

**TUITION REIMBURSEMENT EFFECT ON AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT**

by

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## Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to investigate the relationship between tuition reimbursement programs and affective commitment for non-traditional business learners and an exploration of the differences between the three levels of commitment among non-traditional business learners. The study consisted of two research questions: (1) Are there significant differences in affective commitment with non-traditional business learners accepting tuition reimbursement from their employer and others who are not, and (2) Are there significant differences in affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners. The results from the Pearson's correlation and analysis of variance (ANOVA) resulted in the rejection of the study's null hypotheses. This study was successful based on 362 participants taking two research instruments: the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (ACNCS) to measure affective commitment and the Funding Questionnaire survey (FQS) for the three questions designed to determine the type of funding each participant received.

## **Dedication**

To my family and friends, there is no limit to the importance of education. I encourage you to aim high and pursue your dreams. The doors of your future will never be closed with good education.

## **Acknowledgments**

I want to thank my mother, Lendia James for believing in me and instilling the value of education to her children. I want to thank my father, Ansley James Sr. for showing me how to be a provider and never to quit when the challenge gets difficult. To my brothers and sisters for understanding when I could not be around for family or other events. The love and support from family and friends during the course of this dissertation will never be forgotten.

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### Introduction to the Problem

Organizational commitment is important for retaining employees and attracting new hires to an organization. Because employers can no longer promise job security, many organizations offer tuition reimbursement programs as a way to attract and retain employees (Benson, 2006). Organizations with tuition reimbursement programs fully understand their value in improving organizational commitment of their workers (Guffey, West, & White, 1997). Tuition reimbursement programs paid by the employer allow employees the opportunity for self-development and for learning new skills while attending an institution of higher learning. In 1999, the National Compensation Survey (NCS) reported that 47% of employees qualified for job-related tuition assistance; between 2005 and 2008, that percentage had increased to 56% of qualified employees (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). Such a program can cover the expenses of job-related courses or degree completion that normally could be a financial burden to an employee.

One of the many types of organizational commitment shown by employees is affective commitment. Affective commitment is defined as, “the want to stay component. If affectively committed, the employee is emotionally attached and identifies with the organization”(Meyer, Allen, & Sulsky, 1999, para 6). Organizations with tuition reimbursement programs normally have higher morale, commitment, and performance compared to those without employee reimbursement plans (Aquila, 2007). However,

little research-based evidence is available about affective commitment and tuition reimbursement programs.

### **Background of the Study**

Bartlett (2001) suggested that organizational commitment “refers to a person’s type and strength of attachment to his or her organization” (p. 336). This definition suggests that the type and level of commitment will determine the likelihood of employees leaving an organization voluntarily. Although limited research is available on continuance and normative commitment with respect to tuition reimbursement programs, employers currently investing in strengthening their employees’ organizational commitment with tuition reimbursement programs may reduce workers’ willingness to leave (Benson, 2006).

The research on continuance commitment explains that this type of commitment “is based upon the employee’s analysis of the costs associated with leaving the organization” (Meyer et al., 1999, para. 6). Allen and Meyer (1996) suggested that employees with continuance commitment do not leave the organization because they are financially obligated to stay. An employee could be required to stay after participating in a tuition reimbursement program in which the employer paid the employee’s expenses for a self-development course or a degree. Some organizations initiate commitment contracts with employees to reduce turnover after degree completion. The term *golden handcuffs* refers to a requirement for employees to commit to remain with their organization for one or two years after accepting tuition reimbursement for earning a degree or advanced skills certificate (Benson, 2006).

Normative commitment is another type of commitment, in which “the employee feels a sense of obligation or duty to the organization and thus feels that it would be wrong to leave” (Meyer et al., 1999, para. 6). Allen & Meyer (1996) suggested that employees with normative commitment feel a responsibility to the organization. The marketable skills obtained by earning a degree through tuition reimbursement can increase an employee’s willingness to stay, based on the organizational support the employee received (Benson, Finegold, & Mohrman, 2004). Tuition reimbursement programs provide employees with an opportunity for self-development, and for some, the expectation of a promotion or salary increases.

Each individual’s commitment to the organization varies, which could create challenges for any organization implementing steps to promote organizational commitment. Techniques effective for one organization or industry to improve its employees’ organizational commitment may not be equally effective for another organization in a similar competitive market. The strategies for attracting and retaining top talent could depend on the organizational commitment developed by each unique, culturally diverse workforce. An organization will not be able to appease everyone or promise lifetime employment and should not implement techniques that do not fit or outside the norm of the company’s culture (Chang, Yeh, & Yeh, 2007).

The lack of employee commitment and perceived broken promises will challenge any attempts to implement steps to promote a unique, culturally diverse workforce. A decline in the financial stability of the organization could affect cash reward programs and cost-of-living increases that the organization normally provides to associates. Associated challenges arise when steps to implement benefits or rewards are not tied

directly to the market and financial performance of the organization (Chang et al., 2007). A decline in the firm's financial performance may lead to discontinuing or suspending tuition assistance, merit pay, and pay for performance, which combine to contribute to employees' perceptions of broken promises (Kickul, 2001). In today's workforce, a lack of organizational investment in cash reward programs and cost-of-living increases for attracting and retaining top talent could provide employees reasons to search for new opportunities with a different employer.

The tuition reimbursement benefit to employees allows them to keep their current jobs, while taking classes to earn a higher paying position within an organization or with another one. The marketable skills obtained with earning a degree through tuition reimbursement can increase an employee's willingness to stay based on the organizational support. Employee organizational commitment could be in jeopardy when firms offer tuition reimbursement for courses unrelated to the employees' current job descriptions, since such unrelated reimbursement has increased intent to leave. Employees receiving tuition reimbursement for non-job related roles are more likely to leave the organization once the degree is completed (Benson et al., 2004).

### **Statement of the Problem**

While adequate research is available on tuition reimbursement alone and on the different types of organizational commitment, regarding how the various types may relate to intent to stay, research is scarce on the effect of tuition reimbursement on affective commitment. The objective of the study was to investigate the potential relationship of tuition reimbursement on organizational commitment. Cappelli (2004) affirmed there is

not sufficient research on tuition reimbursement programs, which calls for additional research to determine effect on affective commitment.

Most studies found in the literature do not address tuition reimbursement programs and affective commitment. Therefore, a gap is present in the literature and the intent of this study is to address that gap. Any existing relationship between tuition reimbursement and employee intent to stay is unknown. The research shows when organizations commit to developing employees with on-the-job training or tuition reimbursement, turnover is much lower than in similar organizations without employee development programs. Organizations with 50 or more employees attribute low turnover numbers to 68% of their workers receiving tuition reimbursement for training related activities. High turnover organizations report an estimated 26% of their employees receive tuition reimbursement (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996). Most current research focuses is on the amount of money organizations spend on tuition reimbursement, but there is limited research on the value employees and employers receive from the program. Most of the research surrounds the financial benefit to the organization, but does not examine the employee state of mind for intent to stay (Larson, 2007).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between tuition reimbursement programs and affective commitment for non-traditional business learners. The participants of this study received partial or full tuition reimbursement to obtain the statistical data necessary to analyze the instruments' results.

## Rationale

The rationale for this study stems from the lack of research in the area of tuition reimbursement's effect on affective commitment. Tuition reimbursement is a factor that contributes to organizational commitment, as long as the financial assistance is available. Determining whether this type of investment in employees creates affective commitment is difficult due to the lack of research surrounding the topics (Cappelli, 2004).

Organizations face challenges in retaining employees after offering tuition reimbursement because their workers become valuable to competitors. Turnover is a possibility soon after degree completion, if employee-employer commitment to the organization was not established during the tuition reimbursement period (Cappelli, 2004). Tuition reimbursement can assist an employee in achieving personal self-development and a higher paying job, but recognition and organizational commitment increases intent to stay (McGuire, Houser, Jarrar, Moy, & Wall, 2003).

The research on organizational commitment problems begins with the lack of job security for workers; the "situation has created problems for firms, as it undermines the traditional employment relationship in which employees exchange commitment and loyalty to a firm for a credible promise of long-term employment" (Benson, 2006, p. 173). Employers have to deal with the impossible task of limiting layoffs so employees will not have to look for other employment and can stay with the organization. A review of the literature has not provided research on a significant correlation between affective organizational commitment and employee tuition reimbursement programs (Benson, 2006).

## Research Questions

Two research questions will guide the proposed study:

1. Are there significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement?

H01 There are no there significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement.

2. Are there significant differences in affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners?

H02 There are no significant differences in affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners.

## Significance of the Study

The goal of this quantitative study was to examine statistical results from the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales and funding questionnaire survey for determining the effects of tuition reimbursement on affective commitment from a sample of the population registered to Zoomerang, an online portal. The research contribution to the body of knowledge for organizations seeking reasons for developing a tuition reimbursement program, and determining whether such a program is the right fit

for the organization. This correlational study contribution to the body of knowledge by examining tuition reimbursement literature reviews, data results from research studies, and seminal work on expectancy theory. The contribution to knowledge continues with showing the relationship between organizations offering tuition reimbursement to employee retention, where the statistical procedures extend the validity and reliability of this study. This study was able to show organizations the importance of a tuition reimbursement program as a motivating factor for reducing their employees' intent to leave the company. This study was also able to show organizations a statistical correlation between tuition reimbursement and affective commitment, and recommendations for future research.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Affective commitment.** This type of commitment “is the ‘want to stay’ component. If affectively committed, the employee is emotionally attached and identifies with the organization” (Meyer et al., 1999, para 6).

**Agency theory.** “Individuals will shirk (i.e. exert no effort) on a task unless it somehow contributes to their own economic well-being” (Bonner & Sprinkle, 2002, p. 308).

**Career development.** “Formal education, job experiences, relationships, and abilities that help prepare employees for the future” (Noe, 2002, p. 282).

**Continuance commitment.** “This type of commitment is based upon the employee’s analysis of the costs associated with leaving the organization” (Meyer et al., 1999, para 6).

**Expectancy theory.** “The specific outcomes attained by a person are dependent not only on the choices that he makes but also on events that are beyond his control” (Vroom, 1995, p. 20).

**Employee compensation programs.** “Compensation and reward systems for employees are being modified at an unheard of pace. More firms are compensating their employees based on some type of performance-based system” (Aquila, 2007, p. 11).

**Intent to leave.** “Voluntary turnover has generally been described as a consequence of employees initiating the termination of their employee-organization relationship” (Udechukwu and Mujtaba, 2007, p. 165).

**Non-cash payments and benefits.** These can be considered “prizes for employee incentive plans, special parking spaces, employee of the month recognition, years of service awards, clothing with firm’s logo, vanity license plates, etc” (Aquila, 2007, p. 12).

**Non-traditional business learners.** These are considered working adults who “are highly motivated, bring valuable insights and experiences to the classroom, and often challenge traditional ways of thinking” (Marques, 2012, p. 104) while seeking a Bachelor of Science in Management or Business Administration.

**Normative commitment.** “The employee feels a sense of obligation or duty to the organization and thus feels that it would be wrong to leave” (Meyer et al., 1999, para 6).

**Organizational commitment.** “Refers to a person’s type and strength of attachment to his or her organization” (Bartlett, 2001, p. 336).

**Tuition reimbursement.** “The employer provided cash payment to the employee for his or her participation in a formal education program” (Lee & Clery, 1999, p. 7).

### **Assumptions**

Assumptions surrounding this research included, but were not limited to:

1. Organizational sponsored tuition reimbursement programs increase employee’s intent to stay and recruitment options.
2. This study sampled 362 non-traditional students registered to an online portal, Zoomerang accepting tuition reimbursement from their employer for generalization on the population.
3. Organizational compensation programs can increase employee commitment to the company and performance when the benefit is directly tied to attainable work related business goals.
4. The Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (ACNCS) and funding questionnaire survey (FQS) will serve as a reliable and valid survey for data collection on participants in this study.
5. Participants accepting organizational sponsored tuition reimbursement programs will complete the entire ACNCS and FQS.

## Limitations

Limitations of this research include, but are not limited to:

1. The ability to make generalizations on the population from only a statistical sample of participants registered to the online portal, Zoomerang.
2. The possibility that a few participants do not fully answer all the questions correctly and honestly.
3. A possible decline in non-traditional business learners' enrollment in higher educational institutions accepting funds from their employer due to the lack tuition reimbursement benefits.

## Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Vroom's (1964) *Work and Motivation* is most famous for the theoretical work into expectancy theory becoming a key factor in analyzing work motivation. The primary focus was to explain decisions made by subjects of the experiment and not the data of the scientific methods to compare decisions between subjects. The author agrees that the basis of expectancy theory deals with a subject's decisions being subjectively rational. Four decades ago, when the book was written, personal meaning and perspectives were not accepted unless mentioned in the choice of problems and methodologies. Authors wrote strictly objectively and factually in expressing the research of the time. Vroom was able to apply expectancy theory in determining why individuals choose certain jobs, in explaining concepts behind employees being satisfied

with their performance, and providing reasons for effective workers. These concepts are the basis for other authors' research in analyzing the relationship among job satisfaction, employee performance, tuition reimbursement, and organizational commitment.

In Crotty (1998), the tradition that most likely influenced the author's work on expectancy theory was positivism, where information is received from logical and scientific experiments. This tradition attempts to provide understanding on human and social reality with the use of controls and predictability. Vroom (1964) indentified aspects of society in his approach to explain what is observed through steps done by scientific methods. The collection of data through surveys and other methods allows for practical problems to be analyzed in developing knowledge. The data from tuition reimbursement and employee expectations is viewed in a positivism tradition where information and results are collected from the controlled experiments.

Camman and Lawler (1973) studied the reaction of a group of workers about a pay incentive program. These researchers' qualitative study collected data through interviews and questionnaires from three work groups consisting of men with seniority in their respective companies. These authors noted that pay incentive programs might not lead to the employer's expectation of increase productivity. Employer tuition reimbursement, merit pay, and bonus plans must have links to employee performance. As long as the employees perceive they can reach the level of performance necessary to achieve an incentive will determine the expectants effectiveness.

## **Organization of the Remainder of the Study**

Chapter Two will provide a literature review of employee compensation programs, organizational commitment, and tuition reimbursement programs. The literature review section will cover various employee compensation programs for organizations to consider, discuss how broken promises can affect employee commitment, and the benefit of tuition reimbursement in attracting and retaining top talent. Chapter Three will describe the research methodology including design, sample, data collection, and analysis. Chapter Four will present the results of this study. Chapter Five contains a discussion, implications, and recommendations for future studies on this topic.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Tuition Reimbursement for Attracting and Retaining**

Organizations offer tuition assistance to attract new hires and retain current employees by providing developmental opportunities. Tuition assistance programs are paid by the employer allowing employees the opportunity for self-development and to learn new skills, while attending an institute of higher learning. This program can cover the expenses of job-related courses or degree completion that normally could be a financial burden to an employee. In order to inform this study, literature from Cammann and Lawler (1973); Guffey et al. (1997); Meyer, Allen, and Topolnytsky, (1998); Stajkovic and Luthans (2001); and Bonner and Sprinkle (2002) will be examined.

According to the research of Guffey et al. (1997), tuition reimbursement programs improve employees' overall commitment to the organization based on the financial investment in their training. Employers have to deal with employees accepting tuition reimbursement to earn a degree or not, and if their workers would be willing to leave the organization or stay. There have been cases where employees who participated in tuition reimbursement did not complete their degree but continued to work for the company. This could have been due to a poor job market or lack of compensation at another firm. In one study, employees who received tuition reimbursement from their organization had shown a reduction in turnover (Benson et al., 2004).

Organizations offering tuition assistance do not always cover the total expenses related to taking a class or completing a degree. Some companies will only provide

tuition assistance toward job-related courses, after the employee completes the class with a C or better. Eligibility for tuition assistance can begin on the first day or after a full year of employment depending on the policies of the organization. Guffey et al. (1997) research suggests that the organizational commitment and retention increases among employees, after providing tuition assistance for self-development.

Under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) section 127, employers are able to provide a tax-free amount up to \$5,250 a year for tuition assistance to employees. Employees receiving tax-free tuition assistance enroll in undergraduate, graduate, or training certificate programs for advanced degrees or professional development. Employees enrolling in four-year degree programs have little intentions of voluntary turnover, while receiving tuition assistance from their employer (Fenton, 2004). In a culturally diverse environment, this investment is a marketing tool for attracting and retaining top.

The majority of employees entering a work profession has a four-year degree or an advanced skills certificate, and understands the need for on-going training and development. Organizations are able to provide for continual training and development with tuition reimbursement in developing a career path for employees with various skills (Blau, 2003). A contemporary trend for tuition reimbursement allows employees to take courses that may not directly apply to their current positions.

Employee compensation programs were established to increase performance in private and public organizations. The same employee compensation program will not work across the board for all types of jobs. Some programs and motivators are more effective than others, due to differences in the workforce of each organization. Each organization will need to tailor tuition reimbursement and other employee compensation

programs to their employees' job responsibilities to maximize motivation and performance (Chang et al., 2007).

Offering tuition reimbursement allows the employee to take courses for self-development relating to the current job. In some cases these job-related courses prepare employees for their on the job responsibilities. As organizations continue to state their employees are their "most important asset" (Bassi, 2008, para 2), then an emphasis should be on creating an environment that is effective in attracting and retaining top talent in a culturally diverse workforce. By neglecting to recognize, reward, or invest in employees sends a clear message on the true value of these assets (Bassi, 2008).

The lack of training and occupational options was a strong indicator for employees searching for new employment (Blau et al., 2008). Providing a career path gives employees more control over their development for success, and company's offering tuition reimbursement can increase organizational commitment (Blau, 2003). The use of tuition reimbursement for employee self-development and effect on organizational commitment is also contributing to the depth of knowledge and experience a firm can retain (Blau et al., 2008).

One study reported that incentive programs could increase employee performance by 44%, when organizations have the right programs to motivate their employees (Juergen, 2005). Luthans and Stajkovic's (1999) survey suggested that the majority of Fortune 1000 companies provide monetary rewards to employees, with 80% of that being some type of financial compensation program. There is a downside for employers offering tuition reimbursement to employees for self-development or to learn a new skill.

The financial obligation for seeking new skills to change careers is reduced when employees receive tuition reimbursement from their employer (Acker, 2006).

Student employees are participating in this organizational compensation program to earn multiple degrees or advanced skills to increase chances of finding a better or higher paying job. According to Acker (2006), the University of Maryland surveyed part-time MBA students where 60% to 70% of the response made the decision to switch professions or employers. The results were similar to the University of Chicago graduation class with 60% reporting they expected to switch careers.

### **Commitment through Compensation Programs**

Organizations investing in their employees with tuition reimbursement have seen improvement in their financial performance (Bassi, 2008). Organizations need to develop a direct correlation between performance and compensation. The impact of a tuition reimbursement is most effective when the program is associated with feedback and reward (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2001).

A review of some current research studies should benefit organizations in establishing effective compensation programs and incentive strategies. The examination of the studies should reveal common factors that contribute to the success of organizational compensation programs. According to Dulebohn, Molloy, Pichler, and Murray (2009), organizational compensation programs can play an important role in employees' motivation and productivity, especially when the company offering an expensive compensation benefit program consisting of tuition reimbursement, which is a

concern for organizations during difficult financial times. These programs affect the company's net profits by adding additional expenses to the labor cost.

Organizations continue to offer compensation programs like tuition reimbursement as part of union bargaining agreements and tax advantages. Clearly these are not the only reasons, since employers want to continue to be successful and competitive in the market. But being successful and competitive require retaining top talent, using contemporary trends in organizational compensation programs (Blau, Chapman, Pred, & Lopez, 2009).

The influence on the compensation programs described in this study can have positive and negative motivating affects on employee productivity. These searches also cross referenced expectancy theory as a mean of evaluating compensation programs on employee motivation and productivity, which goes back four decades. The collection of data through surveys on compensation programs and motivation allow practical problems to be analyzed in developing organizational productivity. The data on compensation programs and employees expectations can prove to be very helpful to organizations attempting to increase productivity. Organizations unable to afford financial incentives and the tracking of individual ability should not expect long-term success implementing compensations programs as motivating factors to increase productivity (Dulebohn et al., 2009).

A continuance commitment is established when employers have employees sign contracts or be with the company for a specific amount of time before receiving tuition reimbursement. These employers can expect turnover for the company to be low while their employees are accepting tuition reimbursement due to the cost associated with the

compensation program. Cappelli (2004) explains that about 20% of U.S. employers implement this approach, and employees are expected to stay six months to two years after receiving the last tuition reimbursement. As expected, employees continue gainful employment with the organization to continue receiving compensation benefits for degree completion.

Employees looking for work identify with organizations providing compensation programs establishing an affective commitment. Cappelli (2004) suggested that a few of these new hires who “have higher ability and motivation self-select into firms with tuition assistance plans. The employees who receive tuition assistance are tied to their firm for many years” (p. 220). Affective commitment is created from receiving tuition reimbursement emotionally attaching some employees to their organizations because of the benefit of higher education.

Bonner and Sprinkle (2002) set out to accomplish objectives consisting of cash rewards for individual effort, incentives affecting task performance, and analyzing accounting influencers and cash rewards on effort and productivity. The objectives were a guide to test the hypothesis that cash rewards increase effort and performance more so than if they were not offered at all. The article suggests expectancy theory and agency theory have a greater impact for cash rewards to increase performance and desired behavior. On the other hand, this same article also provides references to other researched articles explaining the effect of cash rewards causing a decrease in productivity and performance. Compensation programs can have a positive or negative motivating factor when aligning goals for productivity. There are many motivating variables to consider when evaluating compensation programs on the effectiveness of

organizational productivity. Communicating to employees an achievable goal is one of the best motivators for linking compensation programs to increase desired organizational productivity (Bonner & Sprinkle, 2002).

Bonner, Hastie, Sprinkle, and Young (2000) reviewed the effects of monetary incentives on performance. Their study collected data from 131 experiments analyzing task type and compensation programs' effects on increasing motivation and productivity. The study tested two hypotheses, one explaining how task type effects any correlations between monetary incentives and productivity and the second on how compensation programs affect the correlations between monetary incentives and productivity. The results suggest there is a correlation with compensation programs causing an increase in productivity.

The Cammann and Lawler (1973) study is much older, but relevant in discussing the influence of these compensation programs on employee motivation and organizational productivity. These authors studied the reaction of a group of workers about a pay incentive program, noting that compensation programs might not lead to the employer's expectation of increased productivity. Employee compensation programs like tuition reimbursement and recognition must have links to employee performances. When the employees perceive they can reach the level of performance necessary to achieve an incentive will determine effectiveness of the program.

The researchers' qualitative study collected data through interviews and questionnaires from three work groups consisting of men with seniority in their respective companies. Dependability of the research is established through an explanation of the sequential events, which led to an employee's feeling that the

compensation program had value in increasing performance. The authors pointed out that there were some limitations and the results from the study should be viewed with caution. However, expectancy models can be effective in correlating employee compensation programs directly with job performance. The authors admit social scientists should have knowledge of the organization's processes, before attempting to establish compensation programs to employee work responsibilities (Cammann & Lawler, 1973).

### **Organizational Commitment Challenges**

Potential challenges are present with undertaking a tuition reimbursement program if the organization is trying to create an environment that is effective in attracting and retaining today's workforce. Management support for a tuition reimbursement program is necessary to encourage employees to take advantage of it (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2001). The associated challenges in implementing steps to promote a culturally diverse workforce will be explained through employee's commitment to the organization and vice versa. Employees with an affective commitment may feel an emotional obligation and involvement with the company. An employee with continuance commitment is looking to stay employed with their current employer or another. Normative commitment deals with an employee feeling a personal and moral attachment to the organization (Meyer, Allen, & Topolnytsky, 1998). The challenge for organizations is building on the commitment of their employees to continue to promote a culturally diverse workforce.

Employees may feel an affective or normative commitment toward their organization after receiving employee involvement incentives. Employees participating in tuition assistance to earn a degree, using flextime to care for family, volunteering for company outreach programs to increase reward points, and continually meeting performance review standards have a greater commitment and involvement with the organization. An employee with continuance commitment considers the potential financial losses for not being able to pay on personal obligations if they were to leave their organization (Meyer et al., 1998). Routine layoffs and poor communication presents a challenge for organizations attempting to build on employee affective or normative commitment.

The commitment level of the employee is challenged when organizations layoff staff and hire fewer full time workers. This situation causes doubt in the employee's mind regarding his or her own position within the company. Organizations cannot guarantee employment for life as seen in the middle of the twentieth century, when employer and employee commitment to each other was not an issue. Currently, organizations are experiencing economic downturns, affecting their financial performance that can lead to a reduction in the workforce. Organizations witness a decrease in employee performance and morale associated with the lack of commitment by the company to retain employees (Meyer et al., 1998).

Unfulfilled promises can have considerable impacts on implementing steps to promote a unique, culturally diverse workforce. These impacts present a challenge for increasing performance, commitment, and reducing turnover intentions. The promises perceived by the employee are not written or verbally spoken, but come in the form of a

psychological contract. Psychological contracts have been around for some time involving non-lawful binding agreement between an employee and employer. Employees willingly give their time and effort to improve the success of the organization, in return expecting gainful employment, self-development opportunities, and commitment from the employer (Kickul, 2001).

Employers face challenges implementing these steps when the cash flow is unavailable to cover employee's tuition expenses. Employees enroll in four-year institutes expecting to receive tuition assistance until the degree is complete. Employers have the right to discontinue the tuition assistance program at any time, regardless of the financial obligation left on the employee (Fenton, 2004). This situation can ruin the trust and organizational commitment toward the company affecting the work environment. A perceived breach of contract can affect the employee morale, and increasing intent to turnover (Kickul, 2001).

The associated challenges in implementing a flextime benefit may vary based on job type and personnel. The lack of supervision tends to be an issue when managers work different schedules and are not able to oversee the employee directly (Haar, 2007). Organizations offering flextime incur additional utility expenses with keeping the heating and power on past normal business hours. Another major concern with flextime is providing security for personnel and access to locked facilities. The potential for theft is higher with a flextime option when there is minimum security (Schmidt & Duenas, 2002).

The challenges of implementing a pay for performance or merit pay program to promote a culturally diverse workforce involve poor managerial decision-making on the

right program for the organization, the firm's financial stability, and requirement process to determine which employees are eligible (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2001). Implementing challenges occur when the employee involvement programs are not directly tied to the market and financial performance of the organization (Chang et al., 2007). Employees are able to manipulate managers when the decision to reward individuals for a particular behavior or nice job that is not directly tied to a goal. While attempting to create an opportunity to earn a reward, employees can change their behavior to match the manager they know reward employees for smiling or looking busy at work. This is not part of the process for a successful implementation of a pay for performance program (Chang et al., 2007).

During a recession, some companies struggle financially to survive the market, and are not able to continue paying out on organizational pay for performance or merit pay bonus reward programs. Being an employee, one comes to expect and know when the merit pay or compensation bonus will be in that check to pay personal obligations consisting of tuition expenses, medical bills, or family emergencies. For the organization to discontinue or suspend these programs mid-year will be perceived as a broken promise, especially when employees fulfilled their promise of coming to work to help develop the company's success (Chang et al., 2007).

The challenge of implementing an effective online merchandise program arises when employers promise a variety of rewards that the incentive company is not able to fulfill. Organizations need to research incentive companies to identify those offering the best customer service and variety of reward products. A unique, culturally diverse workforce will be attracted to different quality products, since offering jewelry and

cooking supplies may not motivate some male employees. When employees become uninterested in the online merchandise rewards due to a lack variety, the employee involvement program ceases to be effective. Organizations offering online reward programs need to provide a choice of options. Employees should be worth more than just a Blockbuster, Best Buy, Wal-Mart, or Target gift card for a job well done in contributing to the financial performance of the company (Juergen, 2005).

### **Recognition**

The contemporary trends in organizational programs like tuition reimbursement and recognition may continue to evolve based on what the competition is offering and the financial performance of the firm. Recognition of employees can be a powerful tool during difficult financial times, when the company is not able to afford cash bonuses, all expense paid trips, tuition aid, and wellness incentives. Compensation programs are not just financial rewards to an employee. According to Struwing (2009), an organizational compensation program can simply be recognizing an employee for a job well done, perhaps by recognizing the individual on the front page of the company newsletter or in an advertisement in the local paper. Organizational compensation programs are more effectively when they fit into the financial ability of the company attempting to develop committed employees (Struwing, 2009).

Lack of recognition for job performance can lead to dissatisfaction or loss of interest in the company. Recognizing employees can benefit retention and limit any misappropriation of the company's time and resources. Contemporary trends in

organizational compensation programs should be evaluated based on the cost and significance to the company, where simply recognizing an employee only takes time.

Other forms of recognition include cash bonuses and company paid trips, after employees meet goals set by the organization. These forms of recognition have contributed to a rise in financial performance for Proforma, a printing company (Busch, 2009). The employee's goal is to reach \$1 million or more in sales by the end of each year to be recognized as a member of the Million-Dollar club. The recognition for achieving established sales goals includes an all-expense paid and luxurious trip for two with other reward earners. This form of recognition, tied to organizational performance, continues to be successful in motivating employees to succeed (Busch, 2009).

Recognition using cash bonuses can include pay for performance, merit pay, or gift cards awarded at the end of the month or every six months. Organizations like WebbMason review and communicate the goals for the company's compensation plan before the start of the next year. Cash bonus recognition can range from \$100 to \$2,500, depending on the impact the employee made that resulted in financial benefits to the organization. Employees can achieve an annual bonus, if the organization reaches the net income goal for the year (Busch, 2009). Cash bonus recognition is more effective when employees are accountable for their individual goals that contribute to the financial success of the organization (Struwing, 2009).

Companies should not limit recognizing employees based on management's assessment alone. Recognizing an individual should also incorporate feedback from other employees and customers of the organization. Employee involvement can contribute to the success of contemporary trends in organizational compensation

programs, which moves away from performance reviews determining cash rewards (Busch, 2009). Nominated employees should be made aware that his or her efforts were recognized by an internal or external source that prompted the cash bonus. The recommendation and meeting the employee's established goals should determine the size of the cash bonus (Busch, 2009). Cash rewards are primarily used to motivate and increase in employee productivity, but they also cater to the employee's needs for security, feedback, and self-esteem (Helm, Holladay, Tortorella, & Candio, 2007).

### **Research Designs**

Hanson and Grimmer (2007) explained that much of the academic marketing methods and a large amount of the research was examined by using a quantitative approach. Using a quantitative study to examine the effect of tuition reimbursement on affective commitment allows the researcher to identify the variables of the study and their relationships. Surveys are necessary to collect numerical data from a sample of the population regarding commitment and views for the focus of the study. Personal interviews have also been done to collect this type of data, but that is mostly qualitative and not preferred by this researcher. The intent of this study was to make a generalization consistent with the findings from the examined sample.

Experimental research was not the ideal method of choice for the proposed study, based on the design purpose of evaluating the cause and effect of variables. The focus of the study does not deal with examination of the employees participating or not participating in tuition reimbursement regarding the outcome of increasing affective commitment. Such an approach would require random assignment of participants to a

control or experimental group to monitor the effects. The challenge with an experimental design for this study would be examining organizational commitment when an individual from both groups plans to leave the organization after degree completion. One could argue the group receiving tuition reimbursement would be more likely to stay with the organization, but there is limited evidence to support this claim using an experimental design (McMillan, 2008).

The quasi-experimental approach is a less random design without a control group that should not assume a cause or effect. Researchers choose this approach over experimental design when attempting to study real-life circumstances. Quasi-experimental design still allows for manipulating of the independent variable, which occurs in natural settings and groups. The challenge with this approach is similar to that of an experimental design in organizations, because employers cannot offer some groups tuition reimbursement and not offer it to others who may qualify for the same tuition assistance (McMillan, 2008).

The challenges with conducting a descriptive study involve examining the data for relationship purposes and not thoroughly describing the participants or survey. A descriptive study design is best suited for early research stages describing the employee's current perspective on accepting tuition reimbursement or the intention behind self-development, but not for following student employees through degree completion. These surveys include demographics involving age, race, and gender where mistakes could be made inputting the data for descriptive purposes. The descriptive study approach involves requiring the participant to describe his or her attitude on the variables in the study (Swanson & Holton, 2005).

A comparative study “investigates the relationship of one variable to another by examining differences in the dependent variable between two groups of subjects” (McMillan, 2008, para. 3). The challenge with conducting a comparative study consists of failing to describe the participants and measuring tools properly. The research design depends on graphs and reliable data for reporting on the various groups in the study. The purpose of a comparative study design is not for describing cause or effect, but for comparing the variance on two or more groups.

A comparative research design would be appropriate if the intent of the study was to investigate the differences in intent to stay between men and women receiving tuition reimbursement. This design is the second best option for exploring the content of the proposed study. The descriptive research design plays a part early on in the study with means, percentages, and graphs of employees receiving tuition reimbursement. A comparative research design does not help researchers come to any sort of conclusion on the relationships among two or more variables. An experimental design would require random sampling of control groups for examining those employees participating or not in tuition reimbursement on the outcome of intent to stay. The quasi-experimental approach was not an option, because surveying employees receiving tuition reimbursement was not a difficult situation (McMillan, 2008).

A correlational study is often used to evaluate the relationship between variables (Swanson & Holton, 2005). Correlational challenges involve misinterpreting the relationship between variables leading to cause and effect. When the instrument is not reliable, the evaluation of any correlation between the variables is not as easily

determined. When dealing with large sample sizes and numerous variables, the statistical data may show a correlation even if none is present (McMillan, 2008).

The various quantitative research methods discussed in this study definitely have challenges to overcome. The researcher should examine the intent behind the study for determining which quantitative research design will serve that researcher best. All methods clearly depend on the data collection process being standardized, controlled, and repeatable leading to examining the information using a statistical tool. These steps are in place to strengthen the validity and reliability of the study. When these quantitative research procedures are followed appropriately, the findings can prove to be of value to organizations and researchers making business decisions or generalizing about the target market.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are important for this type of study. Another researcher should be able to duplicate the process using the same instrument to examine the effect of tuition reimbursement on affirmative commitment, and each time the results should be repeatable for reliability and measure the intent for validity. After reviewing the literature, it becomes apparent that one should not expect 100 percent participation response to the online survey, even if the survey is important to a study in limiting issues associated with validity and reliability. The study may not be deemed acceptable to the body of knowledge, if the instrument used by the researcher was not both valid and reliable (Swanson & Holton, 2005).

There may be some non-traditional students who are biased for or against the study who will respond. At the same time, other students may not complete or return the survey for various reasons. This normally influences the quality of the survey estimates involving the sample frame, sample process, and sample size. The study depends on those taking part in the sample to give information needed to compile an accurate description of the population (Swanson & Holton, 2005).

The issue with validity and reliability in the Buddin and Kapur (2002) military study dealt with time limitations for being able to determine if earning a degree increased re-enlistment in the military. The study recognized that over a two-year period, a soldier might only have completed six semester hours, which is well below what is required to complete an associate's or bachelor's degree. A potential external threat to validity deals with service members being offered higher paying jobs in the public sector.

For the quantitative information used by Pattie et al. (2006), the validity and reliability of the data was determined when the researchers replicated their methods at a southwestern university taking part in the online survey. These authors surveyed only business graduates students from a single university. They discussed weakness in the single variable on the influence tuition reimbursement could have on turnover intentions.

By comparison, Larson's (2007) qualitative study demonstrated the dependability of the data by sharing the several common themes received from the nine interviews. The majority of these participants did not expect to leave their current jobs after degree completion, but did reveal that they received more responsibilities on the job or promotions. Larson's (2007) study refrained from proposing hypotheses before the data

collection process, allowing the participants' answers to the research questions to determine reliability and validity.

The Benson et al. (2004) and Benson (2006) articles related to internal validity in establishing a causal relationship for tuition reimbursement and intent to turnover. The potential threat to internal validity for Benson's (2006) article was excluding employees who were rehired after being involuntarily removed during the study. The Benson et al. (2004) article's threat to internal validity dealt with the employer running out of the resources to pay tuition benefits and the closing of plants during the study. These researchers provided descriptive statistics, correlations, and regressive data for describing the validity and reliability in the quantitative study.

### **Summary**

A review of the literature revealed a few challenges with increasing organizational commitment through the different types of compensation plans offered by employers (Chang et al., 2007). These challenges could be part of the reason there is no clear and recognizable research on the relationship between tuition reimbursement and affective commitment. This study will attempt to bridge the gap in the literature regarding any correlation between tuition reimbursement and affective commitment. The research body of knowledge appears to be lacking significant insight into the two topics prompting further research.

Organizations should not focus on tuition reimbursement programs as primary motivators, when employees' productivity can increase with the right amount of recognition and respect. Tuition reimbursement can assist an employee to achieve

personal self-development and a higher paying job, but recognition and organizational commitment increases intent to stay (McGuire et al., 2003). An organization should consider recognizing employees after earning a degree or advanced skill certificate who participated in tuition reimbursement programs (Blau et al., 2008). Organizational compensation programs can play an important role in employees' motivation and productivity (Dulebohn et al., 2009).

The compensation programs provided in this study are tools to increase employees' satisfaction "with benefits provided to them, they are committed to the employer, remain with the employer, and perform their jobs well, which in turn leads to strong organizational performance" (Dulebohn et al., 2009, p. 87). These compensation programs can take a financial toll on some organizations, but not offering incentives could lead to losing top talent to the competition. The right mix of organizational compensation programs provided for a unique, culturally diverse workforce can positively impact motivation and productivity, when employees are committed to the firm. Committed employees are less likely to voluntarily leave an organization that invested time and money into them.

## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between tuition reimbursement programs and affective commitment within non-traditional business majors. The employers of the participants in this study have provided partial or full tuition reimbursement to obtain the statistical data necessary to analyze the instrument's results. This chapter includes the research design, sample, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

### Research Design

A quantitative non-experimental research design was chosen to investigate the variables of tuition reimbursement and affective commitment. The two research questions were measured by a quantitative correlational research design:

1. Are there significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement?

H01 There are no significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement.

2. Are there significant differences in affective organizational commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners?

H02 There are no significant differences in affective organizational commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners.

Quantitative research allows the researcher to gather numerical data to analyze and explain data collected in the study. The data collected through surveys or control groups, allow the researcher to interpret the data for making generalizations about a sample or population (Creswell, 2009). Quantitative design is widely known for using instruments consisting of closed-ended questions for data collection purposes. Such data provide the basis for testing the study's theory into the possible relationship between variables using statistical procedures (Hanson, Creswell, Plano Clark, Petska, & Creswell, 2005).

Non-experimental research design tends to have more structure in providing credible responses to the study questions. This research study included discussion of three of the non-experimental research designs known as descriptive, relationship, and survey, in which an instrument is a common measuring tool. A descriptive study sets out to describe the characteristics of a group, identifying the data with descriptive statistics, averages, and graphs. A relationship design consists of comparative and correlational research for the purposes of discussing the relationship surrounding the variables (McMillan, 2008). Survey research design involves collection of numerical data from

questionnaires or interviews from a small number of participants for making generalization of the population (Swanson & Holton, 2005).

### **Sample**

Participants in the study are employees working full or part-time receiving full or partial tuition reimbursement from their employers. This particular group was chosen based on the interest and accessibility to the researcher. The target sample consisted of non-traditional business learners between the ages of 20 and 70 years who registered on Zoomerang, an online survey tool. Zoomerang's random sample of respondents consists of over two million adults allowing for a valid generalization of the population (Zoomerang, 2012).

The two research instruments were self-administered through the Zoomerang online portal. The sample of non-traditional business learners received an email from Zoomerang, at which point they completed an informed consent form to continue. Zoomerang's portal then directed the willing participants to the questionnaires for completion and return anonymously (Zoomerang, 2012).

Following the recommended procedures for sample size determination, the calculation resulted in a total of 384 participants to make a generalization of the population. The study was able to make a generalization of the population with the 362 completed surveys. Consistent with most research, a 95% confidence level with a +/- 5% confidence interval provides the best results. This allows the researcher to be 95% confident in making a generalization of the population from the random sample (Creswell, 2009).

## Instrumentation / Measures

This study uses two research instruments for obtaining the research data. The first instrument is called the Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (ACNCS). The use of the ACNCS for this study required permission from Doctor Natalie J. Allen and/or Doctor John P. Meyer. The second instrument is a funding questionnaire survey (FQS) approved by Capella University for a study in 2003. The use of the FQS for this study required permission from Doctor Barbara Bowers.

The ACNCS was developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) to measure affective commitment. For the purpose of this study, the Affective Commitment Scale (ACS) was the primary focus from the ACNCS. The researchers used a 7-point Likert scale approach for collecting scores correlating to the participants' affective commitment. The scores were calculated as: 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *moderately disagree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 4 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 5 = *slightly agree*, 6 = *moderately agree*, and 7 = *strongly agree*.

The FQS developed by Bowers (2003) contains three questions designed to determine the type of funding each participant received. The three questions are suitable for this study in determining a possible correlation with tuition reimbursement and affective commitment. The FQS aligned with the study's direction for incorporating the type of funding received by participants. The instrument was field tested since the "researcher piloted the questionnaire among students to insure that there were no issues with either the reading or the comprehension of the questions" (Bowers, 2003, p. 70).

Bowers (2003) study examined the three questions in the FQS for a statistical significance level at .05 through one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher LSD post hoc test. The ANOVA statistical significant for between groups was  $p = .000$  resulting less than the .05 level of significance for the Hypothesis testing. The Fisher LSD post hoc test reported a significant difference between employer and other groups at  $p = .000$ , no significant difference between employer and self groups at  $p = .076$ , and significant difference between self and other groups at  $p = .005$ .

### **Data Collection**

This non-experimental study should provide a numeric description from the participants, allowing the researcher to determine if there is a potential correlation between tuition reimbursement and affective commitment. The non-traditional business learners were directed to Zoomerang, where the online survey host collected the data necessary for this study. Zoomerang was determined to be the software of choice for its ability to directly correspond with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) data software.

Participants were selected to take a survey in accordance with the guidelines of Capella University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (2012-2013) and Zoomerang. This study hoped to collect 400-900 inquires for a minimum of 200 good surveys from Zoomerang's sample of non-traditional business learners. The decision was made not to survey within an organization, since conducting research in these organizations can be challenging because of the flow of information and the learners involved (Swanson and Holton, 2005).

Zoomerang only sent completed surveys to this researcher's password protected account, eliminating the necessity for the researcher of verifying all the questions were answered. The information was downloaded to and analyzed in this researcher's password protected computer. The data will be protected, saved, and then deleted after seven years.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis was conducted through the SPSS software allowing for the collected data to be examined for descriptive statistics, statistical significance, correlation, and regression results. This collected was analyzed to predict any association between variables. The descriptive statistics, correlations, and regressive data were the basis for describing the validity and reliability in this non-experimental correlational research design. The descriptive statistics and correlations data is necessary for determining what generalizations can be made from the study (Swanson & Holton, 2005).

The best research design for this type of study is correlational, since it explores relationships between two or more variables without inferring causation. This type of research design is non-experimental, with interest in the association of the two variables (Creswell, 2009). According to Swanson and Holton (2005), correlation tends to range from -1.0 to 1.0 indicating a positive or negative association of the variables, where the "strength of the association is indicated by the actual number and how close it is to  $\pm 1.0$ , which is a perfect correlation"(p. 40). This correlational study was an appropriate quantitative research strategy for understanding the data analysis on whether a relationship exists or not between tuition reimbursement and affective commitment.

## **Validity and Reliability**

For the purpose of this study, the evidence to determine the construct validity dealt with the reliability of the measures, factor analytic results and patterns of correlations among tuition reimbursement and affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1996). A researcher should be able to use the same instrument to examine tuition reimbursement's effect on affective commitment, and each time be able to replicate the study's responses for reliability and measure the purpose of the study for validity.

A few of the eight questions corresponding to the ACS were adapted from the Buchanan (1974) study, furthermore establishing the validity of this instrument used by researchers for over 30 years (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Allen & Meyer (1990) suggested the validity of the ACS was established based on correlation with another instrument known as the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979).

The importance of reliability in a quantitative study depends on measuring the consistency and repeatability of the study. Allen & Meyer (1990) reported the reliability (coefficient alphas) of the three scales as: .87 for affective, .75 for continuance, and .79 for normative. A similar study reported the reliability (coefficient alphas) as: .79 for affective, .69 for continuance, and .65 for normative scale (Cohen, 1996).

## **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical consideration and procedures were in place to ensure validity, reliability, and protection of the data received from participants. Capella University IRB

(2012/2013) reviewed the process, allowing for human subjects since the study adhered to ethical compliance. As part of the ethical review process, the researcher provided an accurate description of the collected data and ensured confidentiality to all participants from Zoomerang.

Cooper and Schindler (2008) suggested when conducting research using non-traditional learners, the research must be conducted in way where the participants are safe from suffering any physical harm, discomfort, pain, embarrassment, or loss of privacy. Survey Monkey guaranteed the privacy of the participants to protect the validity of the research and the participants. The steps followed to protect the participants of the study consisted of restricting access to the participant identification, revealing participant information only with written consent, restricting access to the research data instruments where participants are identified, and avoiding disclosing data subsets.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data from the research instruments analyzed using the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS). The data analysis provided participants' scores from the funding questionnaire survey (FQS) and Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scales (ACNCS). The data analysis of the two instruments for this study included descriptive statistics involving measures of central tendency through means ( $M$ ) and standard deviations ( $SD$ ), statistical significance, correlation, and regression results.

### Research Questions

The presentation of the data analysis from this study's instruments corresponded to the following two research questions:

1. Are there significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement?

H01 There are no significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement.

Results: The null hypothesis was rejected.

Interpretation: Based on the results, there are significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement.

2. Are there significant differences in affective organizational commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners?

H02 There are no significant differences in affective organizational commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners.

Results: The null hypothesis was rejected.

Interpretation: Based on the results, there are significant differences in affective organizational commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners.

### **Data Analysis**

One of the three questions from the FQS helped this study identify the type of funding each participant received. The choices consisted of employer-funded educational reimbursement, educational funding sources other than employer, funding from other sources, and employee self-funded. For the purpose of this study, participants receiving full or partial tuition reimbursement from their organizations were identified as

“employer”. Participants’ receiving educational funding sources other than employer were identified as “other” and, “self” identified those who self-funded.

The frequency of the funding sources represents the three different identified funding groups. Table 1 provides a list of the funding groups, frequency of participants for each group, and the study’s percentage. Participants receiving full or partial tuition reimbursement combined for 51.1%, other at 16.9%, and self at 32% of the study’s population. Table 2 also lists the mean and standard deviation for each of the funding groups associated with each Affective commitment (AC) scale.

Table 1. Frequencies of Funding Sources

Valid	Funding			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Employer	185	51.1	51.1	51.1
Other	61	16.9	16.9	68.0
Self	116	32.0	32.0	100.0
Total	362	100.0	100.0	

The funding sources, AC mean scores, and standard deviations are listed on Table 2. The study provides AC mean scores from the eight questions in the ACNCS. The mean score for “employer” is larger than the other two but there is only a .03 difference in the standard deviation between “employer” and “self”.

Table 2. Frequencies of Funding Sources, AC mean scores, and Standard Deviations

Funding	Frequency	AC Mean	SD
Employer	185	8.6	0.97
Other	61	4.22	0.44
Self	116	4.33	0.94
Total	362	5.72	0.3

For testing the null hypothesis, this study reviewed the results from the Levene test of homogeneity of variances, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Fisher LSD post hoc test. The significant level for each test in Tables 3, 4, and 5 are different for testing the null in regard to the funding groups. With the statistical significance level for this study being .05, “the null hypothesis is rejected if there is a five in one hundred probability that the differences among the variables are due to chance” (Bowers, 2003).

One assumption for the Levene Test of Homogeneity of Variance is that the results from Table 3 are based on the funding groups’ variances being equal. The Levene statistic is 2.023 with a statistical significance value of .062. With the study’s significance level at .05, the hypothesis on the funding groups having equal variance can not be rejected.

Table 3. Levene Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Funding Groups				
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.	
2.023	6	355	.062	

\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The ANOVA results show a statistically significant relationship of .712 which is much higher than the results of the Levene test at .062. This test compared the between groups variance to the within groups variance of the three funding variables. With the study's significance level at .05, the hypothesis on the funding groups having equal variance can not be rejected. Table 4 provides the information necessary for the hypothesis testing on the analysis of variance.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Funding Groups					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.997	6	.500	.623	.712
Within Groups	284.851	355	.802		
Total	287.848	361			

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The Fisher LSD post hoc comparisons between “employer” and “other” did not show any statistically significant difference ( $p=.264$ ). The post hoc comparisons between “employer” and “self” did show a statistically significant difference ( $p=.000$ ). The study showed similar results with “self” and “other” having a statistically significant difference ( $p=.000$ ). Based on the results, the null hypothesis was rejected since “self” displayed statistically significant difference when compared to “employer” and “other”. The Fisher LSD post hoc test results are listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Fisher LSD Post Hoc Test  
Dependent Variable: Funding  
Bonferroni

(I) Funding Groups	(J) Funding Groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Employer	Other	.1784	.1043	.264	-.072	.429
	Self	-1.8216*	.0837	.000	-2.023	-1.620
Other	Employer	-.1784	.1043	.264	-.429	.072
	Self	-2.0000*	.1117	.000	-2.269	-1.731
Self	Employer	1.8216*	.0837	.000	1.620	2.023
	Other	2.0000*	.1117	.000	1.731	2.269

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The central tendency on the eight AC scale consisting of “career with this organization”, “discussing my organization”, “organization’s problems are my own”, “easily attached to another organization”, “part of the family”, “emotionally attached”, “personal meaning”, and “strong sense of belonging”. Participants responded with the highest level of agreement on the AC scale for “enjoy discussing their organization with people outside the company” ( $M = 7.23$ ,  $SD = 3.57$ ), and the lowest with “do not feel a

strong sense of belonging to their organization” ( $M = 4.25, SD = 1.47$ ). Based on these results, participants *strongly agreed* with discussing their organization and *moderately disagree* with do not feel a strong sense of belonging (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results demonstrated that participants enjoy discussing their organization with people that are not co-workers while maintaining a strong sense of belonging to the company.

The second highest mean on the AC scale was for “this organization has a great deal of personal meaning” ( $M = 6.61, SD = 3.27$ ). The second lowest AC scale was for “do not feel like ‘part of the family’ at the organization” ( $M = 4.42, SD = 1.6$ ). Based on these results, participants *moderately agreed* with the organization having a great deal of personal meaning and *moderately disagreed* with not feeling like part of the family with their company (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results demonstrated that participants feel the organization does have personal meaning and they are part of the family.

The central tendency with the third highest mean was for participants thinking they could “easily become as attached to another organization” ( $M = 6.47, SD = 2.68$ ). Participants also *strongly agreed* with being happy spending the rest of their “career with this organization” ( $M = 6.27, SD = 3.31$ ). Based on these results, participants *moderately agreed* with thinking they could easily become attached to another organization and being happy spending the rest of their career with the company (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results demonstrated that participants would be just as happy with another organization; however they could also stay with the company their entire career.

The central tendency for the last two scale items deal with participants feeling the “organization’s problems are their own” ( $M = 5.97, SD = 2.66$ ) and if they “do not feel ‘emotionally attached’ to the organization” ( $M = 4.52, SD = 1.61$ ). Based on these

results, participants *moderately agreed* with feeling the organization's problems are their own and *moderately disagreed* with not feeling 'emotionally attached' to the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results demonstrated that participants relate to the problems their organizations are facing, since they feel a sense of attachment to the company. The means and standard deviations for the eight AC scales are listed on Table 6.

Table 6. Measures of Central Tendency on the 8 AC scales

	Employer	Other	Self	Mean	SD
Career with this organization	10.08	4.05	4.69	6.27	3.31
Discussing my organization	11.34	4.93	5.42	7.23	3.57
Organization's problems are my own	9.02	4.13	4.75	5.97	2.66
Easily attached to another organization	9.56	4.7	5.16	6.47	2.68
Part of the family	6.25	3.77	3.25	4.42	1.6
Emotionally attached	6.34	3.95	3.28	4.52	1.61
Personal meaning	10.37	4.49	4.96	6.61	3.27
Strong sense of belonging	5.88	3.72	3.16	4.25	1.47

Pearson correlations were conducted to examine the relationship between the eight affective commitment scales (career with this organization, discussing my organization, organization's problems are my own, easily attached to another organization, part of the family, emotionally attached, personal meaning, and strong sense of belonging) and the three funding groups (employer, other, and self). Pearson correlations were conducted to test the hypothesis that there are significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement. Pearson correlations results show that there was a statistically significant relationship between the AC scales and funding groups.

For the eight Affirmative commitment scales, five of the correlations resulted in positive and weak relationships, and the other three were negative and weak. Based on these results, providing a significant relationship between AC scales and the funding groups, the null hypothesis was rejected. All eight of the AC scales were statistically significant with weak positive and negative results. The three weak negative relationships consisted of career with this organization ( $-.09 < .01$ ), discussing my organization ( $-.1 < .01$ ), and personal meaning ( $-.07 < .01$ ). The negative relationship suggested as scores for “employer” increased, scores decreased for “other” and “self”. The five weak positive relationships consisted of organizations problems are my own ( $.05 < .01$ ), easily attached to another organization ( $.1 < .01$ ), part of the family ( $.04 < .01$ ), emotionally attached ( $.04 < .01$ ), and strong sense of belonging ( $.07 < .01$ ). The positive relationship suggested as scores for “employer” increased, scores also increased for “other” and “self”.

The study's correlation was positive or negative based on the nature of the relationship. A positive correlation suggests a positive relationship, which indicates an increase in two or more variables. A negative correlation suggests a negative relationship, which indicates an increase in one variable and a decrease in another variable (Swanson & Holton, 2005). The results of the Pearson correlations are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Pearson Correlations on the 8 AC Scales and Funding Groups

Relationships between Affective Commitment and Funding Groups	
Affective Commitment Scales	Funding Groups
Career with this organization	-.09
Discussing my organization	-.1
Organization's problems are my own	.05
Easily attached to another organization	.1
Part of the family	.04
Emotionally attached	.04
Personal meaning	-.07
Strong sense of belonging	.07

Note.  $n = 362$

$p < .01$ .

The ANOVA regression model results show a statistically significance value of .034, which is less than the study's significance level of .05 for testing research question two. This study rejects the null and concludes that there is a significant difference in affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment. With the study's significance level at .05, the hypothesis on affective, continuance, and normative commitments having equal variance cannot be rejected. Table 8 provides the information necessary for the hypothesis testing on the ANOVA.

Table 8. ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.860	3	2.287	2.912	.034 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	280.331	357	.785		
	Total	287.191	360			

a. Dependent Variable: Funding

b. Predictors: (Constant), Normative, Continuance, Affective

Pearson correlations were conducted to test the relationships between affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitments. The results of the Pearson correlations indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship among the three organizational commitments. The strongest correlation was found between affective and normative commitments. The weakest correlation was found between affective and continuance commitments. Based on the findings of a significant relationship between affective and normative commitments, the null hypothesis was rejected. The results of the Pearson correlations are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Correlations

		Affective	Continuance	Normative
Affective	Pearson Correlation	1	-.070	.316**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.187	.000
	N	362	362	361
Continuance	Pearson Correlation	-.070	1	.046
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.187		.382
	N	362	362	361
Normative	Pearson Correlation	.316**	.046	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.382	
	N	361	361	361

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The ACNCS is the instrument for analyzing if there are significant differences in affective organizational commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners. The scale with the highest mean was Affective Commitment ( $M = 4.3$ ,  $SD = 1.79$ ), next was Continuance Commitment ( $M = 4.24$ ,  $SD = 1.89$ ), and finally with Normative Commitment ( $M = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 1.68$ ). The standard deviation was highest with the Continuance scale followed by the Affective scale. Table 10 provides the mean and standard deviation for the three types of commitments.

Table 10. Frequencies of ACNCS

Types of Commitments	Mean	SD
Affective	4.3	1.79
Continuance	4.24	1.89
Normative	4.04	1.68

The central tendency on the eight AC scales was discussed for research question one. The central tendency on the eight Continuance Commitment (CC) scales consist of “not afraid to quit job”, “leave the organization”, “life would be disrupted”, “costly to leave”, “necessity as much as desire”, “too fee options”, “scarcity of available alternatives”, and “considerable personal sacrifice”. Participants responded with the highest level of agreement on the CC scale for “staying with the organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire” ( $M = 4.98$ ,  $SD = 1.62$ ), and the lowest with “not afraid of what might happen with quitting without having another job lined up” ( $M = 3$ ,  $SD = 2.18$ ). Based on these results, participants *slightly agreed* with necessity as much as desire and *strongly disagreed* with not afraid to quit job (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results from the participants demonstrated the importance of needing to maintain employment, while being afraid of the consequences caused by quitting their job.

The second highest mean on the CC scale was for life would be disrupted with decision to leave organization now ( $M = 4.89$ ,  $SD = 1.88$ ). The second lowest CC scale was for being too costly to leave the organization ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = 2.03$ ). Based on these results, participants *strongly agreed* life would be disrupted with decision to leave

organization now and *strongly disagreed* with being too costly to leave organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results from the survey demonstrated that participants in the study are not financially ready to leave their organization today, but will leave the company without any concern of the costs.

The central tendency with the third highest mean by participants was for very hard to leave their organization right now ( $M = 4.68, SD = 1.88$ ). A majority of the participants agreed a major reason to continue to work for their organization is leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice ( $M = 4.55, SD = 1.84$ ). Based on these results, participants *moderately agreed* with very hard to leave their organization right now and *slightly agreed* with leaving their organization would require considerable personal sacrifice (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results demonstrated that participants considered the costs associated in leaving their organization right now with the understanding that there will be considerable personal sacrifice.

The central tendency for the last two scale items deals with participants feel one of the few serious consequences of leaving their organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives ( $M = 4.49, SD = 1.92$ ) and too few options to consider leaving their organization ( $M = 3.95, SD = 1.81$ ). Based on these results, participants *slightly agreed* with serious consequences of leaving their organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives. Participants equally responded with *slightly disagreed* and *slightly agreed* for too few options to consider leaving their organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results demonstrated that participants are concerned with finding new opportunities in the current job market with other organizations. The means and standard deviations for the eight CC scales are listed on Table 11.

Table 11. Measures of Central Tendency on the 8 CC scales

Continuance	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Not afraid to quit job	3	2.18
Leave the organization	4.68	1.88
Life would be disrupted	4.89	1.88
Costly to leave	3.35	2.03
Necessity as much as desire	4.98	1.62
Too few options	3.95	1.81
Scarcity of available alternatives	4.49	1.92
Considerable personal sacrifice	4.55	1.84

The central tendency on the eight Normative Commitment (NC) scales consists of “move from company to company”, “loyal to his or her organization”, “jumping from organizations”, “loyalty is important”, “feel right to leave”, “value of remaining loyal”, “stayed with one organization”, and “company man or woman is sensible”. Participants responded with the highest level of agreement on the NC scale for people these days move from company to company to often ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $SD = 1.51$ ) and the lowest with

another offer for a better job would not feel right to leave the organization ( $M = 2.99$ ,  $SD = 1.71$ ). Based on these results, participants *neither agreed nor disagreed* with people who moved from company to company and *strongly disagreed* with not feeling right leaving their organization for a better job (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results demonstrated that the participants do not feel obligated to their organization, and will leave the company as soon as they find a better paying job.

The second highest mean on the NC scale was for moving from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = 1.79$ ). The second lowest NC scale was for not believing a person must always be loyal to his or her organization ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = 1.77$ ). Based on these results, participants *neither agreed nor disagreed* with jumping from organization to organization being unethical and *slightly disagreed* with a person not always remaining loyal to their organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results indicated that the participants do not have a moral issue with moving from one organization to another, or feel they need to be loyal to their company 100% of the time.

The central tendency with the third highest mean was for participants who did not think that wanting to be a 'company man' or 'company woman' as sensible anymore ( $M = 4.31$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ). A majority of the participants were neutral with things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ). Based on these results, participants *neither agreed nor disagreed* with these two scales for company 'man or woman' as sensible anymore and being better off staying with one organization most of their career (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results indicated that the participants are less likely to spend their entire careers with one organization.

The central tendency for the last two scale items deals with participants' responses to loyalty. The two loyalty scale questions consist of a major reason to continue to work for their organization based on loyalty being important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation ( $M = 4.2, SD = 1.75$ ), and taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to their organization ( $M = 4.14, SD = 1.78$ ). Based on these results, participants *slightly agreed* with a major reason to continue to work for their organization was due to loyalty being important. Participants equally responded with *neither agreed nor disagreed* and *slightly agreed* with taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to their organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The results revealed that the factors surrounding the two loyalty scale questions play apart in participants' decision to stay with the organization. The means and standard deviations for the eight NC scales are listed on Table 12.

Table 12. Measures of Central Tendency on the 8 NC scales

Normative	$M$	$SD$
Move from company to company	4.43	1.51
Loyal to his or her organization	3.79	1.77
Jumping from organizations	4.34	1.79
Loyalty is important	4.2	1.75
Feel right to leave	2.99	1.71
Value of remaining loyal	4.14	1.78

Stayed with one organization	4.13	1.66
Company man\woman is sensible	4.31	1.48

### Chapter Summary

The data analysis presented in this chapter was to test the hypothesis of the two research questions. The null hypothesis testing for both research questions included results from ANOVA and Pearson correlations. The first research question, are there significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners who accept tuition reimbursement from their employer and other learners who do not receive reimbursement resulted in differences in mean AC scores. The first research question also rejected the null hypothesis and found a statistically significant relationship among the funding groups. Pearson correlations results show that there was a statistically significant relationship between the AC scales and funding groups. For the eight Affirmative commitment scales, five of the correlations resulted in positive and weak relationships, and the other three were negative and weak. All eight of the AC scales were statistically significant with weak positive and negative results.

The second research question, are there significant differences in affective organizational commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners resulted in differences in mean ACNCS scores. The second research question also rejected the null hypothesis and found a statistically significant relationship between the three commitment scales. Pearson correlations were

conducted to test the relationships between affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitments. The results of the Pearson correlations indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between the three organizational commitments. The strongest correlation was found between affective and normative commitments. The weakest correlation was found between affective and continuance commitments.

## CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

### Discussion

This chapter concludes with a discussion of the research findings in chapter four, their implications, and recommendations for future studies. The main focus for this research study was to investigate the relationship between tuition reimbursement programs and affective commitment for non-traditional business learners. The literature reviews presented in this study clearly identified a gap in the information surrounding organizational commitment and tuition reimbursement regarding any potential benefit to organizations and employees. Organizations offering tuition reimbursement programs can increase commitment and willingness to stay by investing in their employees. Employees are able to keep their current jobs, while taking classes to earn a higher paying position within the company.

The study was able to analyze 362 responses based on the results from the two research instruments known as ACNCS and FQS collected through the online portal, Zommerang. This analysis in chapter four demonstrated that there are significant differences in affective organizational commitment with non-traditional business learners accepting tuition reimbursement from their employer and others who do not. The study also displayed statistical analysis consisting of descriptive statistics for the study variables, assumption testing for Pearson's correlation, and hypothesis testing. Based on the ANOVA results, the data analysis of the two research questions confirmed the rejection of the null hypotheses.

This study's contribution to the body of knowledge consists of tuition reimbursement programs and organizational commitment based on the statistically significant results between employer-funded educational reimbursement and affective commitment. Pearson correlations results show that there was a statistically significant relationship between the AC scales and funding groups. One of the funding groups consisted of employer-funded educational reimbursement potentially being a factor in an employee's affective commitment. Employers currently investing in strengthening their employees' affective organizational commitment with tuition reimbursement programs may reduce workers' willingness to leave (Benson, 2006).

Pearson correlations were conducted in chapter four to test the relationships between affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitments. The results of the Pearson correlations indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between the three organizational commitments. The strongest correlation was found between affective and normative commitments with a statistically significance of .316. The weakest correlation was found between affective and continuance commitments with a statistically significance of -.070.

The focus of research question two was to determine if there was a significant difference in affective organizational commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment with non-traditional business learners. The results from this study proved that there is a significant difference between affective, continuance, and normative commitment with a statistically significance value of .034. The results of the Pearson correlations indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship among the three organizational commitments. The strongest correlation was found between

affective and normative commitments, “suggesting that feelings of obligation to maintain membership in the organization, although not identical to feeling of desire, may be meaningfully linked” (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 8). The weakest correlation was found between affective and continuance commitments. Similar to the Allen and Meyer (1990) study, CC was not influenced by either AC or NC.

Table 13. Measures of Central Tendency for Top 3 ACNCS

Affirmative	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Discussing my organization	7.23	3.57
Personal meaning	6.61	3.27
Easily attached to another organization	6.47	2.68
<b>Continuance</b>		
Necessity as much as desire	4.98	1.62
Life would be disrupted	4.89	1.88
Leave the organization	4.68	1.88
<b>Normative</b>		
Move from company to company	4.43	1.51
Jumping from organizations	4.34	1.79
Company man\woman is sensible	4.31	1.48

In today's workforce, a lack of organizational commitment for attracting and retaining top talent could cause employees to search for new opportunities with a different employer. First, organizational commitment potentially led to the AC scale participants *strongly agreeing* in favor of discussing their organization with people outside of the company. Secondly, participants *moderately agreed* this commitment contributed to the organization having a great deal of personal meaning. Lastly, based on the organizational commitment participants *moderately agreed* with thinking they could easily become attached to another organization. The lack of employee commitment and perceived broken promises by their organization could have potentially been a factor in participants' responses to the top three ACNCS.

The top three continuance commitment scale items out of the eight had a similar theme most participants agreed too. First, participants *slightly agreed* that staying with the organization was a matter of necessity as much as desire. Second, participants *strongly agreed* life would be disrupted with the decision to leave the organization now. Lastly, participants *moderately agreed* how very hard leaving the organization right now would be. Clearly, some participants associated the cost involved or felt an obligation to the organization when responding to these top three scales.

The top three normative commitment scale items out of the eight all had similar results by the participants. Participants could *neither agree nor disagree* with employees these days move from company to company too often, jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical, and wanting to be a 'company man' or 'company woman' as sensible anymore. Based on definition of normative commitment and these results, participants *neither agreed nor disagreed* with potentially being

unethical for not having a responsibility to their organization. The measures of central tendency for the top three ACNCS are listed on Table 13.

### **Implications**

The objective of this study was to investigate the potential relationship of tuition reimbursement with affective organizational commitment. The statistically significant result from the Pearson correlations implies a relationship between tuition reimbursement and affective commitment. The next implication from this study provides organizations research on the importance and necessity of a tuition reimbursement program. Another organizational implication involves the ability to attract and retain top talent with offering tuition reimbursement as an investment in employee's development. This study also implies tuition reimbursement programs are a motivating factor for reducing employees' intent to leave a company. This study does not imply whether partial or full tuition reimbursement has a greater impact on affective commitment, which could be the basis of a future investigation.

This study revealed potential implications based on the responses collected from the ACNCS. First, the affective commitment responses imply these participants were less emotionally attached to their organizations and could easily become attached to another. Second, the continuance commitment responses imply participants were considering the potential costs when deciding whether or not to leave the company. Finally, normative commitment responses implied participants did not feel they had a responsibility to the organization or being unethical for leaving.

## Recommendations

The findings of this study resulted in three recommendations for future research. First, the study did not show any statistically significant difference between the funding groups's under employer and other. However, the self-funded group, when compared to employer and other, did show a statistically significant difference. The self-funded participants would have been the majority of the study responses if not for the combination of employer-funded and funding from other sources with employer-funded educational reimbursement. Future research could investigate self-funded participants affective commitment scores when not compared to participants' receiving full or partial tuition reimbursement.

Second, demographic information could play a role in a future study since the data was not discussed in this study. Researchers may want to know whether or not there is a statistically significant difference between funding groups and affective commitment based on gender, age, household income, and education. The recommendation is to include demographic information when comparing and analyzing ACNCS scores.

Third, this researcher recommends that, for any quantitative study plan, use an online portal like Zoomerang and upgrade to any software package that offer SPSS integration. This recommendation will save researchers time and energy. Researchers that enjoy inputting data into excel may not need the SPSS integration package offered by Zoomerang. Using Zoomerang cut three to six months off the projected time allotted for data collection, since the total number of responses required for the study was received within a week. The data was downloaded to this researcher's password protected computer, which will be protected, saved, and then deleted after seven years.



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## APPENDIX A. AFFECTIVE, CONTINUANCE, AND NORMATIVE COMMITMENT SCALES SURVEY

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was not of primary concern, equality of scale length was considered desirable when it became apparent that few items would be lost as a result. Following the application of these rules, eight items were selected for inclusion in each of the Affective Commitment Scale (ACS), Continuance Commitment Scale (CCS) and Normative Commitment Scale (NCS). The reliability for each scale (i.e. coefficient alpha) was as follows: ACS, .87; CCS, .75; NCS, .79. The 24 items comprising these scales were subjected to a factor analysis (principal factor method). Three factors, accounting for 58.8, 25.8 and 15.4 per cent of the total variance, respectively, were extracted and rotated to a varimax criterion. The items and their factor loadings are reported in Table 1. In all cases, the items loaded highest on the factor representing the appropriate construct. Shown in Table 2 are the means and standard deviations for the three new commitment scales and the OCQ.

*Relationships among the commitment scales.* Also shown in Table 2 are the correlations among the new scales and the OCQ. As can be seen, the CCS is relatively independent of both the ACS and NCS. The OCQ correlated significantly with the ACS but not with the CCS,

**Table 1.** Varimax rotated factor matrix based on correlations among the items of the affective, continuance and normative commitment scales

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
<i>Affective Commitment Scale items</i>			
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	<u>55</u>	<u>47</u>	-07
2. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	<u>56</u>	10	-07
3. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own	<u>52</u>	39	-06
4. I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one (R)	<u>45</u>	21	18
5. I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organization (R)	<u>63</u>	15	-04
6. I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization (R)	<u>81</u>	23	03
7. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	<u>79</u>	19	02
8. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization (R)	<u>82</u>	18	-05
<i>Continuance Commitment Scale items</i>			
1. I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up (R)	-10	02	39
2. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to	22	14	<u>58</u>
3. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now	33	27	<u>44</u>

Table 1. *Continued*

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
4. It wouldn't be too costly for me to leave my organization now (R)	18	12	<u>46</u>
5. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire	-24	-01	<u>59</u>
6. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization	-14	00	<u>67</u>
7. One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives	-17	-07	<u>60</u>
8. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice – another organization may not match the overall benefits I have here	15	-01	<u>50</u>
<i>Normative Commitment Scale items</i>			
1. I think that people these days move from company to company too often.	14	<u>67</u>	-06
2. I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization (R)	29	<u>43</u>	00
3. Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical to me (R)	07	<u>63</u>	01
4. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain	17	<u>59</u>	07
5. If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization	17	<u>49</u>	09
6. I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization	15	<u>49</u>	10
7. Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers	05	<u>56</u>	11
8. I do not think that wanting to be a 'company man' or 'company woman' is sensible anymore (R)	17	<u>47</u>	-03
% of variance accounted for	58.8	25.8	15.4

*Note.* The following items were adapted from items used in previous research: ACS items 1 and 3 from Buchanan (1974) and CCS items 1 and 2 from Quinn & Staines (1979). Factor loadings greater than 0.40 are underlined; decimal points have been omitted. R = reverse keyed items.

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## APPENDIX B. FUNDING QUESTIONNAIRE

For each of the following questions, please circle your response. Please do not provide your name or place of employment.

1. How many years have you been with your present employer?  
(a) <1      (b) 5-10      (c) 5-10      (d) 11-20      (e) >20
2. How long have you been in your current position?  
(a) <1      (b) 5-10      (c) 5-10      (d) 11-20      (e) >20
3. Which of the following best describes the funding for your education?  
(a) Employer-funded educational reimbursement  
(b) Educational funding sources other than employer  
(c) Both employer-funded and funding from other sources  
(d) Self-funded

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### APPENDIX C. FUNDING GROUPS HISTOGRAM



