LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, ORGANIZATONAL COMMITMENT, AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY IN A CALL CENTER

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the correlational study was to explore the relationship between (a) supervisory leadership practice usage and inbound call center agent organizational commitment, (b) demographic variables and organizational commitment, and (c) organizational commitment and turnover intentions. The research leveraged (a) Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices, (b) Meyer and Allen's three-component commitment model, and (c) questions sourced to the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire. The findings indicated that supervisory leadership practice usage and agents' affective and normative commitment are positively related and agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment are negatively related to turnover intention. Job and organizational tenure are not significantly related to organizational commitment. The study is the first known research to relate these variables among inbound agents in a U.S.-based call center organization.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my family, Michele, Jack, and Andi. Together, they supported me in achieving this personal goal. I truly appreciate all the sacrifices they made.

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I owe a debt of gratitude to many individuals, beginning with members of my committee. Their support, guidance, and encouragement, both individually and collectively, created a rewarding learning environment. My committee chair and mentor, Dr. Katherine Downey, was always available to answer a question, provide a perspective, and offer hope and encouragement. Dr. Downey exemplifies the essence of leadership and is a role model in every regard. She is a pillar of hope, intelligence, and respect. I hope to emulate her as I serve other adult learners in the coming years. Dr. Michael Raphael was always willing to ask the tough question in a most respectful and helpful way. I very much appreciate his tutelage, care, and perspective. Dr. Raphael mentored me in many ways. I am grateful for his wisdom in ways that transcend the dissertation process. Finally, Dr. George Brennan, a friend and colleague, provided a perspective that only a seasoned Fortune 500 chief learning officer could provide.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The axiom "employees are our most important asset" (Bassi & McMurrer, 2007, p. 115) is common in the current organizational lexicon. Research indicates high levels of employee commitment, especially affective commitment, correlate with job performance (Meyer, Stanley, Hersovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Sinclair, Tucker, Cullen, & Wright, 2005). The maxim, then, should state the following: highly committed employees are the most important organizational asset.

Organizational commitment is antecedent to many positive organizational outcomes (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer et al., 2002). Commitment positively correlates with financial performance (Goleman, 2000). Inculcating a climate that creates workplace commitment is salient to the management dictum. Managerial actions affect a climate (Goleman, 2000), and climate incorporates commitment (Goleman, 2000).

The current study adds to the discourse on leadership, organizational commitment, and turnover intention by restricting the research to a U.S.-based call center. The study provides correlations for managerial leadership practice usage and call center agent commitment. The research relates self-reported call center agents' commitment with the agents' turnover intentions. An examination of the relationships took place within one U.S.-based call center provider's four call centers. Managerial leadership practices usage and agent organizational commitment is understudied in the U.S.-based call center environment.

Chapter 1 contains an introduction to the study. The chapter details the study's problem statement and purpose. The first chapter presents an overview of the study, the research questions, and the hypotheses. Chapter 1 also includes definitions of operational terms, the project scope, and the study limitations.

Background

Integrating aspects of leadership with worker commitment in a call center environment is germane in the early 21st century. The relevance of the current research study is twofold. First, the research serves to advance past research that addressed the effect of managerial leadership behaviors on employee organizational commitment. Second, the research environment, a U.S.-based call center, provided a contextualization that extends past research.

Organizational commitment incorporates an extensive research base (Meyer et al., 2002). Empirical studies of leaders and leadership are likewise voluminous (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Call center leadership research is less extensive. Integrating the leadership and organizational commitment research bases into the call center environment provides both theoretical and social value. Telephone call centers play an integral business role (Gans, Kool, & Mandelbaum, 2003). The economic impact of call centers is growing (Gans et al.), and U.S.-based call centers employ more than 2.6% of the U.S. workforce (Shen & Huang, 2005).

Organizational commitment is antecedent to and a consequence of numerous organizational, personal, and structural phenomena (Meyer et al., 2002). Organizational commitment is also predictive of employee behaviors (Abbott, White, & Charles, 2005). Research studies have indicated the commitment bases relate to (a) turnover intention and turnover, (b) on-the-job employee behavior, and (c) employee well-being (Meyer et al., 2002). The commitment forms relate to (a) organizational tenure, (b) organizational support, (c) transformational leadership, (d) perceived distributed justice, (e) perceived procedural justice, and (f) alternatives and investments (Meyer et al., 2002). Commitment is organizationally relevant (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Leadership is defined and conceptualized in various ways (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Leaders influence others (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Leadership involves delivering results (Goleman, 2000; Ulrich, Zenger, & Smallwood, 1999). Leaders create a context in which people can achieve their full potential while serving an organization's mission (M. McCall, personal communication, March 12, 2006). The act of leading involves followers and manifests through others (Goffe & Jones, 2006b). The U.S.-based call center environment offered a compelling organizational context in which to study leadership content.

Call centers are work environments in which technology and telephony intercede in a customer–organization exchange (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003). Call centers provide a relevant context to study the relationship between leadership practices and worker commitment. The modern call center integrates human agents with technology to produce a single customer intersection point (Adria & Chowdhury, 2002). Call centers are business relevant (Gans et al., 2003), and call center management is increasingly playing an important role in the modern economy (Shen & Huang, 2005).

U.S. call center agent employment ranged between 2.9 million ("Call Centers," 2004) and 3.97 million agents (Batt, Doellgast, & Kwon, 2005) in 2004. In an age that is increasingly Internet dominated, Internet technology is increasing the need for call center support (Hilmer et al., 2004). Scholastic attention in call centers as a research focal area is growing (Beirne, Riach, & Wilson, 2004).

Call centers are labor intensive (Beirne et al., 2004), and the call center agent is the primary call center laborer at the point of customer contact (Gans et al., 2003). Labor is human. Commitment is organizationally relevant because commitment implies an individual attachment to an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Capacity management in a call center infers successful technological and human workflow integration (Askin & Harker, 2001).

The call center industry can be described in certain ways. Call centers are typically highly structured (Hilmer et al., 2004). The environment features a lack of agent control regarding the timing of incoming calls (Rose & Wright, 2005). Call centers epitomize performance monitoring (Rose & Wright). Call center agent work is highly stressful and demanding (Kinnie, Hutchinson, & Purcell, 2000). Taylor and Bain (1999) reported call centers metaphorically relate to "an assembly-line in the head" (p. 109) because of the never-ending work and inherent pressure. The call center environment provides an intriguing environment to relate leadership, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions.

Problem Statement

Although call centers are increasingly a significant contributor to the global economy (Holman, 2005) and represent an important source of employment (Belt, 2002), call center industry turnover rates can approach 80% (Hilmer et al., 2004). The cost of call center agent turnover can range from $10,000 to $50,000 per employee (Sheff, 2007). The turnover cost can approximate the annual salary for each vacancy (Hilmer et al.). As U.S.-based call centers employed between 2.9 million ("Call Centers," 2004) and

3.97 million agents (Batt et al., 2005) in 2004, the costs associated with turnover are considerable.

Turnover is a major call center management challenge (Beirne et al., 2004). Research indicated employee commitment is antecedent to and inversely correlated with turnover intentions and turnover (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1996; Corporate Leadership Council, 2004; Loi, Hang-yue, & Foley, 2006; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Wasti, 2003). Organizational commitment is multifaceted (Loi et al.; Wasti). An individual's manager may play a prominent role in engendering organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer et al., 2002) and serves as the cantilever to the degree to which employees commit to the organization (Corporate Leadership Council).

Coaching support and high involvement climates enhance call center agent performance (Holman, 2005). In spite of the relationship, limited empirical research exists relating agent-perceived first-level managers' leadership practice usage and call center agent organizational commitment. Because organizational commitment is an antecedent to turnover intentions and turnover (Chiu, Lin, Tsai, & Hsiao, 2005; Meyer & Allen, 1997), determining the relationship between the agent-perceived first-level manager leadership practice usage and call center agent organizational commitment provides organizational value.

A correlational study was conducted to gain insights into the relationship between inbound call center agents' perceptions of first-level managers' leadership practices and agent organizational commitment. The study also examined the relationship between agent organizational commitment and intention to turnover. Frontline inbound call center agents from one U.S.-based call center service outsourcer participated in the study.

Purpose

The purpose of the quantitative, correlational study was to examine the extent of the relationship between variable combinations including (a) agent-perceived supervisory use of Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices and agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment; (b) agents' age, job tenure, and organizational tenure and agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment; and (c) agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment and turnover intentions. The population of the study included the 2,050 inbound call center agents employed by Company X. Agents worked in one of four American call centers located in three states.

Customer service in the Internet era is critical to enterprise performance (Froehle, 2006), and employees play a critical role in delivering service quality (A. Payne, Holt, & Frow, 2001). The call center agents' role is crucial to customer service and enhancing organizational value. For example, agents help customers solve problems (Workman, 2003). In consideration of the beneficial consequences of organizational commitment (Abbott et al., 2005; Meyer & Allen, 1997), articulating the relationship between a supervisors' use of leadership practices and inbound agents' organizational commitment level has research value.

Agent absenteeism and turnover present significant call center management challenges (Beirne et al., 2004). Forty-five percent of customer contact occurs via the telephone (Froehle, 2006). Seventy percent of a call center's cost structure is budgeted to direct labor salary (Friedman, 2001). The percentages indicate the importance of call center agents' organizational commitment. Researching the relationship between supervisory leadership practices and agent organizational commitment is utilitarian.

Likewise, the strong positive relationship between turnover intentions and turnover (Sousa-Posa & Henneberger, 2004), and the significant costs associated with call center agent turnover (Sheff, 2007), indicate that investigating the relationship between organizational commitment and agent turnover intention is meaningful.

Significance of the Study

The study advances research into the association between managerial leadership behaviors and organizational commitment of front-line employees. Organizational commitment is a comprehensively studied construct, particularly with adult employees (Dixon, Cunningham, Sagas, Turner, & Kent, 2005). The organizational commitment construct has received limited research attention in a call center environment. In spite of the established relationship between organizational commitment and positive organizational outcomes (Abbott et al., 2005; Dixon et al.; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Wasti, 2003), limiting the research environment to a call center outsourcer provides research and business value.

Call center agents serve as a principal connection point in the organization–client intersection (Shen & Huang, 2005). The U.S.-based call center industry employs more than 2.6% of the U.S. workforce (Shen & Huang). Given the primacy of the agents' role and the agent employment scale, explaining the relationship between an agent's manager and an agent's organizational commitment is crucial.

U.S.-based call centers continue to expand in economic importance and workforce scale (Gans et al., 2003). Extending the understanding of the relationship between managerial leadership practices and agent organizational commitment might provide leaders of call centers with new insights regarding managerial behavior best practices.

Organizational commitment and various positive organizational outcomes are positively correlated (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

The value chain analysis of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee motivation in service industries indicates that motivated employees are positively associated with satisfied customers (Gelade & Young, 2005). As employees, call center agents play a role in this value chain. Call centers play a strategic role as a customer communication channel (Armony & Maglaras, 2004). Because 70% of customer–business interfaces are call center centric (Shen & Huang, 2005), relating management leadership practices to agent organizational commitment is valuable. Research relating managerial leadership practices to agent commitment in an inbound call center environment is scarce.

In a postindustrial, knowledge-based era, recruiting and mobilizing talent is increasingly critical to enterprise success (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2004). Call center agents represent human talent. Managers with line responsibility influence the level of commitment (Goleman, 2000). Relating managerial leadership practices to agent organizational commitment provides call center leaders with insights such as discerning the relationship between leadership practices and organizational commitment.

The current study provides insights into managerial training and development priorities and expenditures. U.S.-based organizations spent 2.2% of the 2005 payroll on training and focused 9.25% of all training on managerial and supervisory content (Rivera & Paradise, 2006). In an era of constrained resources, deploying relevant management training is fundamental. The study adds to the field of leadership by examining the relationship between leadership practices and inbound call center agent organizational commitment.

Nature of Study

The quantitative study was descriptive and correlational, and the study reported correlations between several bivariate relationships. The reported relationships included the association between agent-perceived first-level manager leadership practices and agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment to the organization. A second reported relationship incorporated the correlation between agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment to the organization and the agents' intent to turnover. A third correlation related the agents' age, organizational tenure, and job tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Fourth, the quantitative correlational research examined the predictive utility of the combination of variables on turnover intention.

A descriptive, quantitative, and correlational design was appropriate for several reasons. First, the research problem sought to explain, rather than to explore. Quantitative research endeavors to describe and explain, whereas qualitative research is exploratory and comprehension oriented (Creswell, 2005). Second, the research questions were explanatory or prediction based. Explanatory and prediction designs represent types of correlational designs (Creswell). Third, the study variables were definable and widely studied in research. The study did not include a search to determine variables of interest, which is a characteristic of a qualitative study (Creswell).

Correlational designs involve measuring degrees of associations between two variables (Creswell, 2005). Correlational designs can also incorporate predictive approaches (Creswell). Because the research study primarily measured associations between variables, a correlational design was appropriate. Unlike an experimental design where study conditions are controlled and manipulated, correlational studies relate characteristics and variables (Creswell).

The study design incorporated explanatory and predictive elements. Research Questions 1, 2, and 3 are explanatory as the questions sought to explicate bivariate relationships. In comparison, prediction correlation research attempts to predict outcomes and typically involves linear or multiple regression techniques (Creswell, 2005). Research Question 4 sought to predict turnover intention based on predictor variables.

Survey instruments measuring distinct constructs were foundational to the study. The Three-Component Model (TCM) Employee Commitment Survey (Meyer & Allen, 1991) measured agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Leadership practice usage was captured using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI; Kouzes & Posner, 2003a). Three survey items sourced to the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (MOAQ; Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesch, 1983) measured agent turnover intention. The centrality of survey instruments to the study necessitated that the survey instruments were participant comprehensible, reliable, and valid. Figure 1 provides a schematic of the integration of the questionnaires with the variables in the study.

An experimental design provides practical benefits and necessitates the ability to intervene in some way (Creswell, 2005). In the research study environment, the ability to intervene in the call center environment was limited. The inability to intervene in the study environment prevented the use of an experimental design.

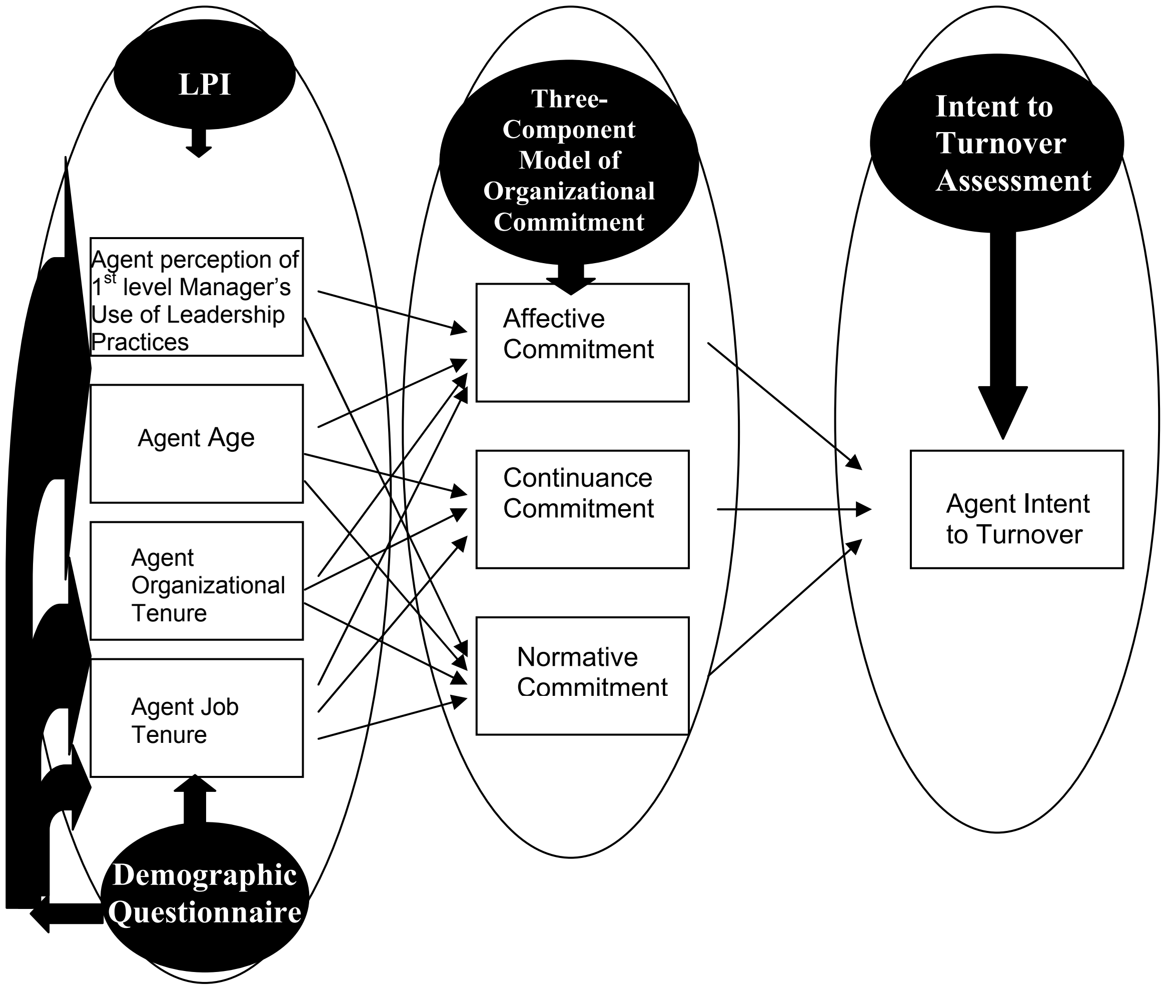

Figure 1. Integration of questionnaires and scales with research model map.

The research questions suggested a correlational design. A correlational design has limits. For example, correlational designs do not permit the confirmation of causal relationship (Fitzgerlad, Rumrill, & Schenker, 2004). Correlational designs do allow for the determination of the degree of co-occurrence between the variables under investigation (Creswell, 2005). The research study reports on the association between study variables. Because the current study is correlational, the study does not offer direct causal insights.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The primary focus of the study was to explore the relationship between employee-perceived managerial leadership practices and employee organizational commitment in a U.S. inbound call center work environment. Another focus was an explanation of the relationship between specific demographic variables and organizational commitment forms. The third focus was an examination of the relationship between the commitment forms and an agent's intent to turnover.

Organizational commitment, as a research base, is extensively studied (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The body of research indicates the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational retention and work performance is positive (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Organizational commitment, as a construct, is composed of multiple forms (T. E. Becker & Kernan, 2003; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Call centers are increasingly central to businesses and continue to increase in economic importance (Gans et al., 2003). Call center representatives play a significant role in call center operations (Hilmer et al., 2004). Customer perceptions form, in part, as a result of the customer's interaction with a call center agent (Hilmer et al., 2004). Asking questions and gaining insights into antecedents of agent commitment, given the agents' role, is useful.

Call center organizations juxtapose technology and human interaction. A call center is an organization that facilitates human-oriented telephone customer service using contemporary information technology (Graumann, Arnold, & Beltjes, 2003). The front-line call center representative, or agent, is central to the call center work (Hilmer et al, 2004).

The research questions integrate leadership, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions within the context of an inbound U.S.-based call center agent. Given the importance of organizational commitment outcomes (Meyer & Allen, 1997), questions relating managerial behaviors and call center agent commitment and their consequences are crucial. A synthesis of the conditions identified resulted in the following research questions that guided the study:

R1: What is the relationship between agent-perceived first-level manager leadership practices and agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment to the organization?

R2: What is the relationship between agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment to the organization and the agents' intent to turnover?

R3: What is the relationship between agents' age, organizational tenure, and job tenure and the affective, normative, and continuance commitment?

R4: How do the combination of (a) agent demographics, (b) agent perception of first-level leadership practices, and (c) agent commitment variables relate to agent intention to turnover?

Hypotheses, unlike research questions, involve predicting and forecasting outcomes in a relationship among attributes based on past research (Creswell, 2005). The hypotheses in the current research study were similar to hypotheses in previous research integrating leadership and organizational commitment. The testing environment for the hypotheses, a U.S.-based call center, was novel.

The conceptualization of commitment encompasses multiple components (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Research indicates an employee's manager plays a significant role in driving climate (Goleman, 2000) and inculcating engagement (Corporate Leadership Council, 2004). Leader behaviors influence organizational commitment (Perryer & Jordan, 2005), and commitment to the immediate manager correlates to in-role performance (T. E. Becker & Kernan, 2003). Metscher (2005) confirmed the five Kouzes and Posner leadership practices positively relate to Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian's (1974) narrow organizational commitment conceptualization. In consideration of the leadership–commitment relationship and the research questions, the study incorporated the following five hypotheses:

H_{01}: When correlating the five LPI scores with affective and normative commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_1: When correlating the five LPI scores with affective and normative commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

H_{02}: When correlating the five LPI scores with continuance commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_2: When correlating the five LPI scores with continuance commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

H_{03}: When correlating the three commitment forms, which include affective, normative, and continuance commitment, with intention to turnover, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_3: When correlating the three commitment forms, which include affective, normative, and continuance commitment, with intention to turnover, there will be a significant correlation.

H_{04}: When correlating demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_4: When correlating demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

H_{05}: A combination of variables will not account for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than can be explained by any individual correlation.

H_5: A combination of variables will account for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than can be explained by any individual correlation.

Conceptual or Theoretical Framework

The study, localized to one U.S. call center service outsourcer, involved the integration of organizational commitment and leadership practices constructs. Call centers integrate resources to provide telephonic service to customers (Gans, Kool, & Mandelbaum, 2003). The U.S. economy is evolving from being manufacturing-dominated to a predominantly service-oriented base (Workman, 2003). Services are produced and consumed concurrently and often involve employees providing client value at the point of consumption (Evardsson, Johnson, Gustafsson, & Strandvik, 2000).

Organizations and employees have needs, and responding to the duality of needs is an organizational imperative. Responding to employees' needs is critical. In an era marked by the proliferation of tacit knowledge, 42% of organizational knowledge exists within employees (Liao, 2005).

Inculcating a high performance climate is a leadership imperative (Goleman, 2000). Commitment level is one delineator of a work climate (Goleman, 2000). Organizational commitment forms correlate to consequence variables (Meyer et al., 2002). A high commitment climate is particularly consequential in a call center environment in view of the growth in centers and the centrality and criticality of the agent's role (Askin & Harker, 2001).

The construct of organizational commitment is well-established (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997). Weber's misgivings with the bureaucratic model and his focus on time efficiency and the motivations of employees (Wren, 2005) are conceptual precursors to organizational commitment. Commitment incorporates numerous definitions. N. J. Allen and Meyer (1996) noted organizational commitment represents a psychological connection an employee has with the organization. In this specific conceptualization, commitment reflects a person's attachment to an organization.

When formal commitment research was nascent, organizational commitment was viewed primarily behaviorally (Grusky, 1966; Kantor, 1968; Sheldon, 1971; D. J. Shoemaker, Snizek, & Bryant, 1977). Grusky viewed commitment in influence and reward terms and intimated that employees who overcome impediments in the garnering of rewards are highly committed. Kantor similarly indicated commitment occurs at the intersection of an organization and individuals. Kantor advanced the construct by offering that different types of commitment exist and noted commitment entails the willingness to expend energy and offer loyalty. Sheldon similarly viewed commitment as being investment-related, indicating the greater the individual investment, the greater the commitment. H. S. Becker offered a side-bet approach to commitment, reporting that individuals invest in activities that provide a valuable return (D. J. Shoemaker et al.). H. S. Becker noted that individuals resist the temptation to disinvest from an organization over time, given the sunk costs (D. J. Shoemaker et al.). The organizational commitment construct incorporated multiple definitions and approaches (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

Organizational commitment became increasingly viewed as a construct that subsumed other constructs (Varona, 1996). Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of organizational commitment represented a multiple commitment form construct. Within the model, Meyer and Allen (1991) recognized differences in psychological dimensions of organizational commitment by labeling commitment bases as affective, normative, and continuance. T. E. Becker (1992) extended the commitment reconceptualization and asserted that employee connections occur through multiple foci and commitment bases. T. E. Becker and Kernan (2003) demonstrated employees distinguish between affective and continuance commitment to organizations and first-level managers, validating T. E. Becker's (1992) earlier proposition.

A large research base exists concerning the consequences of organizational commitment. The research indicated that affective, normative, and continuance commitment are consistently inversely related to both turnover intention and actual turnover, though the relationship is strongest for affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Workers with high levels of affective commitment outwork and outperform workers with lower levels of affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Leadership encompasses an extensive research base. In spite of the plethora of studies and research, a clear demarcation that distinguishes effective leaders from ineffective leaders does not exist (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Bass (1990) reported the number of leadership definitions approximates the number of people who have endeavored to define the term. Leadership lacks a common, standardized definition (Vroom & Jago). The leadership construct incorporates a variety of perspectives (Mastrangelo, Eddy, & Lrenzet, 2004) and multiple dimensions (Campbell, 2007).

Leadership research indicates that leadership behaviors are antecedent to effectiveness (Mastrangelo et al., 2004). Leaders deliver results and create climates (Goleman, 2000). As a collectivity, leaders employ various leadership styles and behaviors (Oshagebmi & Ocholi, 2006).

The styles and behavior leadership approach focuses on what leaders do and how leaders act in the context of others (Northouse, 2004). Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) differentiated three distinct styles when they defined the authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire approach. Behavioral research at Ohio State University resulted in the development of the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire and a focus on initiating structure and consideration (Fleishman, 1953). Initiating structure behaviors are task oriented, and consideration behaviors are relationship oriented (Northouse). Blake and Mouton (1985) similarly noted that managers construct leadership in terms of some combination of production and people concerns. Kouzes and Posner (2002b) described five practices of exemplary leadership: (a) model the way, (b) inspire a shared vision, (c) challenge the process, (d) enable others to act, and (e) encourage the heart.

Research on the relationship between leadership behaviors and worker commitment in a call center environment is minimal. Call centers have drawn academic attention largely because of the technology and technology-oriented controls (Beirne et al., 2004). Considerable academic interest has focused on the control mechanisms and surveillance (Callaghan & Thompson, 2002).

Limited research linking leader behavior and employee commitment exists (Perryer & Jordan, 2005). Research in the U.S. call center domain is extremely limited. The current study extends prior research by examining the relationship between first-line manager leadership practices and agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment and by examining the link between agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment and intention to turnover in a U.S. call center.

Definitions

The study includes operational terms. This section identifies and defines the terms:

Affective commitment: Affective commitment is one of the three organizational commitment forms in the Meyer and Allen (1997) organizational commitment conceptualization. Affective commitment describes an individual's emotional attachment to an organization.

Base: Base refers to the foundational facets that underpin an individual's organizational commitment (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Base is synonymous with the nature of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997) or commitment forms (O'Driscoll & Randall, 1999).

Call center: A cell center represents a combination of human resources, telephony, and computer technology that provide telephonic service delivery (Gans et al., 2003). Call centers and contact centers are sometimes used interchangeably (Luo, Liu, Shao, Lu, & Ye, 2006).

Call center agent: Call center agents are call center employees who directly interact with customers via the telephone. Agents provide personalized services and serve in an ambassadorial role (Ojha & Kasturi, 2005), integrating the embedded computer-assisted technology and telephony. Call center agents and customer service representatives are interchangeable terms (Wallace & Whitt, 2005).

Continuance commitment: Continuance commitment is one of the three organizational commitment forms in the Meyer and Allen (1997) organizational commitment conceptualization. Continuance commitment describes an individual's need-based attachment to an organization.

Foci: Foci describe the individuals or entities that a person commits to (T. E. Becker & Kernan, 2003). The target of one's commitment foci can include (a) one's manager, (b) a work group, or (c) the overall organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Inbound call center: Inbound call centers represent a subset of call centers that receive, rather than initiate, phone calls (Gans et al., 2003).

Leaders: Leaders are people who have followers (Goffe & Jones, 2000).

Leadership: A relationship-based process (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b; Popper, 2004) central to creating an environment that permits people to perform individually and collectively at their best in support of a group or organization. Leadership is about creating an environment in which people excel in support of organizational objectives (M. McCall, personal communication, March 12, 2006). Leadership implies leaders exist.

Leadership practices: Leadership practices represent five context-neutral leadership metacompetencies that exemplary leaders demonstrate. The basis of the practices is quantitative and qualitative research conducted by Kouzes and Posner (2002a).

Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI): The LPI is a 30-item Likert-scale-based instrument (Kouzes & Posner, 2003c) that assesses the behaviors associated with the five leadership practices identified by Kouzes and Posner (2002b).

Management: Management is a process involving resource coordination and alignment. Management focuses efforts on meeting organizational objectives (Jones, 2004).

Managers: Managers are individuals who exercise management. A manager's power derives from the manager's organizational position. Managers possess authority (Jones, 2004).

Normative commitment: Normative commitment is one of the three organizational commitment forms in the Meyer and Allen (1997) organizational commitment conceptualization. Normative commitment describes an individual's obligation-based attachment to an organization.

Organizational commitment: Organizational commitment is a multibase construct that includes an individual's (a) emotional attachment, (b) opportunity cost of leaving, and (c) obligation to remain with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Assumptions

Assumptions denote ideas presumed to be true without mindful thought (Ruggiero, 2004), and the action of explicating assumptions is critical and necessary. A number of assumptions were inherent given the design. Assumptions within the study related to participant time, understandability, and candor.

The first assumption related to time. The study involved call center agents completing a 55-item assessment. The first assumption presupposed that the agents could allocate the necessary time. Each assessment involved agent time and evoked opportunity costs. The assumption acknowledged the opportunity costs associated with time.

The second assumption involved assessment clarity and interpretability in the agent population. The TCM, LPI, and MOAQ turnover intention scales have been widely used with many functional populations. The assessments were novel in the specific agent population of the current study. While survey construction is both an art and a science, survey questions must be clear and constructed from the perspective of the survey respondent (Neuman, 2006). Agent unfamiliarity with commitment, leadership, and turnover intention instrumentation was a concern.

The third assumption related to respondent candor. The assumption presupposed that study participants would answer each question honestly. Given that authority is antecedent to organizational power (Jones, 2004), agents were being asked to assess the leadership practices of individuals with more relative authority and more relative organizational power. Survey respondent and first-level manager organizational power asymmetry existed. The third assumption presumed the asymmetry would not imperil respondent honesty.

An embedded assumption subsumed in the cardinal assumption involved agents' cognitive independence. Agents presumably answered each survey question independently, without external influence or pressure. As an antecedent, agents accurately assessed managerial leadership practices based on observed behavioral patterns. The assumption presumed that rater biases such as the halo effect or recency effect did not manifest. A presumed assumption within this assumption involved rater self-awareness regarding self-cognition and thinking in the evaluation of affective, continuance, and normative commitment levels.

A critical assumption manifested given the volunteer nature of the study. The assumption presumed the volunteers provided responses that were representative of the population of study participants. A major concern of self-administered surveys involves nonresponse error (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Substantive efforts focused on minimizing this error. Organizational support and sponsorship were central to the effort. Targeted communiqués served to create awareness. Of particular importance, the Internet-based survey process was developed to facilitate maximum agent participation.

Scope, Limitations, and Delimitations

The design of the correlational study focused on determining if a relationship exists between defined independent and dependent variables. The independent variables were (a) agents' perception of the five leadership practices defined by Kouzes and Posner (2002b) of the agents' first-level manager, (b) specific commitment forms, and (c) specific demographic characteristics. Dependent variables were (a) affective, continuance, and normative commitment and (b) turnover intentions.

The geographic location of the call centers limited the scope of the study findings. The call center employer in the study is U.S. based. National cultures enmesh values that employees embody (Fang, 2006). This constraint suggests the findings are contextually limited to the American culture. Organizational cultures inculcate shared values that affect employee interaction (Jones, 2004). Denison (1984) noted a culture creates an organizational identity. An organization's culture becomes the accepted way (Handy, 1999). The U.S. national culture limited the geographic relevance of the study findings.

Another limitation involved differences that manifest from call center classification. The phone call initiation direction is one call center classification scheme (Gans et al., 2003). Call center agents in outbound call centers are call initiators, whereas agents employed by inbound call centers are phone call receivers. Outbound call centers relate to telemarketing-type functions (Gans et al.). Inbound call centers serve in help desk, customer support, and client services roles (Gans et al.). The current study targeted inbound call center agents.

The focus on call center supervisors' leadership practices was limiting. An organization typifies a *system* where variables influence and are influenced by each other (Scott & Davis, 2007). The current research study involved an attempt to show a relationship between narrowly defined variables of interest. Taking a systems view, other variables and factors beyond the narrow study focus are likely consequential and thus behaviorally noteworthy. Human behavior is complex (Dymond, Roche, & Barnes-Holmes, 2003) and is denotable by the integrative effects of situation and experience (Hixson, 2004). Isolating behavior, or behavior intentions, to a single source is limiting.

Organizational development and performance models such as Burke-Litwin's model of organizational performance and change indicate human motivation is multifaceted (Burke, 1992). Systems behavior proponents purport behavior manifests from a holistic rather than an activity frame (Rothwell & Sullivan, 2005). Human behavior, as viewed through a dynamic complexity-based paradigm where cause and effect are difficult to discern (Senge, 1990), is complex. Meyer et al.'s (2002) meta-analysis revealed that the three-component commitment conceptualization incorporates a variety of antecedents and the consequences. The three-component model, like any model, is limited. The systems view of the world and the complexity of human behavior limit the systemic relevance of any correlational study.

The cross-sectional correlational survey design constrains the ability to determine causality (Meyer & Allen, 1997). A cross-sectional survey design infers a single data collection point (Creswell, 2005). Cross-sectional designs aim to determine the joint occurrence and relationship between antecedents and consequences rather than causality (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The cross-sectional survey design limited the study.

Summary

The growth of call centers in the United States (Gans et al., 2003) and the criticality of humans in the call center environment (Ojha & Kasturi, 2005) are germane to the contemporary economy. Juxtaposing these conditions indicates that studying call center employee behaviors and attitudes is utilitarian. Organizations, which are ubiquitous in modern society, legitimize the authority of managers in their role of overseeing employee performance (Scott & Davis, 2007).

Managers affect the actions of others based on authority (Yukl, 2006). Managerial success requires leadership competence (Yukl). Leadership involves influence (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Leader actions have an effect on followers (Northouse, 2004). Meta-analytic reviews of employee commitment revealed that managers influence the level that employees commit to an organization (Meyer et al., 2002; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Organizational commitment correlates with withdrawal cognition and turnover (Meyer et al., 2002). Meta-analytic research depicts organizational commitment as an antecedent, consequence, or correlate in numerous studies (Meyer et al.). In the U.S. call center environment, limited organizational commitment research exists. The research study attempted to relate first-level managerial leadership practices to call center agent organizational commitment and then relate agent organizational commitment with intent to turnover.

Chapter 1 contained an introduction to the study and an explanation of both the research problem and the study purpose. The chapter included the research questions, hypotheses, and operational definitions. Chapter 1 is foundational. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature and elucidates the research void the study fills. Chapter 3 describes the study design. Chapter 4 presents the results, and chapter 5 offers a summary and recommendations. With this context in place, chapter 2 places the study in the frame of the critical research base.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Before undertaking research with the expectation of expanding the knowledge domain, reviewing the literature base provides historic research context. Chapter 2 provides a review of germinal research in the areas of organizational commitment and leadership. The chapter overviews the lexicon of contemporary research on call centers. Chapter 2 includes a brief review of perspectives relating to turnover intention and research regarding age, job tenure, and organizational tenure. Although the literature review provides a historical perspective, the review also provides alternative views. Chapter 2 presents the literature review topically. The chapter concludes by identifying a research gap. By relating and articulating the past, the chapter presents the knowledge base from which the research study emanates.

Title Searches, Articles, Research Documents, and Journals Researched

A literature review provides a summary of the body of knowledge based on books, journal articles, and other sources; the encapsulation of the body of knowledge provides context and elucidates the need for the study (Creswell, 2005). The review necessitated the use of primary research sources. Scholarly electronic databases served as a main source of research sources. The research topic lent itself to a number of constructs and genres. The literature review included a number of search strings and search terminology.

The study of leadership and organizational commitment is extensive. A Google search of the terms *leadership* and *organizational commitment* yielded 174,000,000 and 3,210,000 returns, respectively. By comparison, an EBSCOhost search returned 54,620 leadership articles and 4,637 articles related to organizational commitment. Stratifying the quantity of scholastic content, given the need to focus on the most utilitarian and germane research, was a challenge. Table 1 highlights the quantity of literature sources referenced in the literature review.

Table 1

Literature Referenced in Support of the Research Problem and Research Questions

Content Areas	Articles	Books	Dissertations	Other	Total
Organizational commitment	77	6	11	1	95
Leadership	77	17	9	4	107
Call centers	32	2	2	2	38
Turnover intentions	25	1	0	0	26
Demographic variables	6	1	0	0	7
Total	217	27	22	7	273

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has been integral to organizational research for over 25 years (Gautam, Van Dick, & Wagner, 2004, p. 301). As a construct, organizational commitment is a fundamental aspect of the employer–employee relationship (Mohammed, Taylor, & Hassan, 2006). Organizational commitment remains popular (Cullen, Parlobteeah, & Victor, 2003) and encompasses multiple dimensions and conceptual leitmotifs (Loi et al., 2006). Organizational commitment also relates to other variables as an antecedent, consequence, or correlate (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Contemporary research largely extends and environmentally contextualizes predictive aspects of organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment as a research-based construct has substantively evolved since Weber focused on organizational efficiencies and employee motivation 100 years ago (Wren, 2005). Organizational commitment research includes various populations and multiple work contexts. Researchers recently studied organizational commitment with salespeople (Pettijohn, Pettijohn, & Taylor, 2007; Ping, 2007), marketing professionals (Griffith & Lusch, 2007), missionaries (Trimble, 2006), Taiwanese repatriates (H. W. Lee & Liu, 2006), survivors of a downsized organization (Hopkins & Weathington, 2006), Kuwaiti ministry employees (Al-Ajmi, 2006), information technology employees (Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, 2006), rehabilitation counselors (Mittis, 2006), Malaysian government medical doctors (Samad, 2006), and Turkish academicians (Certin, 2006).

Organizational commitment has been researched in various contexts, including (a) transformational leadership (Nguni, Sleegers, & Denessen, 2006), (b) organizational citizenship behaviors (Gautam, Van Dick, Wagner, Upadhyay, & Davis, 2005), (c) quality of work life (Huang, Lawler, & Lee, 2007), (d) job stressors (Oi-ling, 2003), (e) role ambiguity (Pousette, Jacobsson, Thylefors, & Hwang, 2003), (f) perceived external prestige (Fuller, Barnett, Hester, Frey, & Relyea, 2006), and (g) procedural justice (Bagdadli, Roberson, & Paoletti, 2006). Employee commitment to organizations continues to be studied among functionally and geographically diverse populations. Organizational commitment is likely a study target because the concept has consistently demonstrated a significantly positive relationship with performance (Riketta, 2002).

The conceptualization of organization commitment varies. Swailes (2002) noted an individual’s primary commitment orientation can be oriented toward different focal points. Other researchers have focused commitment studies toward career commitment (Blau, 1985, 1989; Mohammed et al., 2006) and occupational commitment (Blau & Holaday, 2006). J. Y. Chang and Choi (2007) differentiated organizational and professional commitment. Similarly, Van Knippenberg and Sleebos (2006) distinguished organizational identification with organizational commitment. Hart and Thompson (2007) contrasted loyalty and commitment. Research increasingly indicates that organizational commitment includes specific intraorganizational foci (T. E. Becker, 1992; T. E. Becker & Kernan, 2003; Reichers, 1985). This multifocus and form-based commitment construct is inherently challenging to test in totality (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Defining Organizational Commitment

Given the extensive literature base surrounding the term organizational commitment, various definitions of the term exist (N. J. Allen & Grisaffe, 2001; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Morrow, 1993, Mowday et al., 1982). Definitions tend to be behavioral, attitudinal, or a combination of both. Morrow (1983) noted researchers often defined work commitment in disparate ways, electing to conceptualize and define work commitment through a multitude of approaches. Porter et al. (1974) and Meyer and Allen (1991) defined commitment in a distinct, yet similar manner. Porter et al. defined organizational commitment as

> the strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Such commitment can generally be characterized by at least three factors: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; [and] (c) a definite desire to maintain organizational membership. (p. 604)

Meyer and Allen (1991) bifurcated the term organizational commitment into three components and defined organizational commitment in terms of affective, continuance, and normative bases.

> Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. . . . Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. . . . Finally, normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67)

In Meyer and Allen's definitional approach, the three components of organizational commitment are bases rather than types. Meyer and Allen (1991) noted the bases are conceptually mutually exclusive.

Morrow (1993) contended organizational commitment represented a psychological attachment to the collective organization. Although Mowday et al. (1982), Meyer and Allen (1991), and Morrow (1993) provided prominent definitions of organizational commitment, other researchers provided insightful perspectives. Organizational commitment encompasses many definitions (Certin, 2006). Appendix A provides an example of the various definitions.

In spite of the variety of definitions, themes emerge. Organizational commitment involves an attachment of members to an organization. A metareview of these definitions indicates organizational commitment implies a relationship between an employee and an organization. Research indicated the reason for the linkage varies (Abbott et al., 2005; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Meta-analyses showed the consequences of organizational commitment are organizationally relevant (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, 1999). Mowday et al. (1982) noted that in spite of the definition propagation, organizational commitment fundamentally represents an individual's attachment to a social system or organization.

Historical Perspective

The history of scholarly discourse involving organizational commitment is extensive and includes a voluminous literature base (Mowday, 1999). Distilling the genesis of formal organizational commitment discourse is challenging. Nineteenth-century philosopher Max Weber provided an early perspective. Noted for his essays focused on bureaucracy and authority (Wren, 2005), Weber proffered that passion ideation is critical to the human condition (Bendix, 1965). Weber's insinuation that organizational attachment matters was strong and clear-minded.

> It is horrible to think that the world could one day be filled with nothing but those little cogs, little men clinging to little jobs and striving toward bigger ones. . . . This passion for bureaucracy . . . is enough to drive . . . one to despair. (Weber, as cited in Wren, 2005, p. 229)

Although he did not use the term organizational commitment explicitly, Weber's focus on bureaucracies and goal attainment in this bureaucratic condition relate to the modern commitment construct.

Another pre-1960s philosopher, Mary Parker Follett, contributed to commitment discourse. Follett's philosophical focus on coordination predates formal scholarly discussions of organizational commitment. Coordination, according to the Follettian paradigm, presumed the active involvement, participation, and give-and-take of all members, irrespective of their formal positions (Fox, 1968). According to Follett's philosophy, information, rather than authoritative power, bonds individuals organizationally. Follett identified principles of coordination within an organization (Fox). The principles included coordination by direct contact of the responsible people concerned (Sethi, 1962). The principles were ideological forerunners to the construct of organizational commitment.

The discernable roots of organizational commitment are traceable to H. S. Becker (1960) and his side-bet theory that links efforts to valued returns. H. S. Becker (1960) proffered the importance of separating committed behaviors from the act of being committed. H. S. Becker incorporated the side-bet concept as a mechanism to rationalize behavior. Committed employees, in this sense, exchange service and effort for extrinsic and intrinsic instruments of value such as rewards and recognition. Side bets can be employee initiated or organizationally created. H. S. Becker (1960) illustrated the organizational initiation of side bets by suggesting workers may be disinclined to change jobs for greater compensation if they deem the decision impugns their reputation. In view of H. S. Becker's (1960) description of the side-bet concept and Meyer and Allen's (1997) three-component conceptualization, particularly the explication of continuance commitment that followed 30 years later, H. S. Becker's (1960) thinking provided a conceptual foundation.

Etzioni (1961), by contrast, described commitment in terms of organizational involvement. In the Etzioni paradigm, positive organizational involvement equated to commitment. The involvement included three distinct involvement zones. Alienative involvement is the most malignant, because this commitment type is negative-relationship based. Etzioni posited slaves or prostitutes relate to their respective organizations through alienative involvement. Calculative involvement defines a low-strength positive or negative orientation toward one's organization. Moral involvement describes a positive perspective one conjures toward an organization.

Herbst (1963) described organizational commitment quantitatively using linear modeling techniques. Herbst noted that permanently committed employees remain with an organization until they attrite because of health reasons, death, or retirement. In Herbst's model, an individual enters an organization and either becomes temporarily committed or decides to leave. In time, a temporarily committed member becomes permanently committed to the organization (Herbst). Commitment in this form is stage-gated. The longer employees remain with an organization, the more committed the employees become.

Grusky (1966) reported commitment strength relates to both the rewards obtained and the interactions experienced. Although Grusky's study of 1,649 managers showed an inconsequential correlation between rewards and commitment, his research revealed that overcoming obstacles to obtain rewards is associated with strong levels of commitment (Grusky). Thus, the mere expectation of a reward does not induce commitment; rather the environment that surrounds reward attainment is a predictor of organizational commitment. Grusky's research portended more contemporary research and discussions relating to antecedents of organizational commitment.

Kantor (1968) suggested commitment is an exchange that operates at the intersection of organizational requirements and personal resonance and posited commitment takes on three types. Kantor indicated the three types of commitment incorporate the person-to-organization linkage mechanisms. Groups that integrate the three commitment types should be successful. Kantor's integrative approach to organizational commitment recognized that commitment incorporates additive elements. Kantor offered that continuance commitment is role based. Cohesion commitment, in contrast, is social-relation based, and control commitment is authority-obedience based. Kantor's work began to show organizational commitment in a more complex way, though issues of quantitatively measuring commitment remain unsolved.

Sheldon (1971) constructed organizational commitment from the conception that commitment is an attitude that couples an individual with an organization. In a study involving Ph.D. scientists, Sheldon confirmed investments and involvement increase commitment to an organization. Investments represent the extent to which participation in one organization precludes participation in another. Sheldon confirmed that involvement, particularly social involvement, produces high levels of organizational commitment. Involvement suggests human interaction and group identification. Involvement is strongly correlated with commitment (Sheldon). Similar to Grusky (1966), Sheldon's research is organizational commitment antecedent foundational.

Hrebiniak and Alluto (1972) extended H. S. Becker's side-bet theory and Kantor's and Sheldon's implicit confirmation of the existence of organizational commitment antecedents. In a study that included elementary school teachers, secondary school teachers, and registered nurses, Hrebiniak and Alluto indicated that tension and experience correlated with organizational commitment. The researchers also reported that commitment is both exchange oriented and accumulation oriented. Organizational commitment involves an employee-implicit calculation. The calculation relates incentives received to perceived contributions in coordination with side bets. The findings support the dualistic nature of organizational commitment as a transaction and reservoir-oriented construct. Commitment, as conceptualized by Hrebeniak and Alluto, is largely behaviorally based.

Buchanan (1974) advanced a multiple-component and socialization-based approach to commitment. Buchanan intimated that organizational commitment involves identification, involvement, and loyalty. According to Buchanan, various organization-based experiences positively relate to levels of organizational commitment. Buchanan portrayed the degree to which 13 experiences and attitudes correlated to organizational commitment at three discrete points of organizational tenure. The experiences explained 68% of the variance in the commitment measured (Buchanan), indicating that commitment at different points of employment tenure incorporates various factors.

Porter et al. (1974) conducted a longitudinal investigation and studied organizational commitment patterns as they relate to turnover. Although Porter et al. posited organizational commitment is superior to satisfaction as a predictor of turnover, the significant contribution of the study involved the development and use of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The 15-item questionnaire remains an extensively used instrument in scholarly organizational commitment research. Many studies have shown a strong relationship between organizational commitment and turnover employing the OCQ (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Criticisms of the OCQ relate to its narrowly focused commitment conceptualization (Swailes, 2002). Unlike Meyer and Allen's three-component model (Meyer & Allen, 1991), the OCQ is oriented toward one-commitment form.

Steers (1977) protested that a systems understanding of organizational commitment was lacking. Steers offered a commitment model that included antecedents and consequences. In a study of hospital employees, scientists, and engineers, Steers considered personal characteristics, job characteristics, and work experiences as antecedents and intent to remain, attendance, employee retention, and job attendance as organizational commitment consequences. Steers showed that components of an organizational commitment model are diverse. The integration of antecedents and consequences into commitment research galvanized in ensuing years as several studies showed relationships linking antecedent and consequential conditions to organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Mathieu and Zajac (1990) examined the relationship between organizational commitment and a number of variables. Like Steers, Mathieu and Zajac segmented variables into commitment antecedents and consequences.

Weiner and Gechman (1977) and Weiner (1982) offered that commitment manifests behaviorally in employees. This behavior-based approach differed from Buchanan's (1974) commitment conceptualization that suggested commitment was attitudinally based and Mowday et al.'s (1982) conceptualization that intimated organizational commitment was organizational belief and acceptance based. Weiner and Gechman contended commitment to an organization involves actions such as personal sacrifice and persistence. Mowday et al. (1982) corroborated the distinction. Mowday et al. (1982) posited attitudinal commitment involves a cognitive process centered on the degree of congruency between self and organizational goals and values. Contrastingly, behavioral commitment relates to the reasons individuals become bonded to an organization. Organizational commitment follows sequentially along stages that include chronological employment stages including early employment and late career stages (Mowday et al., 1982). Mowday et al.'s (1982) commitment framework follows an anticipation, initiation, and entrenchment pathway. Commitment, according to Mowday, relates to an individual's attachment to an organization. Swailes (2002) contended Mowday et al. (1982) used the terms attitudinal and organizational commitment interchangeably.

If the 1960s and 1970s exemplify a period of initial organizational commitment conceptualization, the period post-1980 typifies a time denoted by the expansion of commitment foci and the exploration of commitment in specific work environments. Morrow (1983) identified five discrete foci of commitment, including foci to one's job and career. In a meta-analysis, Morrow (1983) identified 25 discrete forms of work commitment.

The study of commitment was conceptually broad, yet the lack of a validated multiform commitment measure was construct limiting. Mowday et al. (1982) contended interest in organizational commitment results from the construct's predictive quality of critical employee behaviors, including turnover. If organizational commitment is predictive, the question of its utility becomes a focus.

Reichers (1985) noted that the reported consistency in commitment consequences was not matched by initial research relating commitment correlates. Seeking to understand this disconnect, Reichers posited the single-focus commitment orientation was construct-deficient. Reichers' foci-based organizational commitment reconceptualization indicated that measuring commitment to the organization was incomplete. Employees, in a Reicherian sense, commit to different aspects of an organization.

Showing how organizational commitment relates to in-role and withdrawal behaviors, Blau and Boal (1987) differentiated and defined the attitudinal and behavioral approaches to organizational commitment. Blau and Boal noted the behavioral school includes opportunity cost and internal cost-benefit calculations. Individuals invest themselves, accrue organizational benefits, and discern when the costs of leaving become prohibitive. Blau and Boal noted this approach is calculative and behaviorally oriented. Attitudinal commitment, in contrast, is more benign because it consists of the desire of an individual to maintain organizational association based on the desire to achieve goals (Blau & Boal).

Meyer and Allen (1991) recognized that although organizational commitment conceptualizations were diverse, certain themes in the behavior–attitude commitment construct emerged. Meyer and Allen (1991) extended and incorporated the behavioral and attitudinal commitment demarcation, suggesting three distinguishable components exist: (a) affective, (b) continuance, and (c) normative commitment. Integrating the attitudinal and behavioral approaches, Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997) contended commitment is a psychological state that follows from members' affective relationship with an organization and members' desire to maintain organizational membership. Meyer and Allen (1991) noted the commitment bases are components rather than commitment types because an individual's commitment to the organization can reflect various degrees of each component. To measure the commitment bases, N. J. Allen and Meyer (1990) developed a 24-item measure that was later revised to 18-items (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993).

T. E. Becker (1992) extended Meyer and Allen's (1991) and Reichers's (1985) reconceptualization. T. E. Becker (1992) posited the multibase and multifocus approach contrasts strikingly from the single construct view enmeshed in Mowday's conceptualization. T. E. Becker (1992) confirmed the commitment to work-oriented foci, rather than the commitment to organization, relates to job satisfaction. T. E. Becker (1992) concluded the multifocus approach warrants further study and possible instrumentation. T. E. Becker and Kernan (2003) quantitatively explained that affective commitment to supervisors better explained employee performance outcomes that are supervisor oriented while affective commitment to the organization better explained performance-oriented outcomes that are more organization centric.

Measuring Organizational Commitment

Various commitment measures have been integral to organizational commitment research. The most common measures are the OCQ (Porter et al., 1974) and Meyer and Allen's (1991) TCM. The OCQ and TCM have been the most consistent measures employed by researchers in quantitative assessments. The following subsections detail the two measures.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire. The OCQ is a 15-item, 7-point Likert-type questionnaire designed to assess organizational commitment (Porter et al., 1974). Objecting to the dearth of validity and reliability data that accompanied the numerous emergent commitment measures, Mowday et al. (1979) designed the OCQ. The OCQ incorporated the three aspects of organizational commitment central to

Mowday et al.'s (1979) definition. The first aspect necessitated a belief and concurrence of organizational goals. The second part incorporated a willingness to exert effort on the organization's behalf. Lastly, a committed individual was motivated to remain as an organizational member. Mowday et al. (1979) noted that commitment is primarily attitudinal.

The OCQ is the most widely used one-dimensional organization commitment instrument (Meyer et al., 2002). The instrument was the first general commitment measure deemed valid and reliable (Mowday et al., 1982). Criticisms of the measure include its limited relevance in the modern economy (Swailes, 2002). In spite of the incorporation of a multiple commitment perspective, the OCQ yields a single score denoting an employee's overall commitment to an organization (Mowday, 1999).

Commeiras and Forunier (2001) assessed the dimensionality of the measure using two sales force samples. Commeiras and Forunier concluded the OCQ measures the affective base only, which retards the descriptive power given the complexity of the human–organization exchange. Although it quantifies organizational commitment, the OCQ single-form measurement approach limits the instrument's research utility.

Meyer and Allen's three-component organizational commitment model. Meyer and Allen's contribution to organizational commitment research and research-based application included the introduction of the 24-item, three-component organizational commitment measure (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990). The measure evolved into an 18-item assessment (Meyer et al., 1993). The Meyer and Allen measure identifies and differentiates three components of organizational commitment: (a) affective, (b) continuance, and (c) normative. A meta-analytic scale review yields median reliabilities for the normative, continuance, and affective sales of .73, .79, and .85, respectively (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Factor analysis indicates the model discerns organizational commitment from job satisfaction, work values, career commitment, perceived occupational support, and occupational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Diverging from Mowday et al.'s (1982) definition, Meyer and Allen (1991) included both behavioral and attitudinal aspects of commitment. The TCM incorporated aspects of individual desires, needs, and obligations to maintain organizational membership (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The assessment integrated behavioral and attitudinal constructs in one measure (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The multidimensional model integrated behavioral characteristics that were foundational to H. S. Becker's side-bet theory and Hrbeniak and Alluto's approach with the attitudinal elements offered by researchers such as Etzioni (1961), Kantor (1968), and Porter et al. (1974).

The TCM contains three scales. The affective scale incorporates attitudinal items. The continuance scale reports economic-oriented commitment. The third scale, the normative scale, assesses feelings of obligation (Swailes, 2002). Although researchers previously defined affective, continuance, and normative aspects to commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997), the three-component conceptualization represented the first systematic conceptualization of distinct commitment constructs. Central to the TCM are definitions of the terms and specific scales. Affective commitment represents a feeling-based connection with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Continuance commitment denotes an understanding of costs of voluntarily separating from an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Normative commitment, the third scale, measures a duty to remain employed with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Meyer and Allen (1991) contended the multiple-base approach to organizational commitment was component rather than type oriented. Meyer and Allen (1991) purported the commitment bases are independent. One employee could feel a strong desire, need, and obligation to maintain organizational membership, while a second employee could feel a strong desire, a moderate need, and a weak obligation to remain. The integration of the three-component orientation best represents an employee's organizational relationship (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

The TCM continues to be extensively used in research, though Blau and Holiday (2006) reported Meyer and Allen's continuance component is not descriptive independent. Blau and Holiday purported the continuance base amalgamates both a high-sacrifice and a lack-of-job-alternative base. The assertion warrants separate scaling for the sacrifice and lack-of-job-alternative bases (Blau & Holiday). In a meta-analysis, Meyer et al. (2002) posited the three-commitment components correlate with consequence variables as expected. The conceptual evolution, researcher debate, and scholarly discourse continue.

Antecedents and Consequences

This section overviews research related to organizational commitment antecedents and consequences. Meyer and Allen (1991) introduced a multiple-component conceptualization commitment model. Given the multiple-component approach, it follows that antecedents to and consequences of commitment can vary across the bases (Ahmad & Bakar, 2003; Meyer & Allen, 1997). The study of antecedents and consequences incorporates affective, continuance, and normative components.

Several studies have investigated antecedents of commitment (Swailes, 2002). The research provides researchers and practitioners with correlational data that can be useful in view of the multitude of outcomes that derive from the commitment forms (Meyer et al., 2002). While context-specific research proliferates, metareviews by Meyer and Allen (1997), Mathieu and Zajac (1990), and Meyer et al. (2002) consolidated research findings.

Antecedents of organizational commitment. Affective commitment is the most researched commitment form (Beckman, 2003). Meyer and Allen (1997) divided antecedents of affective commitment into three categories. The first category was organizational characteristics. The second and third categories were personal characteristics and work experiences. With regard to organizational characteristics, Meyer and Allen (1997) noted perceptions of organizational policy fairness positively correlate with affective commitment. Konovsky and Cropanzano (1991) similarly reported that employee-perceived social justice perceptions positively relate to affective commitment. Meyer et al. (2002) reported an external locus of control correlates negatively with affective commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) reported a positive but weak relationship with respect to personal characteristics such as age, organizational tenure, and marital status. Meyer et al. (2002) contended that while job tenure and age show a slight positive relationship with organizational commitment, demographic variables generally affect organizational commitment marginally. Marchiori and Henkin (2004) showed that employment tenure in higher education institutions correlates with affective commitment. Education and marital status appear unrelated to affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Baird (2006) similarly reported that age, gender, role tenure, and education were statistically unrelated to affective commitment.

Work experience correlations, which are generally stronger than correlations with the other antecedent classes (Meyer et al., 2002), include variables such as job challenge, job scope, role expectations, and supervisor relations (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Research indicated perceptually supportive and fair on-the-job experiences positively relate to affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Table 2 summarizes recent studies that report an association between a defined independent variable and organizational commitment.

Table 2

Organizational Commitment Research

Independent variable considered	Relationship with AC, NC, or CC
Perceived organizational support (D. G. Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003; Boehmen, 2006; Stup, 2006)	Positive relationship with AC
Prestige (Carlson, 2005)	Positive relationship with AC
Trust (Darrough, 2006)	Positive relationship with AC
Prosocial organizational values (Abbott et al., 2005)	Positive relationship with AC
Job challenge (Dixon et al., 2005)	Positive relationship with AC
Organizational change-related stress and affective commitment (Lopopolo, 2002)	Negative relationship with AC
Organizational socialization (Mittis, 2006)	Positive relationship with AC

Table 2 *(continued)*

Independent variable considered	Relationship with AC, NC, or CC
High-employee involvement performance management practices (Stup, 2006)	Positive relationship with AC and NC
Perceptions of empowerment (Baird, 2006)	Positive relationship with AC
Perception to which organizational members believe the organization has organizational members' best interests at heart (Fuller, Barnett, Hester, & Relyea, 2003)	Positive relationship with AC
Availability of and support for training (Ahmad & Bakar, 2003)	Positive relationship with AC and NC; no relationship with CC
Availability of employment alternatives (Meyer et al., 2002)	Negative relationship with AC, NC, and CC, though strongest with CC

Note. AC = affective commitment, NC = normative commitment, CC = continuance commitment.

Research that relates climate dimensions and managerial styles supports the concept that leadership in the workplace matters. Manifestations of significant positive correlations between leadership-anchored measures and organizational commitment include (a) leader fairness (Deotiis & Summers, 1987), (b) leader–member exchange (Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardner, 1995), (c) leader support (Perryer & Jordan, 2005), (d) leader cooperation (Rhodes & Steers, 1981), and (e) leadership practices (A. K. John, 2006). Several studies have related aspects of transformational leadership, explicitly or implicitly, to affective commitment (Riley, 2006). Liu (2006) showed a significantly positive relationship between transformational leadership and affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Janssen (2004) demonstrated conflict with a supervisor serves as a barrier between an empowerment-based climate and organizational commitment. Dixon et al. (2005) reported supervisory support in a sample of undergraduate students did not significantly relate to affective organizational commitment.

Quantitative research correlating antecedents to continuance and normative commitment is less extensive, though informative. Continuance-based antecedents have focused on employment option awareness and demographic variables (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Meyer and Allen (1997) reported continuance commitment as a dependent variable is inversely related to employee perception of job skills and education transferability. Meyer and Allen (1997) indicated that continuance commitment as a dependent variable is positively related to extrinsic investments and to intrinsic investments such as job status. The research involving age and tenure as antecedents to continuance commitment is mixed, indicating that as employees age and gain tenure, the economic costs of leaving become situational (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Normative commitment development is the least empirically understood base (Meyer & Allen, 1997). N. J. Allen and Meyer (1996) reported that job-based variables are directionally similar, though weaker, than affective commitment antecedents. While feedback, goal difficulty, job challenge, role clarity, and organizational support all positively correlate with normative commitment, the association is weaker than the association between these variables and affective commitment (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1996).

Consequences of organizational commitment. Organizational commitment outcomes are well studied. Outcome correlations with affective and continuance commitment are most common (Meyer & Allen, 1997). A common research-based commitment consequence theme includes turnover and intent to turnover (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Research relating attendance, in-role performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors with organizational commitment is also common (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Organizational commitment research, in context-specific environments, continues as several doctoral dissertations treat organizational commitment as an independent variable.

Research indicates turnover-based measures inversely correlate with organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In a metareview, correlations between affective commitment and intent to turnover ranged from -.29 to -.61 (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1996). Meyer et al.'s (2002) metareview substantiated the negative relationship. Appendix B provides commitment consequence correlations for affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment based on Meyer et al.'s (2002) metafindings. Appendix C provides permission to adapt the table. In recent studies, affective commitment was shown to be negatively and significantly correlated with intent to turnover. Kirby (2006) showed a negative relationship in a wilderness therapy organization. Riley (2006) reported a negative relationship in a sales organization (Riley, 2006). Trimble (2006) presented the relationship among missionaries, as did H. W. Lee and Liu (2006) with Taiwanese repatriates.

Absenteeism is another studied consequence of affective commitment. Hackett, Bycio, and Hausdorf (1994) sampled 126 bus operators and concluded controllable absences from work were negatively related to affective commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) reported a positive correlation between attendance and affective commitment. In contrast, Meyer and Allen (1997) posited, citing other research, an indiscernible relationship between continuance commitment and absenteeism. Research associating normative commitment and absenteeism was limited (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Numerous studies positively correlate both in-role and organizational citizenship behaviors. With respect to job-related performance, research positively correlating affective commitment with outcome variables abounds. Bashaw and Gant (1994) related affective commitment with industrial sales performance. Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, and Jackson (1989) positively associated affective commitment with promotion potential. Meyer et al. (1989) provided findings showing a positive association between affective commitment and overall performance while Gade, Tiggle, and Schumm (2006) confirmed a positive relationship exists between affective commitment and performance in a military organization. Meyer and Allen (1997) suggested, in the absence of correlates, the positive association between affective commitment and performance is research-consistent when the outcome variable denotes a facet of employee motivation.

Given the predictive and explanatory power of commitment, organizational commitment research continues to proliferate in context-specific environments. S. Y. Chang (2006) identified continuance commitment as a factor that predicts on-the-job stress independent of role conflict among clinical nursing instructors in Taiwan. Miraz (2006) reported affective and continuance commitment positively associated with intention to stay among Baptist ordained clergy. Tamosaitis (2006) confirmed affective commitment positively correlates with on-the-job performance, and continuance and normative commitment negatively correlate with performance, among technical personnel. Gade et al. (2006) demonstrated continuance commitment positively relates to performance in a military organization.

Leadership

The study of leadership is replete with opinions, ideas, and paradigms. The leadership field incorporates many frameworks, models, and concepts (Breland, Treadway, Duke, & Adams, 2007). Leadership matters organizationally because the term implies the existence of multiple leaders (Ulrich & Smallwood, 2007). Leadership, by implication, is integral to human consciousness and being.

The extensive academic discussion of leadership notwithstanding, defining leadership can be daunting. Chapman (2002) noted, “Searching for a way in which to define leadership could be likened to the proverbial search for the holy grail” (p. 104). Leadership continues to be one of the most studied social sciences phenomena (Lipshitz & Mann, 2005). Theorists, practitioners, and laypersons continue to define the term, leading some to suggest the number of leadership definitions that exist is a function of the number of people who have defined it (Howard, 2005).

Leadership research is extensive. Since the 1950s, leadership researchers have completed more than 1,000 studies in an effort to explicate the definitive leadership attributes of superior leaders (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007). Leadership in the modern discourse receives significant attention (Fiedeldey-Van Dijk & Freedman, 2007) and is popular among scholars (Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko, 2004). As a contemporary discipline, leadership includes both theory and practitioner experience (Gilbert, 2007), and leadership theories continue to advance and expand (Humphreys & Einstein, 2004).

Leadership is integral to the study of organizations (Yukl, 1989). Leadership matters because organizational vitality depends on leadership acumen (Mastrangelo et al., 2004). Outstanding leaders influence the development and maintenance of high-performing organizations (Bedell, Hunter, Angie, & Vert, 2006). Given the unparalleled changes organizations face (Houghton & Yoho, 2005), including a business environment marked by hypercompetition (Harvey, Novicevic, & Kiessling, 2001) and economic globalization (Ahn, Adamson, & Dornbusch, 2004; Griffin, 2003), leadership is relevant.

Leaders are an organizational cantilever, as a leader's orientation is results-focused (Goleman, 2000). In an age of perpetual change, paradoxes, and organizational complexity, leadership is critical to outcomes, including the building of additional leadership capability (A. Martin & Ernst, 2005, p. 82). Tichy and Cohen (2003) noted leadership is principal to organizational success. Leaders define reality, marshal resources, mobilize responses, determine rejoinders, decide on actions, and manage execution (Tichy & Cohen).

The leadership conceptualization is multifaceted. Leadership involves (a) achieving results (Intagliata & Ulrich, 2000), (b) serving others (Greenleaf, 1977), (c) passionately moving people (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005), (d) encouraging subordinates to accomplish organization-centric goals (Y. D. Lee & Chang, 2007), (e) creating followership (Goffe & Jones, 2006a), and (f) managing organizational knowledge (Bryant, 2003). Given the impact leaders have on creating work climates (Goleman, 2000) and the competitive environment (Heams & Harvey, 2006), leadership competence is increasingly critical to organizational success (Tubbs & Shulz, 2006).

The importance of achieving results through people is fundamental to the leadership discourse. “Without his armies, after all, Napoleon was just a man with grandiose ambitions” (R. E. Kelly, 1988, p. 142). Leadership manifests by combining influence, goal setting, and followership attraction in confronting a problem (Graham, 2007).

Defining Leadership

Numerous definitions of leadership exist (Jago, 1982; Vroom & Jago, 2007; Yukl, 1989). According to Rost (1993), many leadership treatises fail to distinguish leadership from other social relationships conceptually. Appendix D provides a synopsis of various leadership definitions.

The encapsulation of leadership definitions is illustrative. The variation in approaches suggests that the leadership construct is diverse. Researchers do not agree on a common definition (Lipshitz & Mann, 2005). Attempts to define leadership lead to a variety of possible meanings (Northouse, 2004). Through the conceptual discordance, themes emerge. In a research metareview, Lipshitz and Mann reported three leadership themes. Leadership involves vision and strategic direction establishment (Lipshitz & Mann). Leadership also entails invoking change and engaging others (Lipshitz & Mann).

Leadership History as Viewed Through Leadership Theories

The recounting of history is largely a chronicle of leaders (Yukl, 2006). Egyptian hieroglyphics depicted leadership principles 5,000 years ago (Bass, 1990). Aristotle, in *Politics*, provided readers with insights on leadership over 2,000 years ago. The Old Testament is a narrative steeped in leadership (Wren, 2005). The actualization of leadership and human history are interwoven.

Scholarly leadership research galvanized in the early 1900s (Goffe & Jones, 2000). Leadership literature encompasses a variety of theories (Abramson, 2007). The following sections contain overviews of various leadership approaches.

Trait approach. The trait theory, commonly referred to as the "Great Man theory" (Borg & Tupes, 1958, p. 252), considers an individual's innate personal qualities as the principal determinants of leadership (Borg & Tupes; Northouse, 2004). Scholars discussed the great man tenets as early as 1869 (Zaccaro, 2007). The notion that leadership was genetically endowed (Northouse; Zaccaro) indicated only so-called great men could assume a leadership position. The trait paradigm remained a popular leadership approach until after World War II (Northouse). Borg and Tupes noted certain personality traits related positively to successful outcomes in small groups.

Early trait school researchers studied leaders in an attempt to discern discrete traits that distinguished leaders from followers (Jago, 1982). By identifying leadership traits, researchers could theoretically distinguish leaders from nonleaders (Jago). Stogdill (1948) identified, in a metaliterature review, several characteristics that differentiated leaders from nonleaders. R. D. Mann (1959) examined a number of personality characteristics and their perceptual impact on groups. R. D. Mann (1959) offered that intelligence was the most reliable predictor of individual performance in a group. Lord, De Vader, and Alliger (1986) submitted that intelligence, masculinity, and dominance were related to leadership perceptions.

Objections to the trait theory surfaced. Stogdill's (1948) inquiries indicated traits do not explain the totality of leadership. Criticisms with the trait approach, including the challenge of identifying an exhaustive demarcation of leadership traits, emerged in the research (Northouse, 2004). The objections originated from behaviorists such as Stogdill (Northouse, 2004). Other researchers empirically rejected the trait approach in the 1980s (Zaccaro, 2007).

Trait theory proponents exist (Northouse, 2004). Great-man-oriented business books remain popular in the business press (Zaccaro, 2007). Hoogh, den Hartog, and Koopman (1985) related personality to charismatic leadership. Epitropaki and Martin (2005) reported leadership traits have an effect on attitudes and well-being. The recent focus on leadership traits indicates the trait approach may be becoming more accepted in the contemporary leadership discourse.

Behavioral approach. In response to the trait approach, behavioral theories emerged in the middle part of the 20th century (Abramson, 2007). The behavioral or styles approach views leadership through behaviors (Northouse, 2004) rather than traits. Embedded in the behavioral school is a tacit acknowledgment that leader behaviors are antecedent to group and organizational performance (Jago, 1982). The behavioral approach is leader-led; the approach suggests leadership is a function of leader behaviors that integrate leaders' actions with followers and assimilate goal and task accomplishment (Davis & Luthans, 1979). Two prominent behavioral studies are the Ohio State studies and the Blake Mouton managerial grid (Northouse).

Behavioral models such as the Ohio State model developed from trait theory, when researchers began to look beyond individual traits to behavioral patterns (Hollander, 1979). Much of the initial behavioral-based research occurred in the military (Hollander). Researchers at Ohio State distilled two leader behaviors, initiating structure and consideration, from an initial listing of 1,800 items (Northouse, 2004). Initiating structure describes the extent to which a person orients job roles toward goal attainment (Weissenberg & Kavanagh, 1972). Consideration is the degree an individual builds job relationships based on respect and mutual trust for the ideas of subordinates and has respect for others' feelings (Weissenberg & Kavanagh).

The initiating structure and consideration conceptualization led to the development of a widely accepted behavioral assessment, the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (Weissenberg & Kavanagh, 1972). Initiating structure and consideration measurement dimensions anchor the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (Weissenberg & Kavanagh). The Ohio State studies were germinal. Not only did the studies provide a behavioral alternative to the trait perspective, but the research also provided a multidimensional leader behavior typology (Schresheim & Bird, 1979).

The conceptual development and practical application of Blake and Mouton's managerial grid, redesignated the leadership grid (Northouse, 2004), advanced the leadership behavioral discussion. The grid suggests one best leadership style or compendium of leader behaviors exists (Blake & Mouton, 1982). Developed by Blake and Mouton (1985) in the 1960s, the grid remains popular (Northouse).

Believing leadership integrates people and production dimensions, Blake and Mouton (1985) developed a two-dimensional grid with two axes: concern for people and concern for production. Blake and Mouton (1985) identified and labeled five cardinal points among the multitude of *x*, *y* continua. A 9,9 leader, who is high production and high people oriented, is deemed most effective (Blake & Mouton).

The Blake and Mouton behavioral approach recognizes that leader actions are directional. The model provides leaders with a two-dimensional framework from which to view leader behaviors (Northouse, 2004). The Blake and Mouton behavioral approach, like the Ohio State model and Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire, does not integrate situational factors into the construct.

Situational approach. The relevance of contingent factors in leadership date to Putarch's *The Parallel Lives* (Bass, 1990). Contemporary situational models of leadership germinated in the 1960s (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Situational approaches to leadership indicate leadership, and hence effective leader behaviors, are a function of contingent demands (Bass). In the situational model, a single best leadership approach does not exist (Boerner & von Streit, 2005). Three of the most popular contingent approaches to leadership are (a) Fiedler's contingency model, (b) path-goal theory, and (c) Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership model. The approaches recognize the importance of adapting leader behaviors to the situation.

Fiedler developed the first situation-integrative leadership model (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Fielder (1972) posited leadership principally involves integrating power and member relations. In the Fiedler model, group performance, the outcome of effective leadership, results from the leader's motivation and the degree to which the environment facilitates leader power and influence (Fiedler). Fiedler believed a leader's motivation pattern was stable and thus trait oriented. Matching leaders to situations was critical (Vroom & Jago). Situations were derived by integrating (a) leader-member relations, (b) task structure, and (c) the position power of the leader (Fiedler). The most favorable situational condition involved a state that included favorable leader–member relations.

The optimal situation included high task structure and considerable leader position power (Abramson, 2007). Fiedler's approach integrates leadership perspectives (Vroom & Jago).

Path-goal theory, developed in 1971, was a response to perceived weaknesses in other situational models (House, 1996). Path-goal theory integrates three situational elements including leader behaviors (Northouse, 2004). The two additional elements incorporated in path-goal theory are subordinate characteristics and task characteristics (Northouse, 2004). Path-goal theory contends the leader's job involves creating motivational conditions that lead the subordinate to both individual and group goal accomplishment (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Leaders create a motivational condition through the alignment of leader behaviors with subordinate characteristics and the work setting (Northouse). House (1996) noted that in matching leader behaviors to subordinate and group characteristics, leaders create a path that leads to goals. In applying the path-goal leadership approach, leaders must integrate task ambiguity, complexity, challenge, and structure with the needs of the subordinates in the determination of the most appropriate leadership style (Northouse). Effective leadership necessitates that leaders vary leadership behaviors (House, 1996). The use of the most appropriate leader style optimizes employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance (House, 1971).

Path-goal theory criticisms abound. Two areas of criticism relate to the theory's complexity and the lack of empirical testing. Leaders must integrate multiple factors in deducing the most appropriate style, making the theory inherently complex and difficult to actualize (Northouse, 2004). The model, while well documented, has not been adequately empirically tested (House, 1996).

Situational leadership theory, developed by Blanchard and Hersey, first appeared in the literature in 1969 (Graeff, 1997). Sixteen years later, researchers introduced a next-generation situational leadership model, Situational Leadership II (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Zigarmi, 1985). The changes in the model involved variable nomenclature modifications and a broadening of the conceptualization of follower development (Graeff). Blanchard et al. contended a leader's degree of supportive and directive behaviors coalesce with follower development levels; if the leader style aligns with the appropriate follower development level, the leadership is effective. Situational leadership begins with follower development and ends with the adaptation of a leader-aligned leadership style. The Blanchard et al. situational leadership approach involves matching the most appropriate leadership style to a follower's development level (Blanchard et al.).

Weaknesses to the situational model abound (Northouse, 2004). The weaknesses relate to the ambiguity of subordinates' development levels and the deficiency in the research base (Northouse). Model weaknesses also relate to the dogmatic matching of leadership styles to development levels and the exclusion of demographic variables (Northouse). The criticisms notwithstanding, the approach remains popular, particularly in doctoral dissertations (Northouse).

Transformational leadership lens. The term *transformational leadership* has been part of the leadership discourse since 1973 when J. V. Downton published the book *Rebel Leadership: Commitment and Charisma in a Revolutionary Process* (Northouse, 2004). Burns (1978) differentiated transformational and transactional leaders. Burns suggested that transformational leaders influence followers by engaging the followers fully. Using political leaders as his reference base, Burns contended transactional leaders are bargaining and bureaucratic oriented, whereas transformational leaders are revolution and reform focused. Bass (1990) explicated and advanced the transformational construct by distilling characteristics of transformational and transactional leaders. Bass created the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which measures both transformational and transactional leader attributes (Lowe & Galen Kroeck, 1996).

The core of the transformational model includes the four I's (Khatri, 2005). The first I is inspirational motivation. Inspirational motivation refers to act of communicating by appealing to a vision and values (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Bass & Steidlemeier, 1999; Boerner, Eisbenbeiss, & Griesser, 2007; Khatri, 2005). Inspirational motivation suggests enthusiasm and optimism in envisioning a better tomorrow (Bass et al.; Bass & Steidlemeier; Boerner et al.; Khatri). Individual consideration, the second I, involves the act of acting altruistically and supporting the needs of followers (Bass et al.; Bass & Steidlemeier; Boerner et al.; Khatri). Individual consideration includes coaching, supporting, and being cognizant of followers' wants and needs (Bass et al.; Bass & Steidlemeier; Boerner et al.; Khatri). The act of challenging followers in creative ways and helping followers see problems in different ways and in the process helping followers see new realities describes the third I, intellectual stimulation (Bass et al.; Bass & Steidlemeier; Boerner et al.; Khatri). Idealized influence, the fourth I, describes leader behaviors that foster followers' emulation and connection with the leader (Bass et al.; Bass & Steidlemeier; Boerner et al.; Khatri).

Transformational leadership describes a behavioral approach where leaders bond with followers (Northouse, 2004). Transformational leadership creates a union that leads to enhanced leader and follower motivation (Northouse). Transformational leaders recognize the higher order needs of followers and attend to the intrinsic needs of followers (Burns, 1978). The approach recognizes and emphasizes the criticality of values and morals (Northouse).

Transactional approaches to leadership are exchange oriented (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003). Transactional approaches include a leader contingent reward or management by exception approach to leadership (Eagly et al.). Contingent reward behavior manifests when leaders provide rewards for behaviors. Management by exception, which can be either active or passive, involves leader interaction when conditions are substandard (Eagly et al.). Leader proficiency, in a transactional sense, results from the leader's ability to provide rewards in exchange for desired behaviors and activities (Burns, 1978).

Burns (1978) proffered that transformational leadership and transactional leadership were opposite aspects of a leadership continuum. The MLQ measures transformational and transactional approaches (Korkmaz, 2007). An assessment of transformational and transactional leadership using the MLQ indicates that the two approaches are distinct and supportive (Korkmaz). The MLQ is the most common transformational leadership measure (Eagly et al., 2003). The model components have evolved, yet the model's construct has remained constant (Khatri, 2005).

The transformational leadership approach, and the integration of the MLQ, provides research advantages and disadvantages. Metareviews indicated transformational leadership is an antecedent to positive organizational outcomes (Khatri, 2005). The transformational model is a popular contemporary theory (Tucker & Russell, 2004). Transformational leadership is leader and follower centric (Northouse, 2004).

Transformational leadership has limitations as well. In spite of its acceptance and use, reliability and validity issues have been frequently raised (Khatri). Northouse contended the transformational leadership concept lacks clarity and is leader-elitist. The model implies, in part, that leadership is trait and personality oriented (Northouse).

Another way: Leadership through competencies and leadership practices. Organizational success manifests from the collective competence of an enterprise (Zwell, 2000). The collective competence includes both leadership and follower competence (Zwell). Competencies consist of behavioral-oriented characteristics that correlate with successful job performance (Garman & Johnson, 2006). Leadership competencies are measurable; multirater or observer-based assessments measure leader competence (Gentry & Leslie, 2007).

McClelland (1973) introduced the competency framework into the organizational vernacular. Concerned with the proliferation of aptitude and intelligence testing as a mechanism for employment and college admissions, McClelland noted outcome-relevant metrics that assess knowledge, skills, and abilities are more utilitarian and thus are more relevant. Phrahalad and Hamel (1990) invigorated the competency focus by emphasizing core competencies. Kouzes and Posner's (2002b) leadership practices provide a competency-based delineation of leadership practices suitable to measure essential aspects of contemporary, competency-based leadership.

Acknowledging the relational aspect of leadership, Kouzes and Posner (2002b), researched leadership behaviorally, identifying behaviors of exemplary leaders. Kouzes and Posner (2002b) noted the leadership test involves rallying others to become self-motivated to produce exceptional achievements. Leadership is practical, behavioral based, and relationship oriented (Kozues & Posner, 2002b). Credibility is the base in the leadership relationship (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b).

Leaders' credibility, and hence followership, are interrelated. Credibility underlies the leadership process (Kozues & Posner, 2002b). Given the importance of followers in the leader–follower relationship, Kouzes and Posner (2002b) noted certain follower-perceived leader characteristics are most admirable. Appendix E summarizes the findings. Appendix F provides permission to use the table.

In view of the importance of identifying leader practices that create leader credibility, mobilize followers, and accomplish objectives, Kouzes and Posner (2007) created the behavioral-based LPI. The construction of the LPI included triangulating qualitative and quantitative research (Kouzes & Posner, 2002a). The LPI originated from personal-best leadership experiences recorded in over 7,500 surveys, more than 500 in-depth interviews, and item statement construction. The online LPI database contains more than 100,000 respondents (Kouzes & Posner, 2002a).

The core of the LPI is the five leadership practices Kouzes and Posner (2002b) developed from the research. The five leadership practices are (a) model the way, (b) inspire a shared vision, (c) challenge the process, (d) enable others to act, and (e) encourage the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b). Each of the practices bifurcates into two commitments. Appendix G details the integration of the leadership practices and commitments. Appendix H provides permission to use the information. The LPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2003c) incorporates the five practices and 10 leadership commitments in a 30-question, 10-point Likert-type scale.

Unlike the transformational leadership approach, which has been criticized for its trait orientation (Northouse, 2004), the LPI is behavioral based (M. E. Shoemaker, 2003; Stout-Stewart, 2005). Aspects of the LPI have been compared to the transformational leadership model because of the visioning aspect of Kouzes and Posner's conceptualization (Carless, 2001). The behavioral orientation of the LPI indicates that the instrument is competency based. Competencies can be acquired (Bourgalt, Charih, Maltais, & Rouillard, 2006). Because an individual can gain competence, conceptualizing leadership within a competency framework indicates that leadership is learnable.

The Kouzes and Posner leadership approach suggests that leadership is largely behavioral based and relationship oriented (Safferstone, 2005). Many researchers have incorporated the leadership practices as research variables. Table 3 delineates a partial listing of the research.

The research indicated the Kouzes and Posner (2002b) leadership practices are antecedent to positive individual and organizational outcomes. More broadly, the positive effect of leadership on organizational outcomes is well researched (Chen & Sliverthorn, 2005). Goleman's assertion that leaders produce results (Goleman, 2000) seems founded.

Leaders, as agents exercising leadership, (a) are performance focused (Lynham & Chermack, 2007), (b) are in service to others (Dittmar, 2006), (c) are focused on tasks and relationships (Kornor & Nordivk, 2004), and (d) generate excitement (Choi, 2006). Kouzes and Posner's (2002b) leadership practices serve as a superior behavioral compendium of exemplary leadership. Leadership involves motivating people and accomplishing important ends (Vroom & Jago, 2007). The leadership practices provide an appropriate approach to measure leadership.

Table 3

Partial Listing of Research Incorporating the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

Researcher	Study finding
Ovwigho (2007)	Differences in the leadership behaviors, as measured by the LPI, were noted between primary and secondary school leaders in Nigeria.
A. J. John (2006)	The leadership practices of the campus manager and dean of education at campuses of a U.S. higher education college correlate with job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational commitment.
Lima (2006)	For a sample of U.S. chief information officers, the leadership behavior self-reported as most common was enabling others to act. The research indicated no statistically significant relationship exists between leadership practices and gender, education level, tenure as chief information officer, and academic major.
F. C. Martin (2006)	The leadership practices of first-level supervisors positively relate to job satisfaction of nonsupervisors based on a sample of National Aeronautics and Space Administration employees.
Stout-Stewart (2005)	Female community college presidents display competence in the leadership practices without regard to the rural, suburban, and intercity geographic differentiation.
Metscher (2005)	The perceived leadership practices of supervisors of students, air force officers, and civilians attending the Air Force Institution of Technology are positively related to levels of overall student organizational commitment.

Table 3 *(continued)*

Researcher	Study finding
Startcher (2006)	The leadership practice modeling the way is significantly related to individual student achievement in Grades 3 through 8 in reading, based on a sample of West Virginia principals with at least 3 years tenure in their current school.
Sumner, Bock, and Giamartino (2006)	The leadership practices of information technology project managers are predictive of successful project management as measured by project duration.
Sebera (2005)	Leadership competence, as measured by the LPI, is positively related to overall job satisfaction of U.S. professional school counselors.
Jarnagan (2004)	Teacher-perceived principal leadership practices are positively related to teacher morale.
Pingle (2004)	Teacher-perceived elementary school principal leadership practices in academically successful schools differed from teacher-perceived elementary school principal leadership practices in academically unsuccessful schools.
M. E. Shoemaker (2003)	Salesperson perceptions of sales managers' leadership behaviors are individual rather than group oriented.

Call Centers

Academic interest in call centers as an area of study is increasing (Beirne et al., 2004). The reasons for the interest are not definitive, though a review of the literature provides several themes. The themes include the increasing economic importance of call centers and the transformative nature of call center work. Call centers are increasingly an important contributor to national economies in terms of job creation and economic value-added (Bishop, Gripaios, & Bristow, 2003).

In the United States, the call center industry contributed \$20.1 billion to the national economy in 2003 ("Call Centers," 2004). Total call center agent employment in 2004 ranged between 2.9 million ("Call Centers") and 3.97 million agents (Batt et al., 2005). With a labor force of 151,703,000 workers (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007), call center agents represent between 1.9 and 2.6% of the U.S. labor force.

Call centers typify the transition from routine to knowledge-based work where customer relationships and information serve as the core technologies of value creation (Knights & McCabe, 2003). Call center working conditions and the integration of technology into workflows are points of research interest. The working conditions include standardized agent scripting and surveillance (Wickham & Collins, 2004). The description of call centers as "Taylorist" (Bain, Watson, Mulvey, Taylor, & Gall, 2002, p. 170) invokes images of factory floors and production lines.

Call centers embrace and leverage technology. Call centers employ technology in phone-call-automated greeting and delivery systems (Hilmer et al., 2004). The application of enabling technology with a human–customer interface provides an intriguing context for research and study.

Call Center Fundamentals

Call centers represent an embedded capability that enables an organization to deliver services to customers via the telephone (Gans et al., 2003). Call centers provide a multitude of functions including help desks and client services (Gans et al.). Call centers also provide telemarketing and order-taking functions (Gans et al.). The repetitive, high-pressure, and low-discretion work of call centers can be unappealing (Sprigg & Jackson, 2006).

Call center classification schemas relate to the direction of the call between the center and the client. Inbound call centers receive customer calls, inquiries, and complaints (Dorman & Zijlstra, 2003). Outbound call centers typically involve efforts by an organization to sell products or services (Dorman & Zijlstra). Outbound call centers are phone call initiators, and inbound call centers are phone call receivers. Estimates indicate 80% of call centers are inbound call centers (Ojha & Kasturi, 2005). Two of three customer-organization interactions occur through a call center (Deery & Kinnie, 2002). Call centers can be company managed and controlled or external to the organization the call center directly supports (Zapf, Isic, Bechtold, & Blau, 2003).

The growth of call centers in absolute and relative terms ("Call Centers," 2004) is a result of the confluence of cost and technology factors (Dorman & Zijlstra, 2003). Technological advances have disintermediated time and geography, making it functionally possible for geographically disparate and time-distant customers to interact with inbound call centers on the customer's terms. Technological advances have removed the barriers of space and time that traditionally separated customers from the servicing organization. Concurrently, the costs associated with managing a call center have decreased and thus centers are increasingly a strategic and cost-efficient channel to create and scale service performance (Dorman & Zijlstra).

Call centers amalgamate technology with agents' interpersonal competence. Agents are the call center organizational cantilever because agents apply technology and interact with customers. In an inbound call center, call center agents attend to customer inquiries and provide product or procedural information (Rose & Wright, 2005). Thus, agents' performance is critical to the success of call centers (Ojha & Kasturi, 2005). Call centers play a prominent role in the information revolution in which individual customers transmit and exchange information (S. Kelly, 2007).

Call center agents exploit technology during customer telephone calls and work in an environment that requires multitasking and includes frequent interruptions (Bakker et al., 2003). The call center agent's role is integral to the company–customer value chain, though the role is typically stressful (Hilmer et al., 2004). Call centers imbue control and monotonous human work into their technological design. Call centers have been labeled (a) "female ghettos" (Belt, 2002, p. 51), (b) "dark satanic mills of the 21st century" (Fernie & Metcalf, as cited in Holman, 2002, p. 35), (c) "factory sweatshops" (Shah & Bandi, 2004, p. 418), (d) "Taylorist" (Bain et al., 2002, p. 170), and (e) "an assembly line in the head" (Taylor & Bain, 1999, p. 101).

Agent stress results from tempo (Hilmer et al., 2004) and from control (Bakker at al., 2003). Control is multiform-based (Rose & Wright, 2005). Control forms include technological and supervisory controls. Technology-embedded performance monitoring is routinely cited as an enabling source of agent job stress (Bakker et al., 2003).

Supervisory actions exacerbate agents' perceptions of being controlled (Rose & Wright, 2005).

Quantitative measurement and qualitative aspects of a call center agent's role (i.e., customer phone exchange) create pressure (Rose & Wright, 2005). Measurement is integral to management (Crotts, Dickson, & Ford, 2005). The act of measuring is nonneutral (Wheatley, 1994). Call centers increasingly embrace the scientific management model and production-line process as a human resources management method (Deery & Kinnie, 2002). Consequently, the call center environment is stressful (Zapf et al., 2003).

Call Centers: Current Research

Contemporary call center research focuses largely on aspects of technology-oriented issues. Operations management issues such as work queuing, resource management, and work optimization are foci. Appendix I provides a listing of recent technology call center research.

Human Resources Practices in a Call Center

An intriguing concern for researchers involves the effect of high-involvement work processes in a call center environment (Workman & Boomer, 2004). High involvement work processes include emphasizing the leader–follower exchange and creating feedback loops (Workman & Boomer, 2004). The high-involvement approach to work involves engaging workers in jobs that fully leverage their capabilities (Ordiz-Fuertes & Fernandez-Sanchez, 2003). A principal premise is that the creation of high-involvement work processes is antecedent to conditions of high worker involvement and attachment to organizational goals (Ordiz-Fuertes & Fernandez-Sanchez). High-involvement work processes are synonymous with human resources best practices (Ordiz-Fuertes & Fernandez-Sanchez).

Academic interest in high-involvement practices in call centers is nascent. Holman (2003) reported on the positive effect of high-involvement practices on three call centers in the United Kingdom. Holman (2003) asserted that team leader support positively related to agent job satisfaction. Holman (2003) found that performance monitoring could reduce stress, if implemented as the basis for developmental feedback.

Job and organizational factors in a call center positively affect agents' emotional well-being (Holman, 2003). Knights and McCabe (2003) reported that a teamwork work structure provides organizational benefits, though downsides to teams are important considerations to calibrate in call center organizational design. Teams offered agents increased autonomy and discretion while concurrently creating new organizational paradoxes and challenges (Knights & McCabe).

Other research integrated human resources practices with agent outcomes. Rose and Wright (2005) reported that agent perceptions of managers can vary, despite technological control mechanisms that induce stress. Rose and Wright noted,

> There appeared to be a profound ignorance of the rhetoric and practices of HRM [human resource management] among CSRs [customer service representatives], apart from those practices affecting their own performance, such as the monthly performance assessments, quarterly performance review and training/ development initiatives concerning the job. (p. 156)

Workman and Boomer (2004) investigated the relationship between high-involvement work practices and call center agent commitment. In a study of 149 U.S-based call center specialists of a large international firm of varying technical competence, Workman and Boomer concluded high-involvement work practices improved organizational commitment levels. Wegge, Van Dick, Fisher, Wecking, and Moltzen (2006) found the motivational potential of an agent's job negatively related to emotional exhaustion, turnover intentions, and health complaints and positively correlated with personal accomplishment. Collectively, recent human-resources-oriented call center research indicated high-involvement human resources practices influence agent perceptions of the work climate and correlate with positive agent outcomes. Because the performance of a call center largely depends on the commitment level of the staff (Brannan, 2005), the emerging research is compelling.

U.S. Call Centers: A Prologue for Further Research

The benefits that derive from technology are fundamental to the call center model (Beirne et al., 2004). Competition and marketplace expectations demand increased customer service (Iraveni, Kolfal, & Van Oyen, 2007). Technology is definable in different ways (Scott & Davis, 2007). Scott and Davis noted that a definition of technology includes the methods and means an organization uses to produce outputs. More narrowly, Scott and Davis related Orlikowski's construct that technology is more hardware-centric. In a systems-thinking way, technology can include not only the hardware but also the knowledge and skills of employees (Scott & Davis). Technology involves the human resources who implement, act, and perform work.

The impact of the call center environment on front-line employees is increasingly drawing the attention of researchers (Rose & Wright, 2005). Agents serve an important role (Ojha & Kasturi, 2005). Given that U.S. call center employment numbers total between 2.9 million (“Call Centers,” 2004) and 3.97 million agents (Batt et al., 2005), research attention in this domain is warranted.

Intention to Turnover

Turnover embraces many theories and models including organizational equilibrium theory, met expectations theory, and the unfolding model of turnover (Joseph, Kok-Yee, Kok, & Soon, 2007). Turnover creates costs associated with recruiting and work disruption (Dee, 2004). Turnover additionally leads to the loss of organic talent and results in additional training costs (Loi et al., 2006).

In a call center environment, turnover is costly (Hilmer et al., 2004). The costs include technology learning curve assimilation costs (Hilmer et al.). Indirect call center costs include lost productivity and decreased agent performance (Hilmer et al.). Turnover leads to direct and opportunity costs. The total costs can be considerable and can approximate 1 year’s salary for each open call center agent position (Hilmer et al.). The decision to leave, or turnover intention, is antecedent to actual turnover (Brannan, 2005).

While the act of turning over is an action, the act is not an isolated event (Branaham, 2005). Turnover results from a multistep disengagement process (Branham). Porter and Steers (1973) noted initial employment withdrawal begins when individually perceived expectations are unmet. The Porter and Steers’ conceptualization indicates employment withdrawal is process oriented. The process involves the integration of rewards received with expectations subsumed. Mobley (1977) explicated a discrete turnover decision-process schematic that included attrition–nonattrition intention as the ninth employee decision step in a 10-step turnover process. Mobley noted that considering the sequential orientation of the employment withdrawal process, the antecedents to organizational turnover provide points of organizational leverage rather than turnover itself.

Extending the 10-step turnover decision model, Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino (1979) expanded the expectation-focal withdrawal conceptualization by incorporating a multiplicity of factors. The factors included employee expectations regarding current or alternative jobs and the need for immediate rather than delayed gratification (Mobley et al.). Fundamental to this process depiction is the direct antecedent relationship between intent to turnover and turnover behavior. Because intentions precede actions, intent to turnover presages and predicts actual turnover (Mobley et al., 1979). G. J. Lee and Rwigema (2005) countered that employee withdrawal intentions are dynamic. Tactical discordance notwithstanding, managing turnover antecedents is crucial given the influence these factors have on turnover itself (Samad, 2006).

Intent to leave, as a dependent variable, has been well-modeled in research (Daly & Dee, 2006). Research indicated that intent to leave is correlated with (a) emotional exhaustion (Karatepe, 2006), (b) role conflict (Karatepe), (c) role ambiguity (Jarmillo, Mulki, & Solomon, 2006), (d) role discrepancy (Takase, Maude, & Manias, 2006), (e) job stressors (Stetz, Castro, & Bliese, 2007), (f) work exhaustion (Ahuja, McKnight, Cudoba, & George, 2007), and (g) underemployment (Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006). Conversely, research indicated that intention to leave is inversely correlated with (a) job satisfaction (Bedian, 2007; Jarmillo et al.; Lyons, & O'Brien, 2007; Slattery & Rajan, 2005; Trimble, 2006), (b) affective organizational commitment (H. W. Lee & Liu, 2006; Loi et al., 2006; Trimble), (c) repatriation adjustment perception (H. W. Lee &

Liu), (d) perceived organizational support (Loi et al.), (e) on-the-job training (Benson, 2006), and (f) satisfaction with performance feedback (Jawahar, 2006; Kuvaas, 2006). Empirical studies in the turnover intention domain continue to be a focal point for research (Samad, 2006). Turnover intentions and work performance are negatively correlated (Randhawa, 2007).

Organizational commitment research is research profuse (Samad, 2006). The relationship between organizational commitment as a construct and intention to leave is research grounded (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In a study relating each commitment form with organizational withdrawal and retention factors, Somers (1995) reported that affective commitment and normative commitment significantly and positively correlate with intent to remain. Iverson and Buttigieg (1999) confirmed that affective commitment and normative commitment were negatively correlated with turnover intention. The researchers noted the correlation between affective commitment and turnover intention is the most significant (Iverson & Buttigieg). Bentein, Vandenberg, Vandenberghe, and Stinglehamber (2005) showed the larger the decrease in an employee's affective commitment and normative commitment over time, the larger the increase in the individual's turnover intention. Unlike affective commitment and normative commitment, a discernable relationship between continuance commitment and intention to turnover was not established.

Demographic Variables

The research questions indicated that age, organization tenure, and job tenure would be integral to the study. Unlike the leadership practices, organizational commitment, and turnover intention psychometric variables, the demographic variables represent personal characteristics rather than perceptions. The discussion of the demographic variables is brief.

Meta-analysis indicated a positive albeit weak relationship exists between age and the commitment forms (Meyer et al., 2002). Marchiori and Henkin (2004) found a weak positive relationship between age and affective, normative, and continuance commitment among health profession faculty. Tourangeau and Cranley (2004) showed a strong positive relationship between age and turnover intentions in a study that included 8,456 Canadian nurses. Obeng and Ugboro (2005) found age was a determinant of affective commitment. Some studies indicated age is not a strong predictor of commitment or turnover intention. Nasurdin (2005) could not confirm the moderating effect of age on levels of organizational commitment. Age is generally weakly positively correlated with the commitment forms, though the research is inconsistent.

Tenure refers to the number of years someone is affiliated with something (Trimble, 2006). Mathieu and Zajac (1990) identified a moderately positive correlation between organizational tenure and organizational commitment. Meyer et al. (2002) reported a positive relationship between organizational tenure and affective commitment. Trimble supported the relationship between organizational tenure and affective commitment. Van Breukelen, Van der Vlist, and Steensma (2004) found organizational tenure was highly correlated with turnover intentions. Likewise, Tallman and Bruning (2005) reported organizational tenure related to continuance commitment. Stephens, Dawley, and Stephens (2004) reported that job tenure related to affective commitment, given that boards of directors with longer in-role job tenure report higher levels of affective commitment.

Conclusion

Organizational commitment has received substantial research attention since the 1980s (Stephens et al., 2004). The research indicated that higher levels of organizational commitment influence positive work outcomes (Stephens et al.). Meyer and Allen (1997) conceptualized organizational commitment via a three-form model and labeled the commitment components affective, continuance, and normative. Affective commitment connotes an emotional organizational attachment and continuance commitment ascribes a cost to leaving the enterprise (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The components relate to Porter et al.'s (1974) conceptualization and H. S. Becker's (1960) side-bet theory, respectively. Normative commitment represents a commitment form that is obligation based (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Although organizational commitment has historically been conceptualized in various ways (Yousef, 2003), organizational commitment is increasingly constructed as a multiform concept (Abbott et al., 2005).

The body of research indicates the commitment forms relate to a number of workplace outcomes, including intention to quit and turnover (Yousef, 2003). Commitment forms concurrently correlate, as a dependent variable, with certain antecedents. In a meta-analysis, Meyer et al. (2002) correlated relationships between antecedents and consequences of affective, continuance, and normative commitment.

The correlations indicate the commitment forms measure fundamentally different commitment bases. Antecedents relating to the choices involved with voluntary turnover, such as education, alternatives, and transferability of education, were most negatively correlated with continuance commitment. In contrast, factors that relate to creating a positive work climate, such as procedural justice and transformational leadership, most strongly correlated with affective commitment (Meyer et al., 2002). A review of the antecedents and consequences indicates the cause and effect of the forms varies. Organizational commitment is relevant when researchers and practitioners separate the three-component organizational commitment conceptualization into individual commitment forms.

Like organizational commitment, leadership generates considerable scholarly research. Unlike organizational commitment, a unifying leadership paradigm does not exist (Hackman & Wageman, 2007), leadership is relevant (Bennis, 2007), leaders mobilize followers and produce extraordinary results (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b), and leaders have a positive and significant impact on the organizations they serve (Bedell et al., 2006).

The construct of leadership has evolved. The study of leaders and the act of leadership embody various approaches (Northouse, 2004). Kouzes and Posner (2002b) developed a research-and-practice-anchored leadership model that incorporates five practices. Leadership has relevance to the extent that leaders influence others and facilitate positive outcomes. Leadership must be integrative (Avolio, 2007).

Numerous leadership assessment instruments exist in the research. Kouzes and Posner's LPI is an example of a leadership assessment (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b). In addition to several doctoral dissertations, Kouzes and Posner's LPI is central in published research in a variety of environments. The research contexts include female chief executive officers in the community college system (Stout-Stewart, 2005) and sales managers (M. E. Shoemaker, 2003).

Leadership and organizational commitment represent extensively researched constructs. Although the conceptualizations of leadership and organizational commitment embody multiple perspectives, the quantity of research in both knowledge domains spans several decades. Leadership as an independent variable has been correlated with Meyer and Allen's (1997) organizational commitment conceptualization. In their meta-analytic review, Meyer et al. (2002) identified four studies that correlated components of transformational leadership with affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Bass and Riggio (2006) similarly noted that components of transformational leadership increase organizational commitment. Meyer and Allen (1997) reported employee affective commitment appears positively related to supervisors who integrate employees into decision making and show consideration toward those they manage. The relationship between Kouzes and Posner's (2003b) leadership practices is reported in published doctoral dissertations. A. K. John (2006) and Metscher (2005) reported positive correlations between supervisory leadership practice usage and follower-reported levels of organizational commitment.

In spite of the breadth of leadership and organizational commitment research, research relating the effect that high-performance human resources practices have in the call center environment is scarce. Research indicated the first-line manager is a critical front-line employee organizational leverage point (Preiss & Molina-Ray, 2007). Empirical analysis exploring the correlation between employee-perceived managerial leadership practices and employee-reported levels of organizational commitment in the U.S. call center sector is limited. Similarly, research relating agent organizational commitment and turnover intention in the call center sector is scarce. Call centers represent an emerging organizational form (Dorman & Zijlstra, 2003). The dearth of call center research (Grebner et al., 2003) presents researchers with an opportunity to contribute to the knowledge domain.

The lack of call center research is not an indication that call center research is unwarranted. Call centers employ large numbers of people. U.S. call centers employ between 2.9 million ("Call Centers," 2004) and 3.97 million agents (Batt et al., 2005). Integrated leadership and organizational commitment research in the call center domain is crucial. Understanding the relationship between leadership practices and organizational commitment in U.S. call centers may provide insights to researchers and practitioners.

The conceptual rationale that underlies the current research study is compelling. Research indicates leaders influence work climates (Goleman, 2000). Research also suggests an employee's first-level manager is the key cantilever to employee effort (Corporate Leadership Council, 2004). Call center difficulties typically result from the lack of focus on the social component of the sociotechnical system (Dorman & Zijlstram, 2003). Incorporating call center social issues by focusing on inbound call center agent perceptions given the leadership and organizational commitment research base, created a compelling research study.

Summary

Chapter 2 provided a review of the literature relating to leadership, organizational commitment, and specific demographic variables. Chapter 2 also included an examination into the context of the call center environment and the issue of turnover intention. Leadership and organizational commitment have been extensively researched as independent constructs. Various approaches and theories in contemporary leadership endure (Northouse, 2004), and multiple commitment forms exist (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In spite of the multitude of leadership definitions (Kotterman, 2006) and the number of contemporary leadership theories (Khatri, 2005), leadership is in demand (Goffe & Jones, 2006a). Organizational commitment likewise matters because the consequences of commitment affect organizations (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Chapter 2 provided research recounting the increasing effect of call centers (Bishop et al., 2003). The chapter identified the role of technology in call centers (Hilmer et al., 2004) and the primacy of the call center agent's role (Ojha & Kasturi, 2005). Call centers provide organizations with customer service scale (Dorman & Zijlstra, 2003) and represent an area of increasing scholarly focus (Beirne et al., 2004).

Chapter 2 presented a retrospective and historical review of the germinal works and evolving literature in the organizational commitment and leadership domains. Chapters 3 details the study design. The quantitative and correlational design includes five hypotheses that formed from four research questions.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

The purpose of the current quantitative, correlational study was to examine three relationships among inbound call center agents. The relationships included the relationship between agent-perceived supervisory use of Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices and agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment. The second relationship involved agent age, job tenure, and organizational tenure and agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment. The third relationship included the association between agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment and agent turnover intentions. Inbound call centers are technology intensive and human performance is critical to call center performance (Beirne et al., 2004). Inbound call center agents from one U.S. call center servicing organization participated in the research study.

The research employed the LPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b), the three-component commitment model (Meyer et al., 1993), and three questions germane to intention to turnover (Cammann et al., 1983) as an assessment structure and conceptual framework to quantify leadership practices, organizational commitment, and turnover intention constructs. The three scales and specific demographic questions formed an integrated Internet-enabled survey. Correlational and multiple regression analysis techniques were the primary statistical tests employed to test the five hypotheses.

Taking into consideration the research problem, purpose statement, research questions, and hypotheses, chapter 3 describes the study's research method and design. Chapter 3 includes a description of the appropriateness of the research design. The chapter explains the data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter 3 explicates the instrument choices recognizing alternatives. The chapter also delineates informed consent and confidentiality concerns.

Research Method and Design Appropriateness

The research design incorporated a quantitative correlational approach using survey data. Unlike qualitative research, quantitative studies are descriptive and explanatory (Creswell, 2005) Quantitative research is value detached, context independent, and statistically oriented (Neuman, 2006). Quantitative research is appropriate if a study involves measuring variables and assessing the effect of variables on an outcome (Creswell).

The nature of the study's problem statement, purpose statement, and research questions indicated a quantitative design was appropriate. The problem statement's focus was explanatory, which is indicative of quantitative research (Creswell, 2005). The study's purpose statement and the research questions indicated a quantitative approach because the study involved an attempt to identify the relationship among variables. The study's research questions attempted to determine the relationship between variables of interest. In view of the relational orientation, a correlational design was appropriate. Unlike an experimental design that treats sample groups differently, a correlational design handles all study participants in the same manner (Creswell). Correlations, or a measure of the size and direction of a relationship between two variables (Rumrill, 2004), formed the statistical basis of the study.

The study incorporated the following five hypotheses:

H_{01}: When correlating the five LPI scores with affective and normative commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_1: When correlating the five LPI scores with affective and normative commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

H_{02}: When correlating the five LPI scores with continuance commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_2: When correlating the five LPI scores with continuance commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

H_{03}: When correlating the three commitment forms, which include affective, normative, and continuance commitment, with intention to turnover, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_3: When correlating the three commitment forms, which include affective, normative, and continuance commitment, with intention to turnover, there will be a significant correlation.

H_{04}: When correlating demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_4: When correlating demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

H_{05}: A combination of variables will not account for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than can be explained by any individual correlation.

H_5: A combination of variables will account for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than can be explained by any individual correlation.

The research questions and hypotheses did not necessitate variable manipulation. Research focused on investigating relationships does not require variable manipulation and tends to be correlational (Fitzgerald, Rumrill, & Scheneker, 2004). The research questions indicated a correlational design.

Data collection occurred via a survey at a single point in time. Alternative surveying means and data collection methods were available to collect data, including longitudinal survey designs and interviews. The cross-sectional approach leveraged time and validity efficiencies. A cross-sectional survey design was appropriate given the research questions attempted to reveal participants' perspectives and opinions (Creswell, 2005).

Research adds to the knowledge domain by asking and answering questions and by collecting data (Creswell, 2005). Research approaches are constrained. A single research method cannot offer a complete picture of reality (J. Lee, 1992). Given the single method limiting constraint, the study design fit the research problem and question. The study objective involved reporting answers to research questions.

Population

The study population consisted of 2,050 inbound call center agents employed in four separate locations by one call center service outsourcer. Protocols, procedures, and goals were identical in each center location. Table 4 identifies the population by location at the commencement of the study. The target population, or sampling frame, represents members of a population the researcher can include in a study (Creswell, 2005). All inbound 2,050 agents were part of the targeted population and sampling frame.

Table 4

Study Population by Call Center Location at Study Commencement

Location	Number of inbound agents
Florida	530
Florida	630
Oklahoma	400
Texas	490

Although the total U.S. inbound call center agent population is difficult to determine precisely, the population is large. Study generalization benefits might have occurred if the target population included the entire U.S.-based inbound call center agent population. Total call center agent employment in 2004 was between 2.9 million ("Call Centers," 2004) and 3.97 million agents (Batt et al., 2005). Because 86% of U.S. call centers are involved in inbound call center workflow and only 25% are involved in outbound call center work (Adria & Chowdhury, 2002), the U.S.-based inbound call center agent population is noteworthy.

Applying the 86% factor to the lower- and upper-bound call center agent numbers provides a combined inbound and outbound agent population of between 2,494,000 and 3,414,200 agents. Achieving a suitable sample size would be cost and time prohibitive. A sampling ratio of between 0.025 and 1% for a population of this size is required (Neuman, 2006), which indicated the minimum necessary sample size needed ranged from 6,235 to 34,142. Thus, the generalization of the study beyond the study organization is limited.

Sampling

The determination of the minimal required sample size was based on calculations developed by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) and by Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003). Tabachnick and Fidell's required sample size for an individual prediction formula is 104 + the number of independent variables. According to Tabachnick and Fidell, the required sample size formula for multiple regression analysis is 50 + (8 × number of independent variables). Based on the required sample size formulas, the sample size required for Hypotheses 1 through 4 was 115. The required sample size for Hypothesis 5 was 138.

The principal statistical technique used in the study was the Pearson product-moment correlation. Gall et al. (2003) provided in tabular format the minimal sample sizes required for correlational testing for various effect sizes and statistical power. Based on a significance level of $p = .05$, a sample size of $N = 42$ is required for a medium effect size and a statistical power of .50. A sample size of $N = 66$ is required for a medium effect size and a statistical power of .70. For a large effect size and a statistical power of .50 a sample size of $N = 15$ is required. For a large effect size and a statistical power of .70, a sample size of $N = 23$ is required.

Informed Consent

Participation in the study, both organizationally and individually, was voluntary. Appendix J contains a permission to use the premises form signed by an officer from the participating organization. Individual study participants also provided informed consent.

Prior to accessing the survey, participants accessed a Web page that included a welcome message and study information. The Web page delineated the study purpose and the use of respondent data. The page also described the voluntary aspect of participation and the confidentiality maintenance procedures. Appendix K provides an illustration of the page. The survey welcome page contained an electronic link connecting the survey participants to an informed consent page. The informed consent page included two radio buttons where respondents could choose to give, or not give, consent. Appendix L provides a representation of the informed consent page. Participants who provided consent by selecting the first of two radio buttons gained access to the survey. Respondents who did not give consent, and clicked on the second of two radio buttons, did not gain access to the survey.

Confidentiality

Maintenance of participant confidentiality and candor is fundamental to the study design. Survey confidentiality is critical to minimize the tendency of study participants to provide less than candid answers to sensitive survey questions (Rasinski, Willis, Baldwin, Yeh, & Lee, 1999). With respect to Internet-enabled survey confidentiality, researchers must be cognizant of the explicit confidentiality of answers and anxiety concerning the location of the electronic data (Kingston, 2000). The data collection process involved an attempt to assuage the concerns.

The data collection process, including messaging to the participants and the coding technology, intended to minimize Internet-based confidentiality concerns. The comments in presurvey communiqués and in the survey welcome page indicated individual participant responses would be confidential and thus not viewable by the participants' employer. Participant communication indicated that individual responses were only available to the researcher or the researcher's statistician. Demographic information requested as part of the study was not marked or coded on an individual basis. Appendix M provides a Microsoft Word document example of the 55-item survey. WorldApp, an Internet-based data collection organization that specializes in Internet-based survey administration, hosted the survey and initially stored survey responses.

A WorldAPP server recorded and coded all survey responses. At the completion of the survey period, the researcher electronically received all survey data from WorldApp as a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel file. Two distinct CD-ROMs contain the data. The CD-ROMs will remain locked in a secure fireproof SentrySafe located in the home office of the researcher for 3 years. In 3 years, the systematic shredding of the two CD-ROMs, both of which are marked "Mark Nicholson Dissertation Research," will occur. No other electronic files of the data exist.

Geographic Location

Study participants resided and worked in the United States. The participants worked for the same organization in one of four distinct call centers located in Florida, Oklahoma, and Texas. Two of the four call centers are located in Florida.

Data Collection

Survey-based data collection included the compilation of both demographic information and Likert-based quantitative data. The research questions and hypotheses were individual perception based. The integrated survey included informed consent and specific survey questions. The survey was Internet-based and thus accessible to participants via a URL.

Respondent survey input and data extraction transpired with the assistance of WorldApp. The survey input process was Internet based. Merits for a paper-and-pencil survey process exist (Perkins, 2004), although the advantages that Web-based surveys provide offset the inherent weaknesses. The strengths offered by Web-based surveys include the constant survey availability and the decreased time required (Perkins, 2004). The benefits provided by a Web-based survey provided a compelling reason to use electronic surveying means.

The study participants had access to both a computer and the Internet at work. Participants use computer technology in their jobs. The combination of participant computer literacy and Internet fluency mitigated the strengths of nonelectronic methods. Thompson, Surface, Martin, and Sanders (2003) noted despite anonymity unease, online survey methods do not inhibit participation rates. In view of the relative speed, modest costs, and flexible design of Web surveys (Neuman, 2006), the study incorporated a Web-based data survey and collection methodology.

The coding process ensured that a review of all surveys occurred. The process made certain survey responses followed logically given the inclusion of reverse-keyed items. If a survey response appeared nonsensical, a qualitative judgment determined the face validity and the need to disqualify the survey response.

A corporate human resources representative in the participating organization received a communiqué series for redistribution to the study participants. Appendix N contains a notional copy of the welcome communiqué. The communiqué series included a (a) start-up, (b) Week 2 reminder, (c) Week 3 reminder, and (d) end-of-survey thank-you messages. Appendixes O, P, Q, and R provide notional examples of the researcher-provided communiqués.

To promote participation in the study, participation contests ensued. Communiqués announced the raffling of a $100 American Express gift certificate at each call center location that garnered a minimum of 25% participation. Additionally, a communiqué indicated the awarding, via raffle, of a $150 American Express gift certificate at the call center that generated the highest participation rate. Eligibility to win the American Express gift certificates was not restricted to agents who participated in the study.

Data Analysis

In quantitative research, data analysis begins with data preparation and organization (Creswell, 2005). The data analysis step includes data scoring and coding. Microsoft Excel served as the codebook and SPSS 16.0 provided descriptive and inferential statistical analysis applications support. Table 5 overviews the initial coding and scoring schema.

Data analysis included data conversion and the calculation of means. Transposing the hire date from a calendar date to a service longevity figure for each survey participant was an initial step. Additionally, calculations at an individual and overall sample level of mean scores for all Likert-scaled item data were reported. Descriptive statistical analysis including maximums, minimums, means, and standard deviations were calculated and reported for all study variables.

Table 5

Initial Coding and Scoring Schema for Each Survey Response

Research variable	Survey Questions (Section – Question)	Data scale	Initial data calculation
Age	S1 – Q2	Ratio	None – as is
Length of employment	S1 – Q3	Ratio	Convert hire date to employment length
Tenure in role as inbound agent	S1 – Q4	Ratio	None – as is
Leadership practice - Model the way	S2 – Q1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26	Interval	Mean of answers
Leadership practice – Inspire a shared vision	S2 – Q2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27	Interval	Mean of answers
Leadership practice – Challenge the process	S2 – Q3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28	Interval	Mean of answers
Leadership practice – Enable others to act	S2 – Q4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29	Interval	Mean of answers
Leadership practice – Encourage the heart	S2 – Q5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30	Interval	Mean of answers
Affective commitment	S3 – Q1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Interval	Mean of answers after adjusting for reverse keying

Table 5 *(continued)*

Research variable	Questions (Section – Question)	Data scale	Initial data calculation
Continuance commitment	S3 – Q7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	Interval	Mean of answers
Normative commitment	S3 – Q13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18	Interval	Mean of answers after adjusting for reverse keying
Intention to turnover	S4 – Q1, 2, 3	Interval	Mean of answers

The focus of the research questions and hypotheses was the correlation between variables of interest. Hypotheses 1 through 4 were tested to determine the degree of significance of the correlations. Given that Hypotheses 1 through 4 compared two variables, inferential statistical methods applied (Creswell, 2005).

Hypotheses 1 through 5 included variables of interest. Hypothesis 1 correlated each of the five LPI factors with affective and normative commitment. Hypothesis 2 correlated each LPI factor with continuance commitment. In Hypothesis 3, affective, normative, and continuance commitment were correlated with intention to turnover. Hypothesis 4 correlated age, organizational tenure, and job tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment.

The testing schema for Hypotheses 1 through 4 included the calculation of correlation coefficients. Hypothesis 5 involved multiple regression techniques. The .05 significance level ($p < .05$) served as the null hypothesis rejection level for all hypothesis testing. Because Hypotheses 1 through 4 related to the existence or nonexistence of significant bivariate correlations and because the data source was interval or ratio, the

Pearson product-moment coefficient was reported to determine the measure of correlation. Hypothesis 5 included backward deletion and forward selection regression techniques.

Instruments

Three research-based scales, the LPI, the TCM of organizational commitment, and Cammann et al.'s (1983) intention to turnover scale, formed the Likert-based sections of the Internet-based survey. The scales provided quantitative data that helped answer the research questions posed. Each scale has a documented history of use in scholarly research. This section provides amplifying justification for the choice of each instrument.

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

The most appropriate instrument to measure call center agents' perceived first-level managerial leadership behaviors was the LPI. The LPI is a 30-statement, 10-point Likert-type scale instrument. The instrument assesses leadership acumen in five key leadership practices (Posner, 2002). Six behavioral anchored statements collectively measure the frequency of a leader's use of each of the five leadership practices (Posner). The Likert-type rating scale ranges from 1, or *almost never*, to 10, or *almost always* (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b). Each of the five leadership practices is assessed a value that ranges from 6 to 60 (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a). The LPI includes an LPI-Self and an LPI-Observer rating form (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a). The LPI-Observer data were the only data germane to the current study.

The LPI, in its construction, used triangulation techniques that resulted from quantitative and qualitative research studies and methods (Posner, 2002). Step 1 of the multistep instrument development process consisted of asking a series of open-ended questions relating to personal best leadership experience incidents (Posner; Posner & Kouzes, 1988). Over 4,000 long-form and over 7,500 short-form best practices surveys were analyzed (Posner). Following Step 1, the researchers facilitated in-depth interviews (Posner & Kouzes). Content analysis followed. The researchers concluded that 80% of managerial leadership practices that lead to extraordinary accomplishments derive from the factors that evolved into the LPI (Posner & Kouzes).

From the qualitative genesis, researchers developed actual LPI statements that reflected the key practices of excellent leaders (Posner, 2002). The LPI was initially beta-tested with master of business administration degree students (Posner & Kouzes, 1988). Pilot testing of the LPI scales followed with over 2,100 managers involved (Posner & Kouzes). Since its inception in the late 1980s, the Likert-scaled, behaviorally based instrument has been modified based on continuing analysis and enhancement (Posner). The LPI database contains over 100,000 respondents (Posner). More than 350,000 managers and nonmanagers have completed an LPI (Posner). The LPI empirically measures five leadership practices that amalgamate from multiple behaviors (Posner).

The use of the LPI provided many benefits. The benefits included the LPI's extensive research-base and incorporation of quantitative and qualitative methods in the instrument's construction. The demonstrated validity and reliability of the LPI provided a benefit. The benefits also consisted of the behavioral orientation of the leadership practices. The LPI questions are clear and understandable, which is particularly important given the population studied.

LPI instrument construction included the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods. The integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches, a characteristic of a triangulation approach, incorporates the advantages while offsetting the weaknesses of both methods (Creswell, 2005). The depth and breadth of the personal best surveys and the in-depth interviews involved in the initial instrument construction (Posner, 2002) provide additional instrument design benefits.

The LPI is leadership practical as the instrument measures leadership behaviors. Kouzes and Posner (2002b) noted exemplary leaders more typically exhibit the five practices of exemplary leadership. The practices, through behavioral-anchored statements, are measurable (Posner, 2002). Unlike personas, values, or dispositions, behaviors are surface level (Zigarmi, Blanchard, O'Conner, & Edeburn, 2000). Behaviors are the precursor to achieving results (Briscoe & Hall, 1999; T. Payne, 1993). The LPI, in its current format, measures 30 observable behaviors that correspond to five leadership practices. Appendix S relates each of the behaviors, and the instrument question number, to the five leadership practices.

Two other instruments, the MLQ and the Managerial Style Questionnaire (MSQ), were considered. The most recent version of the MLQ, version 5X, contains 45 questions (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The instrument measures characteristics across dimensions of transformational and transactional leadership (Bass & Riggio). MLQ use is common in research. The MLQ has disadvantages, including reliability and validity concerns (Khatri, 2005). A second issue involves concerns regarding the perception that the instrument measures a trait versus behavioral orientation to transformational leadership (Northouse, 2004). A third drawback includes the MLQ's more limited use in assessing leadership because only 15,000 respondents have completed the MLQ (Bass & Riggio).

The MSQ, commercially available from The Hay Group, was another instrument considered. The MSQ measures the degree to which an individual exploits six management styles (Hay Resources Direct, 2003). Development of the MSQ followed from the germinal work of Litwin and Stringer (Hay Resources Direct, 2003). Litwin and Stringer (1968) depicted a relationship between management styles and organizational climate (Hay Resources Direct). The MSQ has been refined in the intervening years (Hay Resources Direct). Reliability concerns exist for the authoritative leadership style at high levels of statistical significance (Hay Resources Direct). The MSQ reliability issue, in combination with the scaling methodology required to create composite style scores (Hay Resources Direct), disqualified the use of the MSQ. The behavioral aspect, Likert-based survey approach, and large LPI respondent database created a compelling research-based case for choosing the LPI. Appendix T provides permission to use the LPI.

Three-Component Model (TCM) Employee Commitment Survey

The TCM Employee Commitment Survey measures three forms of employee commitment to an organization consisting of (a) affective, (b) normative, and (c) continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997, 2004). The TCM represents a substantial evolution in commitment conceptualization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The instrument incorporates Meyer and Allen's (1984) research suggesting instruments that purport to measure side-bet theory-based commitment may not be measuring continuance commitment as H. S. Becker conceived it. Meyer and Allen (1991) concluded organizational commitment includes three distinct components that develop independently and lead to different consequences.

Actualizing the three-component commitment reconceptualization, N. J. Allen and Meyer (1990) developed the initial TCM items and scales by surveying 500 nonunionized employees at two manufacturing plants and one university. Survey testing initially included 51 items, including 15 items from Mowday's OCQ (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990). In the development of the final 24-item, 7-point Likert-type scale, the researchers considered many factors including item endorsement ratios and item correlations (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990). The researchers also considered keying direction and content redundancy (N. J. Allen & Meyer). The initial TCM survey included 24 items incorporating affective, normative, and continuance commitment (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990). Subsequent to the initial instrument design, item reduction reduced the number of items from 24 to 18. The normative commitment form was the most significantly impacted scale as it was completely redeveloped (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Of the 18 questions, 4 are reverse keyed. Meyer and Allen created the limited number of reverse-keyed items as a structure to ensure thoughtful statement consideration by participants (Meyer & Allen, 2004). In the forward-key scale, 1 corresponds to *strongly disagree* and 7 to *strongly agree* (Meyer & Allen, 2004).

The OCQ was an alternative commitment instrument considered. The OCQ is a 15-item, 7-point Likert questionnaire designed to assess organizational commitment (Porter et al., 1974). The instrument is single-form based and assesses attitudinal, or affective, commitment (Swailes, 2002). Given the OCQ form-based limitation, the TCM Employee Commitment Survey became the preferred instrument choice. The TCM Employee Commitment Survey measures a more holistic perspective of commitment because the Meyer and Allen instrument measures organizational commitment through distinct commitment forms (Meyer & Allen, 2004). Another TCM survey advantage involves survey economy. The TCM Employee Commitment Survey measures affective commitment with 6 items; the OCQ, by comparison, contains 15 items. Taking into consideration the total survey length of the amalgamated scales in the current study, the difference in commitment survey length was critical. Appendix U contains approval to use the TCM Employee Commitment Survey in the current research study.

Intention to Turnover Scale

Three questions assessed turnover intention. The questions, adapted from the MOAQ, used a 7-point Likert-type scale. Section IV of Appendix M contains the three intention-to-leave items.

The research incorporated the MOAQ scale for four reasons. The first reason was the demonstrated validity of the scales. The second reason related to the frequency of the instrument's use in other studies. Third, the brevity of the instrument provided a benefit. Finally, the Likert-type scale orientation also provided a suitable design match. Appendix V provides permission to use the MOAQ in the current study.

Instrument Reliability and Validity

High degrees of instrument reliability indicate an instrument's score is stable and consistent (Creswell, 2005). High degrees of instrument reliability suggest the occurrence of similar results under rater situations that are comparable, related, or nearly identical (Neuman, 2006). Reliability measures the degree a test produces identical results given similar test conditions (Obayashi, Bianchi, & Song, 2003).

High degrees of instrument validity are essential characteristics of a useful instrument. Validity infers an instrument's results are meaningful, thus permitting the researcher to draw conclusions to populations based on the sample (Creswell, 2005). Validity is typically more challenging to attain than reliability (Neuman, 2006). A valid instrument measures what it purports to measure (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

One measure of instrument reliability, the Cronbach alpha, relates the degree to which an instrument measures the same construct (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Posner (2002) reported Cronbach alphas above .60 represent satisfactory reliability levels. Table 6 reports the reliability of the LPI–Observer instrument using the Cronbach alpha.

Table 6

Reliability (Cronbach Alpha) Coefficients for the LPI-Observer

Leadership practice	Cronbach alpha
Model the way	.88
Inspire a shared vision	.92
Challenge the process	.89
Enable others to act	.88
Encourage the heart	.92

Note. From *The Leadership Practices Inventory: Theory and Evidence Behind the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership* (p. 6), by B. Posner. Copyright 2002 by B. Posner. Adapted with permission (see Appendix W).

Test–retest reliabilities for all five of the leadership practices are consistent, typically above .90 (Posner, 2002). From 1987 to 2002, Posner reported substantial consistency exists in the five leadership practices scores, based on comparing participants of a workshop that included an embedded LPI component. In a metacomparison of studies involving various samples of varying demographic characteristics, Posner concluded LPI scores were unrelated to (a) age, (b) marital status, (c) education level, (d) years of experience, (e) organization size, or (f) functional area.

Analysis of the LPI indicates the instrument measures what it purports to measure (Posner, 2002). The LPI passes the face validity test. The combination of incorporating quantitative and qualitative methods in the instrument's construction and the inclusion of over 4,000 long-form leadership best practices surveys in the instrument's development (Posner) support the validity claim. Factor analysis empirically confirmed the LPI contains five factors or leadership practice subscales (Posner). In a metareview, Posner contended the LPI demonstrated excellent concurrent validity. The LPI scores and positive aspects of management acumen and organizational effectiveness are consistently related (Posner). Another metastudy review reported the LPI's proficiency to differentiate management performance, highlighting the discriminate validity of the LPI (Posner).

The TCM of organizational commitment meets reliability and validity concerns. Meyer and Allen (1997) invoked factor analysis findings and tests of the nomological net in establishing validity. The TCM factor structure has been examined in multiple studies (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Several confirmatory studies indicate the three commitment forms are discernable constructs and are distinguishable from related constructs including job satisfaction and career commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Affective, normative, and continuance commitment are also distinguishable from occupational commitment and work values (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Reliability estimates for the TCM Employee Commitment Survey are well established. Using alpha coefficients from multiple studies, median scale reliabilities for the affective, continuance, and normative scales are .85, .79, and .73, respectively (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The coefficients compare to the alpha coefficients computed by N. J. Allen and Meyer (1990) during scale construction of .87, .75, and .79 for the affective, continuance, and normative commitment scales. In a metastudy review, N. J. Allen and Meyer (1996) reported alpha coefficients that ranged from .74 to .90, from .69 to .85, and from .52 to .83 for affective, continuance, and normative commitment, respectively. Test–rest reliabilities have varied in longitudinal studies, though reliability measures exceeded .60 when survey participants had a least 1 month of job tenure (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Cammann et al. (1983) reported an internal consistency reliability of .83 for the intention to turnover scales. Two additional turnover intention scales, a four-item scale adapted by Moore (2000) and a three-item scale used by Griffith and Lusch (2007), provided alternatives. The ubiquity and simplicity of the MOAQ scales presented a compelling rationale for its use.

Validity: Internal and External

Validity indicates that conclusions drawn and propositions claimed are truthful (Zarit, Stephens, & Femia, 2003). Internal and external validity, as terms, are distinguishable (Curran & Wirth, 2004). This section identifies the degree of mitigation for internal validity threats. The section also addresses external validity limitations.

Internal Validity

The concept of internal validity represents the extent that error variance is minimized (Parker, 1993). Internal validity depicts the degree the study's results provide an accurate representation of reality rather than a reality induced by superfluous variables (Behi & Nolan, 1996). Using Parker's (1993) internal validity threats as a basis, Table 7 indicates the extent each threat was assuaged. The threat analysis indicates the study results were not excessively biased by the risks identified in Table 7.

Table 7

Internal Validity Threats and Assuagement

Threat	Assuagement given research design
History	The study, completed through a cross-sectional survey, occurred at a single point in time. Study participants provided their perspective one time. Thus, the threat did not apply.
Maturation	The study, completed through a cross-sectional survey, occurred at a single point in time. Study participants provided their perspective one time. Thus, the threat did not apply.
Testing	The study did not incorporate pre- or posttesting. Thus, the threat did not apply.
Instrumentation	Survey instructions were clear and concise. The components of the survey, including the (a) Leadership Practices Inventory, (b) TCM Employee Commitment Survey, and (c) Intention to Turnover Scales have been used in past research. Thus, the threat was minimal.

Table 7 *(continued)*

Threat	Assuagement given research design
Statistical regression	Study participants were not selected based on prestudy or pretest scores. Thus, the threat did not apply.
Selection	Participant involvement was voluntary based on participant's assignment to a work group. Thus, the threat was minimal.
Mortality	The study, completed through a cross-sectional survey, occurred at a single point in time. Study participants provided their perspective one time. Thus, the threat did not apply.
Interactions with selection	Participant involvement was voluntary based on a participant's assignment to a work group. Every potential participant received the same presurvey communiqués and had equal access at work to the Internet. Thus, the threat was minimal.
Causal influence ambiguity	A substantial body of prior research indicates the five research hypotheses were well founded in other environments. Thus, the threat did not apply.

External Validity

External validity indicates the extent the research findings can be generalized (Creswell, 2005; Parker, 1993). External validity suggests the suitability of formulating inferences from specific research (Creswell, 2005) and the ability to generalize findings to a larger population (Lucas, 2003). Table 8 identifies the implication of three validity threats to the study.

Table 8

External Validity Limiters

External validity threat	Implication for study
Interaction of selection	Participation in the study was voluntary and the use of technology as the survey interface indicated an equality of participation opportunity. Thus, the validity threat was minimal.
Interaction of setting	Participation occurred in the United States, within one organization with four call center locations in three states. As such, the results might not be generalizable to other call center organizations. Thus, future replication of the study is desirable.
History interaction	Although workflow in the call center is cyclical, workforce management plans compensate for seasonal demand changes. Thus, from a study participant's perspective, work conditions were consistent. While the threat to validity was minimal, the generalization and extrapolation of study results might be limited if call center agents perceive a change in the working conditions.

Controlling for internal validity threats often leads to reduced generalizations for research findings (Ferguson, 2004). Calder, Phillips, and Tybout (1983) noted researchers of distinct theory tests should not establish external validity as a goal. Since establishing internal validity is more crucial than establishing external validity (Parker, 1993), attaining a high degree of internal validity was the primary research design goal. The current research study advanced the leadership practice and organizational commitment knowledge domain in the U.S. call center environment by contextualizing the research in one U.S. call center.

Summary

The purpose of the quantitative, correlational study was to examine the extent of the relationships between specific variable pair combinations. Established instrumentation was focal to the research. The LPI is central to doctoral research, appearing in over 150 doctoral dissertations (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b). Research using Meyer and Allen's three-component commitment model is extensive (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer et al., 2002). Research relating employee-perceived managerial leadership practices, call center agents' organizational commitment, and agent turnover intentions is emergent. Given the limited research directed at call center management practices (Batt et al., 2005), the current research study provides substantive scholastic value.

Chapter 3 presented the study design and research methods. Because the research purpose related to understanding relationships among variables, a quantitative design was appropriate (Creswell, 2005). Established and validated survey instruments were central to the survey research and study design. Survey research involves economically gathering information from many people (Neuman, 2006). The study design made use of the efficiency of the Internet. The design included statistical methods used to accept or reject five null and alternative hypotheses.

Following the design overview, chapter 4 provides the study results. The purpose of chapter 4 is to present the survey results based on the statistical analysis and to accept or reject the five null and alternative hypotheses presented. Chapter 4 includes an initial discussion of the data results with a more detailed discussion and analysis of the research in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Chapter 3 provided a description of the research design, instrumentation, data collection protocol, and data analysis methodology. The purpose of the current quantitative, correlational study was to examine the relationship between agent-perceived supervisory leadership practices and agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment. The purpose also involved examining the relationship between agent age, organizational tenure, and job tenure and agent organizational commitment. Finally, the research study involved an investigation into the relationship between agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment and agent intent to turnover. Chapter 4 presents the results following the methodology outlined in chapter 3.

Participation

In total, 2,050 inbound call center agents from one U.S.-based call center outsourcing organization were invited to participate in the study. One hundred seventy-eight agents voluntarily participated in the study, resulting in a response rate of 8.7%. The agents participated in the study by accessing a welcome page Web site that linked the participants to an informed consent page and then to the 55-item survey. All 178 responses were usable. The study analysis included both correlations and a multiple regression with 11 independent variables. Given Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007) calculations, the minimum number of usable responses required for the correlational research was 138.

Descriptive Statistics Overview

Study participants provided demographic data. Demographic data collected included agent (a) age, (b) job tenure as an inbound call center agent, and (c) organizational tenure. Table 9 presents the descriptive statistics.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Selected Variables (N = 178)

Variable	*M*	*Mdn*	*SD*	Low	High
Age	27.56	25.00	9.15	18.00	66.00
Organizational tenure	1.21	0.75	1.57	0.04	10.67
Job tenure	1.06	0.75	1.44	0.04	10.00

Note. All units are in years.

Study Variable Psychometric Characteristics

The correlational study included nine variables derived from scale scores. The variables included the five Kouzes and Posner leadership practices, the three commitment forms from Meyer and Allen's TCM, and intention to turnover derived from the MOAQ. Table 10 lists the nine variables sourced to scale scored.

The nine psychometric variables derived from 51 survey items were included in an electronic survey. Mean scores were calculated for the five LPI practices, three organizational commitment forms, and intention to turnover. The LPI consists of 30-items using a response scale ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 10 (*almost always*). Each of the five leadership practice scores followed from measuring, and then averaging, 6 discrete items. The 18-item TCM Employee Commitment Survey incorporates three 6-item sections that correspond to the affective, normative, and continuance commitment forms. The items are scaled from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), and 4 of the 18 items are reverse keyed. Each commitment form score manifested by measuring and averaging the respondents' responses and reverse keying the 4 reverse-key items. The intention to turnover score resulted from averaging the 3-item Likert-type scale responses. Two of the items used a response scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The 3rd item used a response scale from 1 (*not at all likely*) to 7 (*extremely likely*).

Table 10

Psychometric Characteristics for Summated Scale Scores (N = 178)

Scale	Number of items	*M*	*SD*	Low	High	Cronbach's alpha
LPI[a]						
Model the way	6	7.44	2.04	1.00	10.00	.89
Inspire a shared vision	6	6.99	2.32	1.00	10.00	.92
Challenge the process	6	6.86	2.33	1.00	10.00	.91
Enable others to act	6	7.72	2.08	1.33	10.00	.89
Encourage the heart	6	7.49	2.37	1.17	10.00	.94
TCM[b]						
Affective commitment	6	4.22	1.53	1.00	7.00	.83
Continuance commitment	6	4.30	1.43	1.00	7.00	.77
Normative commitment	6	4.15	1.74	1.00	7.00	.90
Intent to turnover[b]	3	4.02	2.13	1.00	7.00	.93

[a] 10-point Likert-type scale. [b] 7-point Likert-type scale.

Table 10 displays the psychometric characteristics for the nine summated scale scores and provides statistical data for each scaled score including Cronbach alphas. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients ranged from .77 to .94, with a median coefficient of .89. All Cronbach coefficient alphas exceeded .7, which is the generally accepted standard of desirable internal consistency reliability (B. C. Martin et al., 2000; Obayashi et al., 2003), indicating that all scales had at least adequate levels of internal reliability.

Hypotheses Testing

Five hypotheses were tested employing quantitative techniques. Hypothesis testing incorporated Pearson product-moment correlation techniques for testing Hypothesis 1 through Hypothesis 4 and multiple regression techniques for testing Hypothesis 5. Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4 incorporated multiple bivariate correlations. Hypothesis 5 incorporated backward deletion and forward selection regression techniques. The significance level established for null hypothesis rejection was $p < .05$.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 predicted that affective and normative commitment had a significant correlation with the five LPI scores.

H_{01}: When correlating the five LPI scores with affective and normative commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_1: When correlating the five LPI scores with affective and normative commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

Table 11 displays the significance level and the Pearson product-moment correlations associated with all 10 correlations. Table 11 reveals that all 10 correlations were statistically significant and in the positive direction. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Table 11

Intercorrelations for Selected Variables (N = 178)

Variable	Commitment scores: Affective		Normative		Continuance		Intent to turnover	
Model the way	.21	***	.24	***	.13		-.21	***
Inspire a shared vision	.25	****	.26	****	.18	*	-.29	****
Challenge the process	.25	****	.24	***	.20	**	-.27	****
Enable others to act	.23	***	.23	***	.18	*	-.25	****
Encourage the heart	.29	****	.29	****	.19	**	-.28	****
Intent to turnover	-.69	****	-.72	****	-.16	*	1.00	
Age	.24	****	.25	****	.04		-.30	****
Job tenure	-.05		-.04		-.06		.00	
Organizational tenure	-.05		-.05		-.06		-.02	

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .005$. ****$p < .001$.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 predicted that continuance commitment had a significant correlation with the five LPI scores.

H_{02}: When correlating the five LPI scores with continuance commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_2: When correlating the five LPI scores with continuance commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

Table 11 revealed the significance level and the Pearson product-moment correlations associated with all five correlations. The table shows a significant relationship and positive correlation were present for four of the five relevant correlations. H_{02} stated there would not be a significant correlation. Because there was significance in four of the five correlations, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 predicted that affective, normative, and continuance commitment had a significant correlation with intention to turnover.

H_{03}: When correlating the three commitment forms, which include affective, normative, and continuance commitment, with intention to turnover, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_3: When correlating the three commitment forms, which include affective, normative, and continuance commitment, with intention to turnover, there will be a significant correlation.

Table 11 displays the significance level and the Pearson product-moment correlations associated with all three correlations. Table 11 reveals that all three correlations were statistically significant and in the negative direction. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 predicted that demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure had a significant correlation with affective, normative, and continuance commitment.

H_{04}: When correlating demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment, there will not be any significant correlation.

H_4: When correlating demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment, there will be a significant correlation.

Table 11 reports the significance level and the Pearson product-moment correlations associated with all nine correlations. The table shows there was a significant correlation in the positive direction for two of the nine relevant correlations. H_{04} stated there would not be any significant correlation. Because there was significance in two of the nine correlations, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 predicted that a combination of variables would account for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than could be explained by any individual correlation.

H_{05}: A combination of variables will not account for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than can be explained by any individual correlation.

H_5: A combination of variables will account for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than can be explained by any individual correlation.

Table 11 indicated normative commitment had the highest significant individual correlation with intent to turnover ($r = -.72$, $r^2 = .51$). The findings indicate that normative commitment accounted for 51% of the variance with intention to turnover.

To address Hypothesis 5 initially, a backward deletion regression model was developed. Additional analysis followed using forward selection regression as a regression technique. The final backward deletion and forward selection regression models included four significant predictor variables.

The backward deletion regression model was statistically significant. Table 12 reports the significance of the model showing the calculated *F* statistic and displays the *p* values of the individual predictor variables based on *t*-test statistic calculations. By definition, the four-variable model accounted for 58% of the variance in an agent's intent to turnover. Table 12 shows the final four variable predictive model. Intention to turnover was negatively correlated with (a) inspire a shared vision, (b) affective commitment, (c) normative commitment, and (d) age. The regression model based on the backward deletion regression using the unstandardized coefficients is

Intention to turnover = -.1(inspire a shared vision) + -.42(affective commitment)
+ -.52(normative commitment) + -.03(age) + 9.48.

Forward selection regression testing confirmed the significance of the final four variable regression model. The calculation of the *t*-test statistic substantiated the significance of the predictor variables. Table 13 summarizes the forward selection regression findings.

Table 12

Prediction of Intention to Turnover Based on Selected Variables: Backward Deletion Regression Final Model (N = 178)

Variable	*B*	*SE*	β	
Intercept	9.48	0.49		****
LPI inspire a shared vision	-0.10	0.05	-.11	*
Affective commitment	-0.42	0.11	-.30	****
Normative commitment	-0.52	0.10	-.43	****
Age	-0.03	0.01	-.13	*

Note. Final model: F (4, 173) = 59.84, $p < .001$. $R^2 = .58$.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .005$. ****$p < .001$.

The forward regression testing began with normative commitment included in the model. The R^2 value in the first step was .514, $F(1, 176) = 185.95$, $p < .001$. The addition of affective commitment in the second step produced a R^2 change of .043 and a significant model, $F(2, 175) = 109.87$, $p < .001$. When age was added to affective commitment and normative commitment in the third step, the addition resulted in a R^2 change of .012. The Step 3 model was significant, $F(3, 174) = 76.46$, $p < .001$. The fourth step produced a R^2 change of .012 and a significant model. The final four-variable model accounted for 58% of the variance in intention to turnover.

Forward selection regression testing confirmed the backward deletion regression analysis. In the forward selection regression testing, each variable in the final four-variable predictive model contributed to the statistical significance in the model's R^2 value. The statistically significant four-variable model accounted for 58% of the variance with turnover intention compared to 51% of the variance in turnover intention accounted for by normative commitment. The combination of findings resulted in the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis.

Table 13

Summary of Forward Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Intention to Turnover (N = 178)

Variable	*B*	*SE*	β	
Step 1				
Normative commitment	-0.88	0.06	-.72	****
Step 2				
Normative commitment	-0.57	0.10	-.46	****
Affective commitment	-0.46	0.11	-.33	****
Step 3				
Normative commitment	-0.55	0.10	-.45	****
Affective commitment	-0.44	0.11	-.31	****
Age	-0.03	0.01	-.11	*
Step 4				
Normative commitment	-0.52	0.10	-.43	****
Affective commitment	-0.42	0.11	-.30	****
Age	-0.03	0.01	-.13	*
LPI inspire a shared vision	-0.10	0.05	-.11	*

Note. Final model: F (4, 173) = 59.84, $p < .001$. $R^2 = .58$.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .005$. ****$p < .001$.

There was an absolute difference in the variance accounted for by the four-variable regression model and the variance accounted for by normative commitment. The difference in the respective coefficients of determinations, 58% versus 51%, was based on a visual inspection. Although the R^2 value of the four predictive variable regression model is qualitatively larger than the r^2 value of normative commitment, this difference was not statistically evaluated.

Summary

Chapter 4 presented the data and results based on the design described in chapter 3. The chapter also reported acceptance or rejection for the five null and alternative hypotheses. Table 14 provides a summary of the findings for each of the five hypotheses.

Table 14

Summary of Hypotheses Testing: Alternative Hypotheses Acceptance

Alternative hypothesis	Results	Acceptance
1. When correlating the five LPI scores with affective and normative commitment, there will be a significant correlation.	10 of 10 correlations are significant	Yes
2. When correlating the five LPI scores with continuance commitment, there will be a significant correlation.	4 of 5 correlations are significant	Yes
3. When correlating the three commitment forms, which include affective, normative, and continuance commitment, with intention to turnover, there will be a significant correlation.	3 of 3 correlations are significant	Yes

Table 14 (*continued*)

Alternative Hypothesis	Results	Acceptance
4. When correlating demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment, there will be a significant correlation.	2 of 9 correlations are significant	Yes
5. A combination of variables will account for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than can be explained by any individual correlation.	Multiple regression analysis supports	Yes

Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the research in more detail. Chapter 5 also includes a discussion of the results in the context of other research and provides research implications. The chapter addresses study limitations. Chapter 5 concludes by offering recommendations and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The current research study provided quantitative data within one U.S.-based call center organization that related inbound call center agents' perceived supervisory leadership practices and specific agents' demographic information with agents' organizational commitment. The study subsequently involved relating agent organizational commitment with turnover intentions. One hundred seventy-eight agents voluntarily participated in the study. The participants answered 55 survey items via an online survey hosted by a data collection outsource provider. Chapter 4 presented the results, which revealed the support for alternative Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Chapter 5 provides an interpretation of the results. The chapter includes an exploration into the implications of the findings and study limitations. Chapter 5 also describes the fit with related research and provides specific recommendations.

Summary of Study

The study derived from a research problem and a purpose statement. Call center turnover rates can approach 80% annually (Hilmer et al., 2004), and the cost can approach $50,000 per employee (Sheff, 2007). Research indicates a positive relationship exists between turnover intentions and turnover (Podskoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Given turnover frequency and the costs ascribed, turnover can manifest as a major call center issue.

Study Purpose

The purpose of the correlational study was to explore various relationships. One relationship was between an agent's perception of his or her supervisor's use of five leadership practices and affective, normative, and continuance commitment. A second relationship consisted of the relationship between specific demographic variables, including age, job tenure, and organizational tenure, and the three commitment forms. The third relationship involved the relationship between each of the commitment forms and the agent's intention to turnover. Turnover presents a major call center management challenge (Beirne et al., 2004). A meta-analytic review indicated that organizational commitment is inversely associated with turnover (Meyer et al., 2002). Explicating the correlations related to organizational commitment and turnover intentions is relevant to the contemporary call center management and leadership discourse.

Study Participation, Data Collection, and Research Questions

The study targeted the perceptions of inbound call center agents. Agents worked in one of four geographic locations. Two centers were located in Florida and two centers were located in Oklahoma and Texas. A call center inbound agent population of 2,050 and 178 usable responses resulted in a response rate of 8.7%. Given Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007) calculations for minimally acceptable responses for correlational studies with 11 independent variables, the response of 178 exceeded the minimum threshold of 138.

Participants provided their perceptual responses to the 30 LPI items, 18 TCM Employee Commitment Survey items, 3 intention to turnover items, and 4 demographic items by accessing a Web site. The Web site contained instructions and a link to the survey hosted on Web servers provided by WorldApp. Data collection commenced on May 5, 2008, and concluded May 23, 2008. Internet accessible personal computers were available for agents' use in the workplace. Study participants accessed the survey during break times. Agents received informed consent information in the survey introduction. Participants read about the voluntary nature of participation in the instructions.

The research questions were as follows:

1. What is the relationship between agent-perceived first-level manager leadership practices and agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment to the organization?

2. What is the relationship between agent affective, normative, and continuance commitment to the organization and the agent's intent to turnover?

3. What is the relationship between agent age, organizational tenure, and job tenure and the affective, normative and continuance commitment?

4. How do the combination of (a) agent demographics, (b) agent perception of first-level leadership practices, and (c) agent commitment variables relate to agent intention to turnover?

The research questions narrowed the study from the broader purpose statement.

Interpretation of Hypotheses Findings

The study incorporated five hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 through 4 were tested using correlational analysis. Multiple regression analysis served as the statistical technique used to test Hypothesis 5. This section explains the findings.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 predicted that when correlating the five LPI scores with affective and normative commitment, there would be a significant correlation. Leadership practices, affective and normative commitment, and organizational climate intersected in Hypothesis 1. Affective commitment embodies an employee's emotional attachment to an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Normative commitment denotes a values-based obligation to remain with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The two commitment forms represent an emotive, or feeling-based, attachment. Meyer and Allen (1991) noted that organizational commitment represents a psychological condition that affects an employee's relationship with an organization.

Goleman (2000) contended that organization climate relates to the "working environment" (p. 81) and "working atmosphere" (p. 81). Climate describes an organization's feel as perceived by its members. Climate is individual person perceptual. Given the emotive implication of the affective and normative commitment forms (Meyer & Allen, 1991), and given the relationship between leadership behaviors and organizational climate (Goleman, 2000), Hypothesis 1 indicated the leadership practices are associated with emotive-oriented commitment.

Leadership encompasses many conceptualizations and definitions (Northouse, 2004). Leadership is also relational (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b). A qualitative, visual inspection of the correlation coefficients indicates the encourage-the-heart leadership practice is the most positively correlated leadership practice with affective and normative commitment. The encourage-the-heart leadership practice incorporates showing appreciation and celebrating accomplishments (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The act of showing appreciation and celebrating accomplishments incorporates a relational component.

Hypothesis 1 did not infer a causal relationship between leader behavior and affective and normative commitment. The hypothesis confirmed a significant and positive relationship between each of the five leadership practices and the two commitment forms. The findings might support, albeit through inference, Goleman's (2000) contention that leader behaviors affect climate.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 predicted that when correlating the five LPI scores with continuance commitment there would be a significant correlation. Continuance commitment describes an awareness of the costs ascribed to leaving an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Continuance commitment represents a need-to-stay commitment form (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The continuance commitment form differs from the affective and normative commitment forms (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

The study's findings supported the relational aspect of leadership (Popper, 2004) in combination with the rational orientation of continuance commitment. A qualitative, visual inspection of the significant correlations indicated that the correlations between the perception of the supervisors' leadership practices and the agents' self-reported level of continuance commitment was less than the correlations between the leadership practices and affective and normative commitment. If contemporary leadership is shifting to incorporate the primacy of the relational aspect of leadership and leader–follower emotional relationships (Popper, 2004), contemporary leadership might be transitioning toward an emotion-based versus a rational-based leadership construct.

The continuance commitment conceptualization incorporates the perception of a dearth of available alternatives (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The continuance commitment form is rational based. Given this rational orientation and the relational aspect of leadership (Popper, 2004), the expected relationship between the leadership practices and the continuance commitment correlation would be smaller than the correlation between the leadership practices and affective and normative commitment.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 predicted that when correlating the three commitment forms with intention to turnover, there would be a significant correlation. Support for Hypothesis 3 provided two important insights. The first insight was the substantial degree of negative association between agent affective commitment and intention to turnover and the substantial degree of negative association between agent normative commitment and turnover intention. The correlation coefficients presented in Table 11 suggest that affective and normative commitment provide larger turnover intention predictive utility relative to continuance commitment. Correlation coefficients of .66-.85 provide good predictive utility (Creswell, 2005). Correlation coefficients of .50-.75 represent a "moderate to strong positive relationship" (Fitzgerald et al., 2004, p. 144).

A visual inspection of the coefficients of determination provided a second insight. The coefficients of determination, or r^2 values, showed the common variance between two variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The coefficients of determination indicated that the variance in intention to turnover explained by affective, normative, and continuance commitment was 48%, 51%, and 3%, respectively.

A qualitative comparison was made regarding the differences in the sizes of the coefficients of determination for intention to turnover with affective commitment (r^2 = .48), normative commitment (r^2 = .51), and continuance commitment (r^2 = .03). From the visual inspection, the coefficients of determination for affective and normative commitment tended to be similar in size but many times larger than the coefficient of determination for continuance commitment. The qualitative difference might have implications.

The study's problem statement focused on the costs associated with call center turnover. In view of the problem statement's cost orientation, assessing the variability in turnover intention that can be explained by each commitment form might have economic implications. The relationship between the affective and normative commitment forms and turnover intention might simply represent a strong association, rather than causation. Alternatively, the reported relationships might be indicative and imply that the affective and normative commitment levels represent leading indicators that can be predictive of intent to turnover.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 predicted that when correlating demographic variables of age, job tenure, and organizational tenure with affective, normative, and continuance commitment, there would be a significant correlation. The relationship between age and affective commitment and the relationship between age and normative commitment were significant and positively correlated. The other seven relationships were not significant.

The results indicate that job tenure and organizational tenure do not significantly relate with the commitment forms. The findings indicate that age relates weakly to affective and normative commitment. The combination of findings might indicate that organizational environmental factors, rather than person-specific demographic variables, are more salient to organizational commitment.

Demographic variables are not alterable. Supervisory leadership behaviors do not change an agent's age. The findings that demographic variables relate to organizational commitment minimally, or with no significance at all, might offer call center leaders hope. Managers cannot change demographic variables, such as age, that are person-to-person unalterable. Alternatively, managers can influence a work climate based on their behaviors (Goleman, 2000).

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 predicted that a combination of variables would account for more variance in an agent's intent to turnover than could be explained by any individual correlation. The support found for Hypothesis 5 indicates that agent turnover intention is better represented as a multivariable construct than as a bivariate relationship with a single predictor variable. Based on a visual inspection of the coefficients of determination, the combination of variables in the final four-variable model accounted for more variance in the agent's intent to turnover than was accounted for in any one correlation. The four-variable regression model and the individual predictor variables were significant. Support for Hypothesis 5 is concordant with a systems thinking paradigm.

Systems thinkers amalgamate multiple parameters in making assessments (Moberg, 2001). A systems thinking approach emphasizes an integrative view toward organizational issues (Senge, 1990). Given turnover intention issues, a management focus on multiple independent variables rather than one variable represents a systems thinking orientation. The integrative approach to leadership is useful to call center first-level supervisors serving as leaders. Call center leaders can view turnover intention as a construct with multiple antecedents.

Relationship to Other Research

The current study adds to the leadership-organizational commitment body of knowledge. The study is the first known study that correlated call center agents' perceptions of first-level supervisory leadership practices with affective, normative, and continuance commitment. The study is also the first known study to correlate call center agent demographic variables with call center agent organizational commitment and to correlate agent organizational commitment with intent to turnover. This notwithstanding, prior research has established correlations between leadership practice perception and organizational commitment and between organizational commitment and turnover intentions. Prior research also related leadership and climate antecedents with positive call center organizational outcomes.

In a meta-analytic assessment of four studies, Meyer et al. (2002) reported that transformational leadership positively correlated with affective and normative commitment but negatively correlated with continuance commitment. Emery and Baker (2007) confirmed a relationship between charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration and organizational commitment, as measured by the OCQ. Similarly, Jaskyte (2003) used a leadership scale based on employee perceptions of supervisory behaviors as measured by Cammann et al.'s (1983) supervision scales and reported that employees' perceptions of supervisory leadership behaviors were significant predictors of employees' self-reported level of organizational commitment. Young-Ritchie, Laschinger, and Wong (2007) used the Emotional Competence Inventory as a measure of emotionally intelligent leadership behavior and Meyer and Allen's Affective

Commitment Scales and showed a positive correlation between employee perceptions of emotionally intelligent leadership and employee affective commitment.

The current research study adds to the body of research that correlated the leadership practices with organizational commitment forms. Using Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices as a leadership measure, McNese-Smith (1991) published the first known research study that showed a relationship between Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices and organizational commitment. In a study involving employees of two Seattle hospitals, McNese-Smith reported statistically significant positive relationships between each of the leadership practices and organizational commitment as measured by the OCQ. McNese-Smith indicated enabling others to act, challenging the process, and inspiring a shared vision explained most of the variance in organizational commitment. Similarly, Bell-Roundtree (2004) reported that a significant correlation exists between each of the five Kouzes and Posner leadership practices and organizational commitment.

In a study that involved examining the relationship between age, organizational tenure, the Kouzes and Posner leadership practices, and organizational commitment, Metscher (2005) confirmed a positive relationship exists between each of the leadership practices and organizational commitment as measured by the OCQ. Metscher did not confirm a relationship between the demographic variables and commitment. Metscher could not establish a significant relationship between age and service years with organizational commitment. Similarly, Woods (2007) correlated each of the leadership practices, length of service, and age with organizational commitment. Woods reported that the association between enabling others to act and organizational commitment was strongest with a correlation of .548, while the association between inspiring a shared vision and organizational commitment was weakest with a correlation of .442.

McCroskey (2007) provided the only other known research study that involved an investigation into the relationship between each of the five Kouzes and Posner leadership practices and the TCM of organizational commitment. McCroskey reported that each of the five leadership practices was positively and significantly correlated with affective and normative commitment. In the study of Houston, Texas-based employees of a hedge-fund trading firm and a petroleum products services organization, McCroskey did not find a significant relationship between the leadership practices and continuance commitment. McCroskey's correlation coefficients between each of the leadership practices and affective and normative commitment suggested the existence of a stronger relationship than revealed in the current study.

The findings from the current research study regarding the positive relationship and the significant relationship between the leadership practices and the affective and normative commitment forms are directionally consistent with McCroskey's (2007) research. McCroskey found that a significant relationship between age and the commitment forms did not exist, while the relationship between job tenure and affective commitment was significant and positive. McCroskey did not establish a relationship between job tenure and the other commitment forms. The current research study, in combination with McCroskey's research, directionally affirms the correlation between the leadership practices and affective and normative commitment in three different work contexts.

A number of recent researchers reported the relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intentions. In a study involving 232 survey responses from 27 various U.S.-based organizations, Canipe (2006) used the Meyer and Allen TCM of organizational commitment to correlate the relationship between the commitment forms and turnover intentions. Canipe reported a negative correlation between affective, continuance, and normative commitment and turnover intentions with reported correlations coefficients of -.711, -.458, and -.436, respectively. In a study of U.S. Air Force company grade officers, Rich (2006) confirmed that a protégé's intention to turnover is inversely related to the protégé's affective commitment in a mentor–protégé relationship. A relationship between protégés' normative commitment and mentoring and between continuance commitment and mentoring was not established (Rich). Normative and continuance commitment did not mediate mentoring perceptions and turnover intentions (Rich). In a study that included site and case managers from U.S.-based outpatient clinics, Lazar (2004) confirmed that turnover intention is negatively correlated and statistically significant with affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Lazar reported Pearson product-moment coefficients of -.66, -.65, and -.27 for affective, normative, and continuance commitment, respectively. Similarly, in a study of salespeople from a Fortune 100 organization, Riley (2006) reported an inverse relationship between organizational commitment as measured by the OCQ and turnover intentions.

A review of additional research relating the demographic variables provides inconsistent findings. Meyer et al. (2002), in a meta-analytic review, and Trimble (2006) reported a positive relationship between organizational tenure and affective commitment.

Van Breukelen et al. (2004) found organizational tenure was highly correlated with turnover intentions. Tallman and Bruning (2005) described a relationship between organizational tenure and continuance commitment. Stephens et al. (2004) confirmed that job tenure and affective commitment are associated. With respect to age, Marchiori and Henkin (2004) reported a weak positive relationship between age and affective, normative, and continuance commitment among health profession faculty. Obeng and Ugboro (2003) found that age was not statistically significant when correlated with affective commitment. Similarly, Nasurdin (2005) could not confirm the moderating effect of age on levels of organizational commitment.

In general, recent research indicated that leadership positively relates to organizational commitment. Recent studies indicated that organizational commitment is negatively associated with turnover intentions; the relationship between demographic variables and organizational commitment is less clear. With regard to the leadership practices and the TCM of organizational commitment, a synthesis of McCroskey's research and the current study indicates that the relationship between leadership practices and organizational commitment is strongest for affective and normative commitment.

Research indicated that intention to turnover and turnover are strongly correlated (C. Chang, Du, & Huang, 2006). In a metastudy, Meyer et al. (2002) reported correlations of -.17, -.16, and -.10 regarding the relationship between affective, normative, and continuance commitment, respectively, and turnover. Given that turnover intention is an antecedent to turnover (C. Chang et al.), the current research study directionally validated Meyer et al.'s findings. When coalesced, the research reveals a stronger relationship between the affective and normative commitment forms and turnover intention when compared to the relationship between continuance commitment and intention to turnover.

Implications

The current study expands leadership, organizational commitment, and turnover intention research by confirming the positive relationship between an employee's perception of supervisors' use of leadership practices and front-line employees' affective and normative commitment and to a lesser extent continuance commitment. The study findings support the significant negative relationship between the commitment forms and intention to turnover. The research study findings were specific to one U.S.-based call center outsourcing organization. This section includes a description of the importance of the study and its contribution to the leadership discourse.

The focal area of the current study, a U.S.-based call center, offers an important business domain in which to study leadership and the relationship between leadership, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Although precisely measuring the U.S. call center employment market is challenging, the market is large. Call center agent employment estimates range from 2.9 million ("Call Centers," 2004) to 3.97 million agents (Batt et al., 2005). Given a U.S. labor force of 151,703,000 workers (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007), call center agents represent between 1.9 and 2.6% of the U.S. labor force. Leadership practices and organizational commitment are well-studied conceptualizations, though the relationship between leadership practices and organizational commitment is understudied in the call center environment.

The growth of the call center industry is a recent occurrence (Val Verde, Ryan, & Gorjup, 2007). The projected growth of the call center market of $20,551 million in 2007, a 4.1% increase from 2002 (Data Monitor, 2004), is attributable to various factors. The call center model facilitates service delivery centralization, which is particularly beneficial with a geographically dispersed customer base (Val Verde et al.). In spite of the fundamental role that technology plays in a call center (Beirne et al., 2004), call centers are human-resource reliant (O'Dea Hein, 2008). Call centers depend on agents because centers integrate embedded technology with agents' competence. Agents' performance is critical to the success of a call center (Ojha & Kasturi, 2005). Agents are a cantilever to call center success.

The current study provides insights for researchers and practitioners. Call centers continue to grow in economic importance (Gans, Koole, & Mandelbaum, 2003). The agent's role within a call center is critical (Sheff, 2007). The current study represents a meaningful research contribution given the combination of the centrality of the human element in the call center value chain (O'Dea Hein, 2008) and call center growth (Gross, 2005). The current study adds to the call center discourse by integrating leadership practices, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions.

The study and practice of leadership abounds with theories, cognitions, and approaches. Given the plethora of leadership definitions, defining leadership (Northouse, 2004) is challenging. The difficulty of defining leadership notwithstanding, leadership is relevant (Bennis, 2007). Leadership influences one's quality of life in profound ways (Bennis, 2007). Leaders produce results (Goleman, 2000). The inverse of leadership excellence, or bad leadership, leads to negative outcomes (Erickson, Shaw, & Agabe, 2007). The leadership practices developed by Kouzes and Posner represent the behavioral manifestations of personal best leadership experiences (Posner, 2002). The practices denote leader actions that lead to extraordinary results (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b). The current study introduced the leadership practices into the call center environment, confirming expected correlations between all of the Kouzes and Posner leadership practices and affective and normative commitment.

The inference of causation in any of the bivariate relationships depicted in the study is problematic given the correlational design. This notwithstanding, the results indicate that in the participating call center organization, each of the leadership practices positively related to the agents' affective and normative commitment. Given the positive consequences of affective and normative commitment forms (Meyer et al., 2002), the findings in the current study validate previous research in a new research environment.

Visual inspection of the relationship between continuance commitment and other correlates appears weaker when compared to the relationship between normative commitment and affective commitment and the same correlates. The weaker relationship between the leadership practices and continuance commitment might suggest the effect a leader has on a cost-based commitment form is less direct. The weaker relationship between continuance commitment and turnover intentions may indicate that merely being aware of the costs of leaving an organization provides insufficient motivation to contemplate turnover. Alternatively, the findings might indicate that emotional responses take precedence over rational thought. Further research is required. Continuance commitment appears to be less leader impacting and less relevant to turnover intentions in this U.S. call center environ.

The demographic variables offer insights. Although age, as an independent variable, showed a significant, positive relationship with affective and normative commitment, the bivariate relationship of job tenure and organizational tenure with any of the commitment forms was not significant. The implications for these demographic-based organizational commitment findings provide practical benefits. The generation of individuals born between 1946 and 1964 possess knowledge and valuable job skills (Head, Baker, Bagwell, & Moon, 2006). Projections indicate the number of older workers will increase (Head et al.). In view of a significant, positive relationship between age and the affective and normative commitment forms, organizational benefits may accrue to a call center that employs older workers. Employing baby-boomers can have a positive impact on call center organizations given the juxtaposition of the large baby-boom generation and call center growth.

Organizational performance is systems-oriented and integrates interrelated levers, including leadership (Burke & Litwin, 1992; Yukl & Lepsinger, 2004). Leadership involves influence (Northouse, 2004), and effective leadership involves being aware of the self-perceptions of others (Goffe & Jones, 2006a). Leadership competence, then, is follower-determined. An organization’s leadership climate is based on employee perceptions of leader behaviors (Perryer & Jordan, 2005). The LPI behaviorally measures leadership practices (Posner, 2002). With this behavioral focus, the LPI offers insights into employee perceptions of the leadership climate. The current study provided insights into the organizational climate in one U.S.-based call center as measured by agents’ organizational commitment.

Similar to leadership, organizational commitment is well studied. Organizational commitment represents an important element in the employer–employee relationship (Mohammed et al., 2006). Metaresearch indicated organizational commitment is associated with many antecedents and consequences (Meyer et al., 2002). In spite of the research and the plethora of study findings, organizational commitment research in call centers is scarce.

The correlation of the leadership practices with the TCM of organizational commitment in a U.S.-based call center extends the current knowledge domain. A limited number of studies have related the Kouzes and Posner leadership practices with organizational commitment. Only one known study correlated the leadership practices with organizational commitment, as conceptualized with the TCM. McCroskey (2007) reported a positive and significant relationship between leadership practices and both affective and normative commitment. The current study extends the leadership practices–organizational commitment academic discourse and expands the research domain to include U.S.-based call centers.

Study Limitations

Several study limitations exist. The limitations, or study weaknesses (Creswell, 2005), include design and implementation weaknesses. Explicating research limitations is important given the extent to which the study findings can be generalized (Creswell).

The first limitation involved the study's generalizability. The population incorporated agents from one call center organization. The population included 2,050 agents. With this population size, the generalizability of the results beyond this specific call center to the general U.S. call center population is questionable. Generalizability, the link between the knowledge engendered in a study and the ability to generalize the knowledge (Ferguson, 2004), is a research goal. The single call center orientation limits the generalizability of the study findings.

A second study limitation involved the voluntary nature of participation. Agent participation was strictly voluntary. One hundred seventy-eight of 2,050 agents voluntarily participated. The findings represent the perspectives of 8.7% of the population. Survey respondents represent those most interested. Nonresponse degrades a survey's validity (Neuman, 2006). Nonresponse retards generalizability and may affect the degree that conclusions ascribed to the target population can be made (Rogelberg & Luong, 1998). Nonresponse bias occurs when respondent and nonrespondent differences affect variable representation (Rogelberg & Luong). Thus, the volunteer nature of participation may unknowingly influence the study results.

A third limitation results from the limits of correlational design. The design included measuring and relating leadership practices, organizational commitment, and turnover intention based on respondent answers to scaled survey items. The correlations measured degrees of variable association. Variable manipulation does not occur in a correlational design (Fitzgerald et al., 2004). The nonmanipulation of variables in correlational research makes causation supposition problematic (Fitzgerald et al.). Correlational research produces correlation coefficients that signify degrees of relationship between two variables (Gall et al., 2003), though the correlations do not provide evidence that *x* leads to *y* (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

In correlations, multiple explanations exist regarding variable influencing direction. Researchers cannot infer which other variables generate *x* and *y* or the extent *x* and *y* influence one another in a mutually reciprocal manner (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Thus, the study did not explore causal relationships between any of the study variables.

A fourth limitation involved rater biases. In the current study, participants evaluated their perception of their supervisor's use of certain leadership practices. Participants reported their perceptions of supervisor behaviors. Participants' responses derived from their perceived perceptions of supervisory leadership behaviors. Agyris's ladder of inference metaphor indicated that conclusions and beliefs follow from the limited data individuals select from all the data available (Ross, 1994). Data selection, then, is perceptual. Perceptions are subjective (Kant, 1949) and may differ from person to person. Although a study participant's assessment of a supervisor is experiential based, personal experience errors influence an individual's perception of reality (Neuman, 2006).

The study's cross-sectional survey design was limiting. Unlike longitudinal surveys, cross-sectional surveying approaches are single-point-of-time oriented (Creswell, 2005). Cross-sectional research provides a useful survey design to measure current practices, beliefs, and attitudes (Creswell). The act of participants completing an assessment exemplifies a behavior. Behaviors follow from beliefs and feelings (T. Payne, 1993). Respondents' survey replies may have changed at different points of time depending on the respondents' current thinking and feeling.

The determination of a survey participant's precise cognitive or emotional mood when completing an assessment is problematic. Individuals with negative mood predisposition more negatively rate others than do individuals with lower levels of negative mood predisposition (Fried, Levy, Ben-David, Tiegs, & Avital, 2000). A longitudinal survey, in contrast to a cross-section survey design, would allow evaluations at different points of time (Creswell, 2005). A longitudinal study might not have completely mitigated the effects of negative mood predisposition. The longitudinal approach would meter mood-based survey responses given the multiple time orientations engendered in longitudinal research.

Another study limitation involved the conceptualization of organizational commitment. Organizational commitment as conceptualized by Meyer and Allen is form based (Meyer et al., 2002). T. E. Becker and Kernan (2003) bifurcated organizational commitment, which indicated that employees distinguish between forms and foci. Solinger, van Olffen, and Roe (2008) concluded that the TCM's utility as a general model of organizational commitment is limiting. Individuals can commit to different work foci (T. E. Becker & Kernan), including coworkers and supervisors (T. E. Becker, Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996). In view of the foci-based commitment approaches, organizational commitment as conceptualized by Meyer and Allen is construct limited.

Finally, the reliability and validity of the instruments limited the study. Discriminant validity between the affective and the normative commitment scales is questionable (Jaros, 2007). Given the discriminant validity issue that exists between the affective and normative commitment scales, questions of conceptual redundancy manifest. Beyond the TCM, validity and reliability constraints of the LPI and the MOAQ are also limiting.

Recommendations

The current study reported correlations between several variable pairs. The data indicated a significant, positive relationship exists between a supervisor's perceived use of each of the leadership practices and agents' affective and normative commitment. The study results also confirmed the results of past research, indicating a strong negative relationship exists between affective and normative commitment and intention to turnover. The results indicated the organizational virtue of leadership practice implementation and organizational commitment. The following section provides policy and practitioner recommendations.

Call Center Leadership Development Focus Using the Leadership Practices

The first recommendation involves the criticality of call center organizations proactively integrating leadership practices into the organizational leadership development system. The formal act of developing leaders has organizational implications. Leader behaviors demonstrably affect a work climate (Goleman, 2000). A work climate affects financial results (van Veldhoven, 2005). The study's results, which indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship exists between leadership practices and affective and normative commitment, support Goleman's 2000 research, which indicated that leadership styles correlate with drivers of climate.

Given their behavioral orientation, the leadership practices provide a framework to support systematic leadership development. The 30-item LPI incorporates 30 discrete behaviors that integrate to five practice areas (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a). Behaviors are antecedent to actions (Zigarmi et al., 2000) and can change.

The first recommendation incorporates the implementation of a self-directed learning model that integrates four elements. The elements of the self-directed learning model include self-reflection on the delta between one's ideal self and current self and an identification of strengths and gaps (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Self-directed learning also includes the development of a learning agenda and practice (Goleman et al.). The first recommendation amalgamates integrated leadership development elements and includes integrating (a) assessment, (b) coaching, (c) individual development planning, (d) challenging assignments, and (e) action learning-based opportunities (D. Weiss & Molinaro, 2006). The first recommendation offers a holistic development schema that provides the opportunity of leadership practices actualization and behavioral change.

The systemic development approach recognizes that leadership is intrapersonal and interpersonal, requiring internal self-discovery and self-development (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Three-hundred-sixty-degree assessments provide insights because assessments increase leader self-awareness regarding others' perceptions of the leader's behaviors (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). The LPI is a 30-item Likert-type scale-based instrument (Kouzes & Posner, 2003c). The instrument assesses behaviors associated with the five leadership practices identified by Kouzes and Posner (2002b). The first recommendation incorporates the LPI as a mechanism to provide leaders insights.

The incorporation of an assessment into the leadership development schema is a first step. The first recommendation recognizes the interconnectivity of actions and events. The recommendation builds on systems thinking constructs, which suggests that human activities and organizations are systems where interconnections and interrelations manifest (Senge, 1990). Leadership assessments in a leadership developmental context must necessarily integrate with other activities (Hernez-Broome & Hughes).

The second and third steps of the holistic, yet leadership-practices-anchored, leadership development schema involve coaching and the opportunity to actualize leadership acumen through experiential practice. Coaching is a Socratic process that facilitates performance maximization and enhances learning (Whitmore, 2004). Coaching facilitates the development of self-answers (Whitmore). The combination of coaching and focused practice creates a virtuous leadership development circle.

The first recommendation recognizes the importance of systemizing leadership development. The recommendation begins with using the LPI as a behavioral assessment. The approach incorporates multiple elements including coaching and focused practice. The systemization of leadership development using the leadership practices as a behavioral architecture integrates the best practices research associated with the LPI creation (Posner, 2002), while contextualizing the LPI within a leadership development framework.

Integrate the Leadership Practices Into a Call Center's Performance Management System

The second recommendation involves the integration of the leadership practices, and the behaviors they embody, into a call center organization's performance management system for managers. The second recommendation indicates the performance management system should balance results and behaviors. The recommendation incorporates the integration of objectives and assessments that include both quantitative results and qualitative behaviors. The LPI items constitute leading performance behavioral indicators while quantitative objectives serve as lagging performance indicators.

The recommended performance management model relates to the General Electric approach as applied by Honeywell. The model includes measuring quantitative performance and the degree that a manager embodies advocated behaviors (Bossidy &

Charan, 2002). The approach recognizes that both performance and behaviors matter. Delivering results is crucial, though embodying shared values is equally important. The integrated performance management system recognizes the importance of both results and behaviors.

The LPI's behavioral orientation (Posner, 2002) provides a compelling instrument to assess managerial actions. Employees who work with leaders who exhibit the five leadership practices exhibit more energy and excitement (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Incorporating the leadership practices into a balanced performance management managerial assessment model provides holistic assessment rigor.

Foster and Promote Leadership Practice Usage With Call Center Nonmanagers

The third recommendation, to foster and promote leadership practices usage into the behaviors of a call center's nonmanagers or followers, augurs organizational performance improvement. The word *follower* conjures an unflattering association (Frisna, 2005). Followership competence is critical because the number of followers exceeds the number of leaders (Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008). Organizational success hinges on follower behaviors (R. E. Kelly, 1988).

Human-resource-focused research in U.S. call centers is understudied. Followership is also understudied (Bjugstad, Thack, Thompson, & Morris, 2006). Organizationally, people operate more frequently in follower, rather than leader, roles (R. E. Kelly, 1988). Call center agents primarily serve in a follower role. Leaders must develop followership competence (Banutu-Gomez, 2004).

One conceptualization of the manager versus leader demarcation involves authority versus a noncoercive influence relationship between people (Yukl, 2006).

Nonmanagers can be leaders and not simply followers. Yukl's leadership conceptualization indicates anyone can be a leader. In view of Yukl's conceptualization, developing leadership behaviors, irrespective of a person's formal position, will likely have implicit organizational benefits. The current study confirmed a positive relationship between the perceptions of managerial leadership practices use and agent, or follower, affective and normative commitment. In view of the current study's findings and Yukl's conceptualization, developing leadership behaviors across the entire organizational employment base will likely have organizational benefits.

Leadership practices can become the focus of a call center employee competency-based human performance system. Given the knowledge orientation to work, competency management can create competitive enterprise advantage (Capaldo, Iandoli, & Zollo, 2006). Competency-based human resource practices lead to improved performance management (Markus, Cooper-Thomas, & Allpress, 2005). The systemic adaptation and assimilation of the leadership practices into the call center competency context can create, reinforce, and sustain an effective organizational climate.

Focus on the Key Metalevers That Drive Affective and Normative Commitment in a Call Center Climate

The results presented in Table 11 suggest that affective commitment and normative commitment are worthy of organizational focus given their relationship with turnover intention. Correlation coefficients between .5 and .75 indicate a "moderate to strong positive relationship" (Fitzgerald et al., 2004, p. 144). A visual inspection of the coefficients of determination for affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment indicates that affective commitment and normative commitment better explain turnover intention than continuance commitment. Call center organizations should focus on influencing antecedents that drive affective and normative commitment.

Affective commitment and normative commitment represent distinct commitment components (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Affective commitment relates to an emotional or want-based organizational attachment. Normative commitment involves a dutiful enterprise attachment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). To build both commitment forms, call center leaders can use Meyer and Allen's affective and normative commitment survey items as an initial checklist to focus organizational efforts. Organizational leaders can engender affective commitment by creating a shared sense of organization–agent meaning and a joint organization–agent ownership of organizational problems. With respect to improving normative commitment, efforts should be oriented toward creating loyalty.

To develop joint meaning, joint ownership, and loyalty, organizational leaders can emphasize values-based management, empowerment, and relational-event organization–employee reciprocity initiatives. These targeted efforts support the affective and normative commitment forms. Actualizing the levers intraorganizationally will require focus and effort.

Values represent permanent beliefs that guide behavioral and goal-oriented choices (Rockeach, 1973), are endemic to people (Zigarmi et al., 2000), are central to organizations (Buchko, 2007), and guide organizational behaviors (Buchko). Explicating enterprise values and rewarding employees based on a values-based managerial approach creates employer–employee relationships founded on principles. The leadership practice of modeling the way, which includes clarifying and modeling values (Kouzes & Posner, 2007), supports the values-based approach to values-based management.

Empowerment refers to a process in which people gain control of their destiny (Sevensson, Mussener, & Alexanderson, 2006). In view of this conceptualization, empowerment in a work setting involves the juxtaposition of flexibility and responsibility. Flexibility refers to an employee's feeling of innovating and making choices without unnecessary controls (Goleman, 2000). Responsibility includes being answerable (Bertelli & Lynn, 2003). Organizations create empowerment-oriented climates when employees feel they have job choices and are answerable for the choices. The leadership practice of encouraging others to act, which cultivates competence and efficacy in others (Kouzes & Posner, 2007), fosters empowerment.

Loyalty involves a long-term attachment and a duty-based undertaking (Hart & Thompson, 2007). Leadership credibility engenders employee loyalty (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Call center managers, as leaders, must engender loyalty. Leaders, in engendering loyal followership, must respond to key follower wants. The wants include feeling important and being part of a community (Goffe & Jones, 2006). Loyalty is, in part, leader inspired.

Call center organizations, which must balance quality customer service while managing costs, face challenges (Hilmer et al., 2004). Given the challenges, call center managers must design, develop, and execute a strategy. Strategy setting invokes decision making (Jones, 2004). The four recommendations offered represent managerial decisions that can become elements of a call center's strategy. The four recommendations present four strategy choices that can potentially be organizationally transcending.

Future Research Considerations

The results of the current research indicate the statistical significance of various bivariate relationships. While stating the relationship between variable pairs based on the perspective of agents from one call center adds to the knowledge base, future research can extend and expand the study's findings. The following section outlines nine areas for future research.

The first area for future research involves extending the explanatory relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention in a U.S. call center. Reichers (1985) noted that organizational commitment is construct divisible. An employee can commit unevenly to one's superiors and coworkers (Reichers). Rational commitment and emotional commitment, as categories of employee engagement, actualize through the employee's (a) day-to-day work, (b) work team, (c) manager, and (d) organization (Corporate Leadership Council, 2004). The organizational commitment forms in the Meyer and Allen paradigm could be decoupled into the specific commitment foci. Extending the study in a call center environment by reconceptualizing organizational commitment into additional foci might enhance discrete commitment insights. Determining the relationship between the foci in the reconceptualized organizational commitment paradigm and turnover intentions represents an area for future research.

Another area for future research involves extending the incorporation of demographic variables given workforce diversity. Extending the range of demographic variables correlated to include variables such as marital status and number of dependents supported would offer meaningful commitment antecedents to explore. Demographic variables such as the degree the participant is the primary family income source and the agent's education level would provide relevant demographic variables to explore. Establishing a relationship between the additional demographic variables and each of the commitment forms may have implications for U.S.-based call centers in identifying demographic variables that positively correlate with highly motivated workforces.

A third area for future research involves study replication. To date, research examining the relationship between the Kouzes and Posner leadership practices and the three-component organizational commitment model is limited. Several doctoral dissertations correlationally report on the relationship between the leadership practices and organizational commitment. Woods (2007) explained the relationship between the Kouzes and Posner leadership practices and organizational commitment with master of business administration students. A. K. John (2006) correlated the leadership practices with organizational commitment within a higher education, for-profit college. Metscher (2005) conducted research among Air Force employees. Chiock Foong Loke (2001) related leadership practices and organizational commitment with registered nurses, and McNese-Smith (1991) related leadership practices and organizational commitment among Seattle-area hospital employees. Woods, A. K. John, Metscher, Chiock Foong Loke, and McNeese-Smith used the OCQ scale developed by Porter et al. (1974) rather than the TCM. McCroskey (2007) provided the only other known research study integrating the Kouzes and Posner LPI with TCM. Study replication integrating the Kouzes and Posner leadership practices with the TCM of organizational commitment is encouraged and recommended.

A fourth area for future research involves extending leadership practices' utility by correlating the leadership practices with followership levels in call center research.

Leadership is relational (Kouzes & Posner, 2002b) and leadership presumes followership (Goffe & Jones, 2006b). Research indicates that leaders deliver superior team performance and increase group morale (Van Vugt, 2006). Extending the current study to include specific behavioral measures of followership might be insightful.

R. E. Kelly (1992) noted that followership stylistically fits along two continua, independent critical thinking versus dependent uncritical thinking and active versus passive behaviors. Exploring the relationship between leadership practices and follower styles in a call center could validate the relative importance of supervisory leadership competence. Followership is a dominant organizational role (R. E. Kelly, 1992), and the act of followership represents between 70 and 90% of a typical employee's workday (R. E. Kelly). Correlating the perception of manager leadership practices utilization with follower outcomes warrants further research.

Further research that explores the relationship between managerial behaviors of call center first-level supervisors and agent commitment might be beneficial. There exist divergent views and differing perspectives of the conceptualizations of leadership versus management (Yukl, 2006). Leadership is primarily an influence relationship, whereas management is an authority relationship (Rost, 1993). Given that authority implies the ability to hold others accountable for actions (Jones, 2004), call center first-level supervisors serve in both a management and a leadership role.

Kotter (2003) maintained that leadership and management are complementary yet discrete activities. Kotter noted that management involves (a) planning and budgeting, (b) organizing and staffing, and (c) controlling and problem solving. Call center work is repetitive and high pressure (Sprigg & Jackson, 2006). The nature of call center work requires managerial competence. Investigating the relationship between management practices and agent commitment might provide practitioners with insights relating prescribed management practices with agent behavioral outcomes.

A sixth area for future research involves assessing supervisors' self-perception of the use of the leadership practices. The current study related only agents' perception of the frequency of supervisory leadership practice use and did not incorporate supervisors' self-perception. Correlating both the agents' perception of supervisory leadership practice use with the supervisors' self-perception of leadership practice utilization would be beneficial. Research indicates that unlike average performers, highly effective managers either perceive themselves as others do or underestimate their abilities (Eichenger & Lombardo, 2003). Incorporating the supervisor's perspective into the correlational relationships in a call center provides a research area for future study.

The seventh recommendation involves extending the current study's quantitative design into a mixed-methods study. Correlational designs measure degrees of association between variables (Creswell, 2005). In correlational research, attributing causality is difficult (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The integration of quantitative and qualitative design methodologies, delineators of mixed-methods research, facilitates an understanding of a research problem (Creswell). A quantitative research design followed by a qualitative design can clarify and further explicate the initial quantitative findings (Creswell).

An eighth area for future research involves gaining insights regarding the relationship between the organizational commitment of a manager and the perception by direct reports of the manager's use of the leadership practices. The current study confirms a positive and significant relationship between call center agents' perception of a supervisor's use of all five of the leadership practices and agent affective and normative commitment. This notwithstanding, empirical research relating a manager's level of organizational commitment and leadership practice use is limited. Meyer et al. (2002) reported a positive correlation between affective and normative commitment and job performance. In Meyer et al.'s (2002) research, job performance was generic. Job performance was not leadership, or leadership practice, specific. Extending the current research to explore a supervisor's use of the leadership practices as perceived by direct reports and the supervisor's level of affective, normative, and continuance commitment would offer new insights.

A ninth area for future research involves including call center agent performance measures as a criterion variable in a leadership-practices-oriented correlational study. Leadership incorporates a results focus (Goleman, 2000). Future call center research might focus on agent performance outcomes rather than simply organizational commitment levels and turnover intentions. Leadership is a goal-oriented influence process (Northouse, 2004). Organizations are instruments that engage in achieving collective goals (Scott & Davis, 2007). Identifying the relationship between perceptions of supervisory leadership practices and agent performance metrics would relate leadership to results in a call center. Positive outcomes are associated with high levels of commitment (Meyer et al., 2002). Correlating agent-perceived supervisory leadership practice usage to agent performance measures is particularly meaningful, especially given a rational systems organization view.

Conclusion

Leadership, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions are concepts that have long evoked interest from researchers. As a construct, more than 65 different classification schemas define and distill leadership (Northouse, 2004). Researchers similarly conceptualize organizational commitment through different paradigms. Kouzes and Posner's (2002b) five leadership practices provide a contemporary and research-based leadership model. The Meyer and Allen multidimensional, three-component commitment model (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997) is central to organizational commitment research (Jaros, 2007). The current study incorporated Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices, Meyer and Allen's three-component organizational commitment model, and a turnover intention scale sourced to Cammann et al.'s (1983) MOAQ as instruments to respond to four research questions.

The current research study advances leadership and organizational commitment research. The study contextualizes leadership practices use, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions in one U.S.-based call center. The research findings indicate that call center agents' perceptions of their supervisors' use of all five of Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices positively and significantly relate to the agents' level of affective and normative commitment. The study results indicate that the agents' affective, normative, and continuance commitment levels are negatively correlated with turnover intention. The relationship between the study's demographic variables and turnover intention varied. The association between age and affective commitment and age and normative commitment were the only demographic variable-based relationships found to be significant.

The research study advances the leadership and organizational commitment body of knowledge. The study provides a leadership–organizational commitment context in one U.S.-based call center. Although the study answered the research questions by testing five hypotheses, the quantitative correlational study also provides a reference point for applying the study findings and for additional research. Research, in part, engenders novel ideas and produces new questions (Salkind, 2006). The search for knowledge and the opportunities for new research continue.

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APPENDIX A: ORGANIZATION COMMITMENT DEFINITIONS

Author	Definition
Herbst (1963)	"A state where the individual would no longer consider leaving the organization and is no longer considered by the organization as somebody who can be dismissed" (p. 38).
Grusky (1966)	"The nature of the relationship of the member to the system as a whole" (p. 489).
Kanter (1968)	"The willingness of social actors to give their energy and loyalty to social systems, the attachment of personality systems to social relations which are seen as self-expressive" (p. 499).
Sheldon (1971)	"An attitude or orientation toward the organization which links or attaches the identity of the person to the organization" (p. 143).
Hrebiniak and Alluto (1972)	"One approach is the consideration of organizational commitment in terms of exchange or reward-cost notions" (p. 556).
Buchanan (1974)	"A partisan affective attachment to the goals and values of an organization, to one's role in relation to these goals and values, and to the organization for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth" (p. 553).
Cook and Wall (1980)	"The concept . . . refers to a person's affective reactions to his employing organization. It is concerned with feelings of attachment to the goals and values of the organization, one's role in relation to this, and attachment to the organization for its own sake rather than for strictly for its instrumental value" (p. 40).
Scholl (1981)	"Stabilizing force that acts to maintain behavioral direction when expectancy/equity are not met and do not function"(p. 593).
Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982)	"Strong believe in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization" (p. 27).
Wiener (1982)	"The totality of internalized normative pressures to act in

Author	Definition
	a way that meets organizational goals and interests. The stronger the commitment, the stronger is the person's predisposition to be guided by his actions by such internalized standards rather than by a consideration of consequences of these actions" (p. 421).
Mathieu and Zajac (1990)	"A bond or linking of the individual to the organization" (p. 171).
Morrow (1993)	"Employee dedication to an organization" (p. xviii).
Meyer and Allen (1997)	"Organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct. Commitment can take different forms and can be directed at different constituencies in the organization" (p. 105-107).
Shepard and Mathews (2000)	"An internalized employee belief, often associated with soft HRM" and a high trust organizational culture" (p. 556).

APPENDIX B: CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT (AC), NORMATIVE COMMITMENT (NC), AND CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT (CC) SCALES AND CONSEQUENCES

	AC correlation	NC correlation	CC correlation
Turnover	-.17	-.16	-.10
Overall withdrawal cognition	-.58	-.26	-.13
Overall absence	-.15	.05	.06
Supervisor-rated job performance	.17		-.08
Organizational citizenship	.26	.10	-.04
Stress	-.21		.14
Work-family conflict	-.20	-.04	.24

Note. From "Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment to the Organization: A Meta-analysis of Antecedents, Correlates, and Consequences," by J. P. Meyer, D. J. Stanley, L. Hersovitch, and L. Topolnytsky, 2002, *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 61*, p. 34-35. Copyright 2002 by Elsevier. Adapted with permission (see Appendix C).

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APPENDIX D: LEADERSHIP DEFINITIONS

Author	Definition
Prentice (1961)	"Leadership is the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistants" (p. 143).
Greenleaf (1977)	"Leadership – going out ahead to the show the way – is available to everyone in the institution who has the competence, values, and temperament for it, from the chairman to the least skilled individual" (p.96).
Zaleznik (1977)	"Leadership . . . [involves] using power to influence the thoughts and actions of other people" (p. 67).
Blanchard (1999)	"Leadership is not something you do to people. It is something you do with people" (p. 140).
Collins (2001)	"Leadership is about vision. But leadership is equally about creating a climate where the truth is heard and the brutal facts confronted" (p. 74).
Schaeffer (2002)	"Leadership is about more than heavy-handed action from the top. Its defining characteristics change according to the needs and vagaries of the individual, the organization, the industry, and the world at large. In other words, leadership is not a state, it's a journey" (p. 43).
Kieth as cited in Kouzes and Posner (2002b)	"Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen" (p. 3).
Kouzes and Posner (2002b)	"Leadership is a relationship. Leadership is an identifiable set of skills and practices that are available to all . . ., not just a few charismatic men and women" (p. 20).
Ahn, Adamson, and Dornbusch (2004)	"Leadership, . . . is a prospective. It defines what the future should look like, aligns the organization with a common vision, and provides inspiration to achieve transformational goals" (p. 114).
Northouse (2004)	"Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individual's to achieve a common goal" (p.3).
Vroom and Jago (2007)	"[Leadership is] a process of motivating people to work together collaboratively to accomplish great things" (p. 18).
Lynham and Chermack	"Leadership is defined as a focused system of interacting

Author	Definition
(2007)	inputs, processes, outputs, and feedback wherein individuals and/or groups influence and/or act on behalf of specific individuals and/or groups of individuals to achieve shared goals and commonly desired performance outcomes within a specific performance system and environment" (p. 75).
Zaccaro (2007)	"Leadership represents complex patterns of behavior, likely explained, in part, by multiple leader attributes. . ." (p. 6).
Halpern and Lubar (2007)	"Leadership is about results and outcomes, and so leaders want the hearts and minds of others directed toward some purpose, some result desirable for the group or organization" (p.8).

APPENDIX E: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS SELECTING LEADER CHARACTERISTICS THAT ARE ADMIRABLE

Percentage of Respondents Selecting Leader Characteristics That Are Admirable

Leader characteristic	1995 survey	2002 survey	2007 survey
Honest	88	88	89
Forward-looking	75	71	71
Inspiring	68	65	69
Competent	63	66	68
Intelligent	40	47	48
Fair-minded	49	42	39
Straightforward	33	34	36
Broad-minded	40	40	35
Supportive	41	35	35
Dependable	32	33	34

Note. From *The Leadership Challenge* (4th ed., p. 30), by J. M. Kouzes and B. Z. Posner, 2007, San Francisco: Wiley. Copyright 2007 by Wiley. Adapted with permission (see Appendix F).

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University of Phoenix
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May 27, 2008

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Thank you,

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix

APPENDIX G: LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND COMMITMENTS

Leadership practice	Commitment
Model the way	1. Find one's leadership voice by clarifying personal values
	2. Set an example by connecting one's actions with shared values
Inspire a shared vision	3. Envision the future by imagining an exciting tomorrow
	4. Enlist others in the common vision by appealing to shared aspirations
Challenge the process	5. Search for opportunities by searching for creative ways to grow, change, and improve
	6. Take risks, experiment, and create short-term wins and learning opportunities
Enable others to act	7. Foster collaboration, cooperative behaviors, and trust
	8. Share power and discretion with others
Encourage from the heart	9. Recognize the contributions of others by demonstrating an appreciation for excellence
	10. Celebrate victories, lived values, and build community

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Thank you,

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix

APPENDIX I: CONTEMPORARY CALL CENTER NARROW RESEARCH

Researcher	Study finding
Dempsey Hegarty, Frei, and Vijayalaxani (2006)	Using a Denver, Colorado, children's hospital as the study location, this study confirmed that assigning after-hours calls to an after-hours triage call center reduced the number of after-hours calls to physicians, thus decreasing the number of urgent referrals.
Ude (2006)	This study evaluated static and dynamic call center queues and determined that dynamic queue configurations outperform static queue schemes.
Tham (2005)	This study indicated call center agent performance could be improved "through increased ventilation . . . at a marginally warmer temperature . . . and reduced indoor temperature at a lower ventilation rate" (p. 692).
Whitt (2005)	In this study, the researcher developed an algorithm to determine the steady-state performance metrics in a base call center queuing model. The algorithm can help determine staffing and information technology requirements.

Researcher	Study finding
Armony & Maglaras (2004)	The researcher created a square root agent-staffing rule to determine the number of call center agents required and confirmed the utility of incorporating multiple service channels in improving overall performance.
Avramidis, Deslauriers, and L'Ecuyer (2004)	Call center call arrival models were developed and studied. The researcher identified considerations for call centers in the choice of the arrival approach.
Ridley (2004)	This study suggested in a call center environment, fluid approximation measures are congruent with steady-state simulations, even as the system load varies between under- and overload conditions.
Gans and Zhou (2003)	The researchers evaluated and reported on call routing policies, given common inbound call center queuing systems. The researchers employed quantitative decision modeling techniques.
Graumann et al. (2003)	Using a large German insurance company's call center, these researchers developed an organizational–information technology efficiency concept, suggesting that efficiency and process trade-offs are important management considerations.
L. V. Green, Kolesar, and Soares (2003)	These researchers proposed two "stationary independent period by period (SIPP) approaches" (p. 46) to call center server and staffing that enhance service and performance levels.

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I hereby authorize William Mark Nicholson, student of University of Phoenix, to use the premises, name and/or subjects requested to conduct a study entitled Leadership Practices, Organizational Commitment, and Turnover Intentions: A Correlational Study in a Call Center.

[redacted]
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Date

Vice President Human Resources & Administration
Title

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Name of Facility

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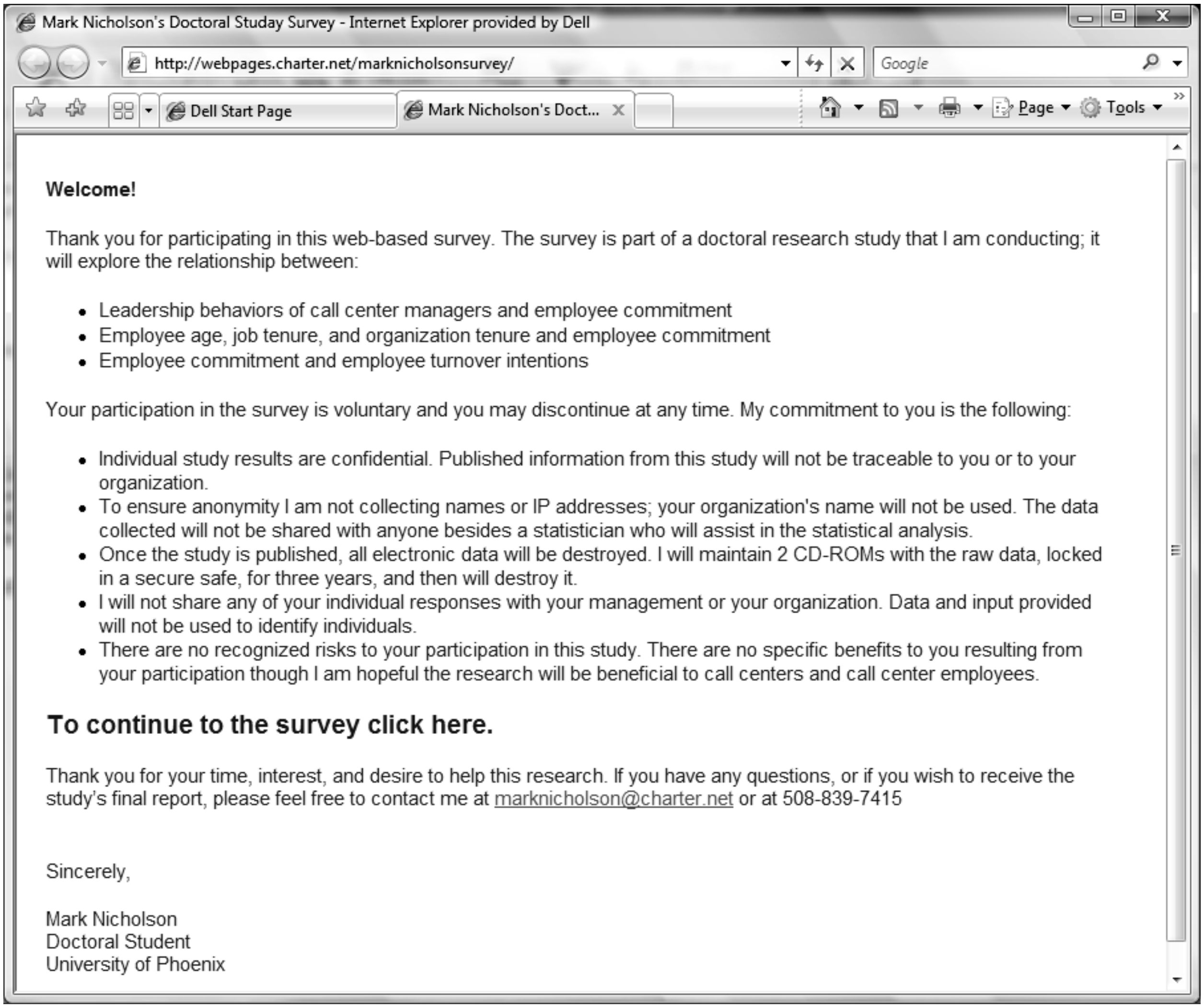

Welcome!

Thank you for participating in this web-based survey. The survey is part of a doctoral research study that I am conducting; it will explore the relationship between:

- Leadership behaviors of call center managers and employee commitment
- Employee age, job tenure, and organization tenure and employee commitment
- Employee commitment and employee turnover intentions

Your participation in the survey is voluntary and you may discontinue at any time. My commitment to you is the following:

- Individual study results are confidential. Published information from this study will not be traceable to you or to your organization.
- To ensure anonymity I am not collecting names or IP addresses; your organization's name will not be used. The data collected will not be shared with anyone besides a statistician who will assist in the statistical analysis.
- Once the study is published, all electronic data will be destroyed. I will maintain 2 CD-ROMs with the raw data, locked in a secure safe, for three years, and then will destroy it.
- I will not share any of your individual responses with your management or your organization. Data and input provided will not be used to identify individuals.
- There are no recognized risks to your participation in this study. There are no specific benefits to you resulting from your participation though I am hopeful the research will be beneficial to call centers and call center employees.

To continue to the survey click here.

Thank you for your time, interest, and desire to help this research. If you have any questions, or if you wish to receive the study's final report, please feel free to contact me at marknicholson@charter.net or at 508-839-7415

Sincerely,

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student
University of Phoenix

APPENDIX L: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Before you access the survey I ask that you read the statement below and then check one of the two boxes below.

> I acknowledge that I understand the nature of the study, any potential risks to me as a participant, and the means by which my identity will be kept confidential. Clicking on the first Radio Button below indicates that I am over the age of 18, that I am not a member of any protected category of participants (minor, pregnant woman when considered part of a designated research group of women, prisoner, or cognitively impaired), and that I give my permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in this study

Please read the following two statements and check one of the following Radio Buttons:

O I understand the above statements and GIVE PERMISSION for my survey information to be used in the study

O I understand the above statements and DO NOT GIVE PERMISSION for my survey information to be used in the study

APPENDIX M: WEB-BASED SURVEY

Directions

This survey has four sections. Section I asks for background information. Section II asks for your perceptions of your immediate manager / supervisor. Section III asks for your perceptions of your views of your organization. Section IV asks for your perceptions regarding the likelihood that you intend to leave your employer.

Be candid and honest in your answers. They represent your perceptions and are important to the research.

There are 55 questions. It is anticipated that the survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete.

Section I – Background Information

Directions for Section I

Section I asks four background questions that are important to the research. Answer the questions as best you can.

1. Which is your location: ___ Fort Lauderdale ___Miramar ___ Ada ____ Houston
2. How old are you (in years)?
3. What is your hire date? (month, year)
4. How long have you been in your role as an inbound call center agent in this organization (in years, months)?

Section II – Leadership Practices Inventory

Directions for Section I1

Section II asks you to assess the leadership behaviors of your immediate supervisor. You will see 30 statements describing his/her leadership behaviors. Read each statement carefully, and using the rating scale below, ask yourself, "How frequently does this person engage in the behavior described?"

Rating Scale

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10. Choose a number that best applies to each of the 30 statements.

1. = Almost never
2. = Rarely
3. = Seldom
4. = Once in a While
5. = Occasionally
6. = Sometimes
7. = Fairly Often
8. = Usually

9. = Very frequently
10. = Almost Always

Tips in Assessing Your Manager / Supervisor	1. Be realistic about the extent to which he/she actually engages in the behavior 2. Be as honest and accurate as you can be 3. Do not answer in terms of how you would like to see this person behave or in terms of how you think he or she should behave 4. Do answer in terms of how this person typically behaves on most days and with most people.

1. Sets a personal example of what he/she expects of others.
2. Talks about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.
3. Seeks out challenging opportunities that test his/her own skills and abilities.
4. Develops cooperative relationships among the people he/she works with.
5. Praises people for a job well done.
6. Spends time and energy making certain that people he/she works with adhere to the principles and standards that we have agreed on.
7. Describes a compelling image of what our future could be like.
8. Challenges people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.
9. Actively listens to diverse points of view.
10. Makes it a point to let people know about his/her confidence in their abilities.
11. Follows through on promises and commitments he/she makes.
12. Appeals to others to share an exciting dream of the future.
13. Searches outside the formal boundaries of his/her organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.
14. Treats others with dignity and respect.
15. Makes sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of projects.
16. Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect other people's performance.
17. Shows others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting a common vision.
18. Asks, "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected.
19. Supports the decisions that people make on their own.
20. Publicly recognizes people who exemplify commitment to shared values.
21. Builds consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.
22. Paints the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish.
23. Makes certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on.
24. Gives people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.
25. Finds ways to celebrate accomplishments.
26. Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership.
27. Speaks with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.
28. Experiments and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure.

29. Ensures that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.
30. Gives the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.

Section III – Organizational Commitment

Directions for Section I1I	Section III asks you to consider 18 statements relating to your feelings. Read each statement carefully and then choose a number from 1 to 7 based on the rating scale below that best applies to you and your feelings.
Rating Scale	The rating scale runs from 1 to 7. Choose a number that best applies to each of the 18 statements. 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Slightly Disagree 4 = Undecided 5 = Slightly Agree 6 = Agree 7 = Strongly Agree
Tips in Assessing Your Manager / Supervisor	1. Be as honest and accurate as you can be 2. Read each statement carefully. Some of the questions have words like "do not" in them so please read each statement carefully.

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
3. I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization.
4. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.
5. I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization.
6. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
7. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
8. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.
9. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.

10. I feel I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.
11. If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.
12. One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives
13. I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.
14. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.
15. I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.
16. This organization deserves my loyalty.
17. I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.
18. I owe a great deal to my organization.

Section IV – Intent to Leave

Directions for Section I1I

Section IV asks you to consider 1 question and 2 statements relating to your intentions to leave your organization. Read each statement carefully and then choose a number from 1 to 7 based on the rating scale below that best applies to you and your feelings.

Rating Scale

For question 1, choose a number, from the choices below, that best applies, to the question:

1 = Not At All Likely
2 =
3 = Somewhat Likely
4 =
5 = Quite Likely
6 =
7 = Extremely Likely

For questions 2 and 3 choose a number that best applies to each of the 2 statements.

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Slightly Disagree
4 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
5 = Slightly Agree
6 = Agree
7 = Strongly Agree

Tips in

1. Be as honest and accurate as you can be

Answering
this Question

1. How likely is it that you will actively look for a new job in the next year?
2. I often think about quitting.
3. I will probably look for a new job in the next year.

APPENDIX N: WELCOME COMMUNIQUE

____
(date)

Dear Potential Research Study Participant,

I am a doctoral student and am asking for your help. I am conducting a research study that hopes to show a relationship between the leadership behaviors of call center supervisors and the commitment level of call center agents. I am excited about the study because I believe that leadership is important and because I believe that it's people, like you and me, that make a difference in our organizations.

I will be sending you another letter in two weeks inviting you to participate in my study/survey. In this letter I will provide you with a Web URL to access and ask that you access the internet and complete the survey questions. Your participation in this research study is voluntary and your answers are confidential. I will not be asking for any names or reporting any individual responses; rather, I will be combining and aggregating all input.

I am excited about the study because I believe the results can make a difference in call centers. I recognize that my study relies on volunteers like you who are willing to offer your valuable time to answer some questions on-line. I want to thank you in advance for potentially participating in the study.

<u>To make this fun, I am sponsoring a participation contest. I will be raffling a $100 American Express gift certificate, open to all center employees, at each call center location that has at least a 25% survey completion rate</u>. Likewise, I will be raffling, a $150 American Express gift certificate, open to all center employees, at the call center that generates the highest completion rate of the four centers.

Your participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix

APPENDIX O: START-UP COMMUNIQUE

____
(date)

Dear Potential Research Study Participant,

As a follow-up to my letter of ______ I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study that hopes to show a relationship between:

- Leadership behaviors of call center managers and employee commitment
- Employee age, job tenure, and organization tenure and employee commitment
- Employee commitment and employee turnover intentions

I am excited about the study and am hopeful that you choose to participate by answering some questions. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

To participate in the on-line survey, please go to http://webpages.charter.net/marknicholsonsurvey

Once on this home page you will see some important information and a link to the actual survey. It should take less than 15 minutes to complete. In the survey, you are asked to respond to a series of questions.

Researchers like me depend on volunteers like you. Your input, which will be kept confidential, forms the basis of the research. I will not be asking for your name and your answers will not be shared with anyone in your organization. I will not be reporting any individual person information. I will gladly share with you the final research report with you if you would like.

As I mentioned in my last message, I am sponsoring a participation contest. I will be raffling a $100 American Express gift certificate, open to all center employees, at each call center location that has at least a 25% survey completion rate. Likewise, I will be raffling, a $150 American Express gift certificate, open to all center employees, at the call center that generates the highest survey completion rate of the four centers. I hope this makes this more fun and also encourages lots of participation.

Thank you in advance for your time, because I realize it is valuable. Your participation is appreciated. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix

APPENDIX P: WEEK TWO REMINDER COMMUNIQUE

____
(date)

Dear Research Study Participant,

I am writing you and am requesting 15 minutes of your time.

If you have not done so already, I respectfully ask that you mouseclick to the web site below and complete the 55-question survey. Your input, which is confidential, will be used in a research project that I am doing as part of my doctorate program at the University of Phoenix. In this study, I hope to learn more about leadership practices, organizational commitment, and turnover. While I hope you choose to participate, your participation is strictly voluntary.

To participate in the on-line survey, please go to

http://webpages.charter.net/marknicholsonsurvey/

Once on this page you will see some *getting started information*, and a link to the actual survey. It is estimated that the survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you so much for your time. It is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix

APPENDIX Q: WEEK THREE REMINDER COMMUNIQUE

____
(date)

Dear Research Study Participant,

By now you may or may not have already completed the survey I've written to you before about. If you have completed the survey, I want to thank you. If not, I would ask that you take some time, if you can spare it, in the next few days to answer some questions. The survey period will close out on ______. While I hope you choose to participate, your participation is strictly voluntary.

I am a doctoral student and part of my school requirement is to complete a research study. I am excited by the study because it involves call centers, leadership, and commitment. Your input, which is confidential, is critical to the study. In this study, I hope to show a relationship between supervisor leadership behaviors and organizational commitment.

To participate in the on-line survey, please go to

http://webpages.charter.net/marknicholsonsurvey/

Once on this home page you will see some *getting started information* and a link that will take you to the actual survey. It is estimated that the survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration. I appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix

APPENDIX R: END OF SURVEY THANK YOU COMMUNIQUE

____
(date)

Dear Research Study Participant,

Now that the survey period has ended, I wanted to thank you for either participating in the study, by responding to the survey questions, or for simply considering but declining to participate in the study. I appreciated the opportunity to survey members of your organization. I am confident that your survey responses will go along way toward helping me complete this study.

Studies, like mine, are worthwhile, if people like you participate. I recognize this and want to acknowledge your interest and involvement.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the final research study, once it is complete, please contact me. I will gladly forward a copy to you.

Again, thank you so much for your time, interest, and/or participation. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mark Nicholson

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix

APPENDIX S: LPI SURVEY ITEMS BY LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

Practice	Survey Number	Survey Item
Model the Way	1	I set a personal example of what I expect of others.
	6	I spend time and energy making certain that the people I work with adhere to the principles and standards we have agreed on.
	11	I follow through on the promises and commitments that I make.
	16	I ask for feedback on how my actions affect other people's performance.
	21	I build consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.
	26	I am clear about my philosophy of leadership.
Inspire a Shared Vision	2	I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.
	7	I describe a compelling image of what our future could be like.
	12	I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.
	17	I show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting a common vision.
	22	I paint the big picture of what we aspire to accomplish.
	27	I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.
Challenge the Process	3	I seek challenging opportunities that test my own skills and abilities.
	8	I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.
	13	I search outside the formal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.
	18	I ask, 'What can we learn?' when things don't go as expected.
	23	I make certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on.
	28	I experiment and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure.
Enable Others to Act	4	I develop cooperative relationships among the people I work with.
	9	I actively listen to diverse points of view.
	14	I treat others with dignity and respect.
	19	I support the decisions that people make on their own.

Practice	Survey Number	Survey Item
	24	I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.
	29	I ensure that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.
Encourage the Heart	5	I praise people for a job well done.
	10	I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.
	15	I make sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of our projects.
	20	I publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values.
	25	I find ways to celebrate accomplishments.
	30	I give the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.

Note. From *Leadership Practices Inventory: Participant's Workbook (3rd ed.)* (p. 11-12), by J. M. Kouzes and B. Z. Posner. Copyright 2003 by J. M. Kouzes and B. Z. Posner. Reprinted with permission (See e-mail approval on the following page).

From: Barry Posner [mailto:BPosner@scu.edu]
Sent: Sunday, July 06, 2008 7:54 PM
To: Nicholson, Mark
Subject: Re: Permission to Re-Use Leadership Practices Inventory Workbook Info

No problem. Look forward to reading your thesis.

Barry

>>> "Nicholson, Mark" <Mark.Nicholson@Teradata.com> 7/5/2008 11:34 AM >>>

Dr. Posner,

My apologies for writing you again. I am finishing up my doctoral dissertation and am working to coalesce important elements into my final

write-up.

I am a Doctoral student in a Doctor of Management program at the University of Phoenix. I am currently working on my dissertation titled, *Leadership Practices, Organizational Commitment, and Turnover Intentions: A Correlational Study in a Call* Center. As part of my research, I am incorporating the Leadership Practices Inventory. I am thrilled that my study confirmed several relationships between the leadership practices and organizational commitment amongst a population of United States-based inbound call center agents.

Request
I request permission to re-use / re-publish the "Leadership Behaviors Organized by Practice info found on pages 11-12 of the following publication in an Appendix in my Doctoral Dissertation.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2003). *Leadership practices inventory: Participant's workbook* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Pfeiffer.

I am pleased that you granted me permission to use your LPI in my study. I will send to you my signed dissertation once it is approved.

Thank you in advance and continued best wishes,

Mark Nicholson

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix

APPENDIX T: PERMISSION TO USE THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY

KOUZES POSNER INTERNATIONAL
15419 Banyan Lane
Monte Sereno, California 95030
FAX: (408) 354-9170

June 3, 2007

Mr. Mark Nicholson
[redacted]

Dear Mark:

Thank you for your request to use the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) in your dissertation. We are willing to allow you to ***reproduce*** the instrument as outlined in your letter, at no charge, with the following understandings:

(1) That the LPI is used only for research purposes and is not sold or used in conjunction with any compensated management development activities;
(2) That copyright of the LPI, or any derivation of the instrument, is retained by Kouzes Posner International, and that the following copyright statement is included on all copies of the instrument: "Copyright © 2003 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. All rights reserved. Used with permission.";
(3) That one (1) **electronic** copy of your dissertation and one (1) copy of **all** papers, reports, articles, and the like which make use of the LPI data be sent **promptly** to our attention; and,
(4) That you agree to allow us to include an abstract of your study and any other published papers utilizing the LPI on our various websites.

If the terms outlined above are acceptable, would you indicate so by signing one (1) copy of this letter and returning it to us. Best wishes for every success with your research project.

Cordially,

Barry Z. Posner, Ph.D.
Managing Partner

I understand and agree to abide by these conditions:

(Signed) ______________________ Date: 7/1/07

APPENDIX U: PERMISSION TO USE THE THREE-COMPONENT MODEL (TCM) EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT SURVEY

From: support@flintbox.com [mailto:support@flintbox.com]
Sent: Monday, May 07, 2007 11:14 AM
To: marknicholson@charter.net
Subject: [SPAM] Flintbox - License Agreement for Academic Researcher License for Use of the Survey in a Single Research Project (Academic Users Guide - Dec 2004.pdf)

Licensee: Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student
51 Blanchard Road
xxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxx

Project: TCM Employee Commitment Survey - Academic Package - Academic Researcher License for Use of the Survey in a Single Research Project (Academic Users Guide - Dec 2004.pdf)
Date: 7 May 2007 8:14 PST

TCM Employee Commitment License - Academic Researcher Use

QUESTIONNAIRE LICENSE AGREEMENT – FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCHER USE

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In this agreement, the following words, when capitalized, have the indicated meanings:

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"Inventors" indicate the authors, Dr. John Meyer and Dr. Natalie Allen, in the faculty of Social Science at UWO.

"Questionnaire" indicates the TCM Employee Commitment Survey, Academic Version 2004 developed by the Inventors. The Questionnaire includes the Users Guide and the Organizational Commitment Survey which is available in two versions; the “Original” which contains 24 questions and the “Revised” which contains 18 questions. The license granted under this Agreement includes both versions of the survey and the Users Guide and can be downloaded from this website as a single PDF file.

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(a) YOU acknowledge that the Questionnaire is a copyrighted work and that it shall retain any copyright notices contained in or associated with the Questionnaire. Any use of or reference to the Questionnaire in a Research Project shall include the following notice: “Use of the TCM Employee Commitment Survey, authored by John Meyer and Natalie Allen was made under license from the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada”.

(b) YOU agree (at the request of the Inventors) to share any results of the research conducted using the Questionnaire.

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9. GOVERNMENT END USERS: US Government end users are not authorized to use the Questionnaire under this Agreement.

10. USE OF THE WEBSOFT DOWNLOAD SERVICE: YOU represent and warrant that YOU possess the legal authority to enter into this Agreement, and that YOU shall be financially responsible for your use of the Websoft Download Service. YOU agree to be responsible for any License Fees, costs, charges and taxes arising out of your use of the Questionnaire and the Websoft Download Service. YOU are responsible for supplying any hardware or software necessary to use the Questionnaire pursuant to this Agreement.

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(c) YOU agree that no joint venture, partnership, employment, consulting or agency relationship exists between YOU and UWO as a result of this Agreement or your use of the Websoft Download Service.

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(e) No modification of this Agreement shall be binding, unless in writing and accepted by an authorized representative of each party.

(f) The provisions of this Agreement are severable in that if any provision in the Agreement is determined to be invalid or unenforceable under any controlling body of law that shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions of the Agreement.

(g) All prices are in US dollars and prices are subject to change without notice. UWO shall not be liable for any typographical errors, including errors resulting in improperly quoted prices on the Download Summary screen.

(h) YOU should print out or download a copy of this Agreement and retain it for your records.

(i) YOU consent to the use of the English language in this Agreement.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Flintbox Customer Support
Email: support@flintbox.com
Phone: 604.678.9981
Website: www.flintbox.com

APPENDIX V: PERMISSION TO USE THE MICHIGAN ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONAIRE

January 9, 2008

Yan Fu
Population Studies Center Library
Institute for Social Research
University of Michigan
426 Thompson Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248

Dear Yan,

I am a doctoral student at the University of Phoenix in Phoenix, AZ. I am requesting permission to use a portion of the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (MOAQ) in my research for my dissertation. Specifically, I would like to use the intention to turnover portion of Module 2: Job Facets.

The three survey items, and their accompanying scales, that I request to use are:

1. How likely is it that you will actively look for a new job in the next year?
2. I often think about quitting.
3. I will probably look for a new job in the next year.

My request is to use these items, solely in my doctoral dissertation research study.

If I may be granted permission to use the MOAQ, please indicate by signing below. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Nicholson
Doctoral Student, University of Phoenix
[redacted]

Permission is hereby granted to Mark Nicholson to use the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (MOAQ) for research purposes in his doctoral dissertation.

1/14/08

(signed and dated)
Yan Fu
Institute for Social Research
University of Michigan

Source: Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, "The Michigan Organizational Assessment Package Progress Report II." Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan

APPENDIX W: PERMISSION TO ADAPT A TABLE

From: Barry Posner [mailto:bposner@scu.edu]
Sent: Saturday, May 10, 2008 4:41 PM
To: mark nicholson
Subject: permission

Mark,

Permission is granted per your note of May 3, 2008.
Looking forward to receiving a copy of your dissertation when it is completed.
All the best,

Barry

May 3, 2008

Barry Z. Posner, Ph.D.
Managing Partner, Kouzes Posner International
15419 Banyan Lane
Monte Sereno, CA 95030

Dear Dr. Posner

My name is Mark Nicholson, and I am a Doctoral student in a Doctor of Management program at the University of Phoenix. I am currently working on my dissertation titled, *Leadership Practices, Organizational Commitment, and Turnover Intentions: A Correlational Study in a Call* Center.

Request
As part of my research, I would like to incorporate parts of Table 2 (Reliability (Cronbach Alpha) Coefficients for the LPI by Respondent Category from page 6 of the following:

> **Posner, B. (2002, May 12). *The leadership practices inventory: Theory and evidence behind the five practices of exemplary leadership*. Retrieved June 15, 2007, from http://media.wiley.com/assets/463/74/lc_jb_appendix.pdf**

Specifically, I request permission to reproduce and modify this information so that it appears in my dissertation as formatted in enclosure (1).

I would greatly appreciate your permission to use this information in my dissertation as requested. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Thank you,

Mark Nicholson