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CONFLICT AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

CONFLICT AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

By

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Intra-psychic conflicts and psycho-social conflicts were explored as correlates of organizational commitment among professional employees of a mental health services organization. Intra-psychic conflict was defined as the inability to choose decisively in favor of any one of four organizational constituencies (top management, funding agencies, clients, professionalism). Psycho-social conflict was defined as the discrepancy between individual orientations towards these constituencies and perceptions of top managements' orientations towards these groups. The relationship between tenure in the organization and commitment was also investigated because of the importance of tenure as a correlate of commitment in previous research. Results indicate that only psycho-social conflict was significantly related to organizational commitment among professionals in this organization. Implications for theory and practice are discussed along with directions for future research.

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For all my parents (intellectual, biological, and adoptive). And for all my friends and colleagues who cheered, cajoled, pushed, pleaded, and stood by me.

But especially for Elaine, whose help and support was immeasurable, and for John, who was a source of inspiration to me in more ways than one.

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INTRODUCTION

This research explores the relationship between conflict and organizational commitment using a theoretical perspective derived from both personality theory (Maddi, 1980) and macro conceptions of organizations as political entities (Pennings and Goodman, 1979). This perspective is based upon the premise that commitment is in large part a process of identification with organizational goals and values, but that organizations frequently espouse several different sets of goals and values. The conflict that is engendered in some individuals when they must choose between two or more mutually exclusive goal orientations is hypothesized to be associated with lower levels of commitment to the organization as a whole. In addition, to the extent that individuals do identify with multiple sets of goals and values, they are presumed to experience multiple commitments. Thus, it is suggested here that the concept of organizational commitment may require refinement and further specification to reflect the multi-dimensional nature of commitment.

The rest of this introduction provides an overview of the theories, reasoning, and assumptions that guided this research. A complete explanation of what is presented in this introduction appears as Chapter One.

An extensive review of the literature that deals with commitment as a dependent variable revealed that psychological processes,

particularly identification, have been theoretically and empirically important as antecedents or correlates of organizational commitment. In addition, this review of the literature indicated that commitment has almost always been defined and measured as a unidimensional construct--unidimensional in the sense that the organization is conceived of as a monolithic structure which serves as the sole overarching focus for commitment. This view of organizations and this conceptualization of commitment is surprising in light of various macro approaches to organization that stress the multi-faceted, coalitional nature of organizations.

Accordingly, a body of organizational literature was reviewed that indicated that some organizational theorists view organizations as coalitional entities, comprised of different groups which espouse competing goals for the organization. In particular, an approach by Pennings and Goodman (1979) which describes organizations in terms of their internal and external constituencies was adopted. Briefly, this theoretical perspective maintains that organizational effectiveness is a function of the degree to which an organization succeeds in satisfying the sometimes competing goals and values of groups of individuals that have a vested interest in organizational functioning. Examples of organizational constituencies include groups such as customers or clients, employees, the public at large, and top managers.

A parallel was drawn between this coalitional conceptualization of organizations and Gouldner's (1958) work on identification and reference groups. It was argued that the relationship between individuals and reference groups is analogous to that which exists between organizations and constituencies. That is, different individuals tend

to judge their personal effectiveness with respect to the goals and values of the reference groups with whom they identify. Organizations are judged effective, in a similar sense, to the extent that they satisfy the demands or goals of multiple, competing constituencies. Empirical work on reference group theory, professionals, and boundary role persons was cited to bolster this parallel and to show that certain types of employees are likely to be aware of the conflicting expectations to which they are subjected. In addition, the results of interviews conducted with the respondents of the sample used here suggested that many individuals (particularly professionals) experienced conflict regarding their endorsements of the goal orientations of multiple constituencies.

Conflict was considered to be important in understanding organizational commitment in two ways. First, it was reasoned that intra-psychic conflict, or within-person conflict regarding the legitimacy of the goals of various constituencies, may manifest itself as the individual's inability to identify with or commit to any single entity, including the organization as a whole. This may occur when the energy that is expended by an individual in dealing with intra-psychic conflict is not available to be expended elsewhere, as in commitments to various sets of goals and values. Second, it was argued that psycho-social conflict, or conflict between the individual and a group, may make identification with that particular group (and thus commitment to that group's goals) impossible. Thus, it was reasoned that intra-psychic conflicts of sufficient magnitude may result in withdrawal from the organization, a withdrawal which would be indicated by low levels of commitment. And, psycho-social conflict, between the individual and

top management in this case, could prevent the individual from identifying with top management's goals and values. This lack of identification with top management's goals might also be associated with low levels of commitment to the total organization. This hypothesized relationship was based upon the reasoning that one focus or facet of organizational commitment may be commitment to managerial goal orientations. Therefore, factors such as psycho-social conflict, which inhibit identification between individuals and top management, may also inhibit identification with and commitment to the organization.

The impetus for the importance of conflicts as correlates of commitment was obtained from Maddi's (1980) review of personality theories. In his view, many theories of personality attempt to explain personality dynamics and development as a function of intra-psychic or psycho-social conflicts. This classificatory scheme for conflict types was applied to the study of commitment because it seemed both general enough and specific enough to capture the impediments to identification which may be negatively related to commitments. Multiple identifications with various individuals and groups are themselves aspects of personality, so conflict types derived from personality theory seemed particularly appropriate in the study of commitment as an identification phenomenon.

Chapter One presents in some detail the empirical and theoretical literature relevant to the present study on the relationship between conflicts and commitments. Chapters Two and Three deal with the data collection procedures and results of data analyses, respectively. Chapter Four discusses these results in light of specific hypotheses, draws some conclusions, and suggests additional research.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational commitment has been studied primarily from two different perspectives: (1) as an independent variable which determines other outcomes such as attendance, performance, and tenure (Farrell and Rusbult, 1981; Marsh and Mannari, 1977; Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian, 1974; Steers, 1977; Van Maanen, 1975), or (2) as a dependent variable which is thought to be determined by structural/situational characteristics of organizations (Becker, 1966; Grusky, 1966; Sheldon, 1971), psychological/personal characteristics of individuals (Brown, 1969; Hall, Schneider, and Nygren, 1970), and/or behaviors that result in individuals attributing an attitude of commitment to themselves (Kiesler and Sakumura, 1966; Salancik, 1977; Staw and Fox, 1977). Commitment as an independent variable is considered an important topic of research because of its presumed effects on other personally and organizationally relevant outcomes. The study of commitment as a dependent variable is equally important because research that takes this orientation attempts to account for the causes or antecedents of organizational commitment. An understanding of the antecedents of commitment, then, allows for the possibility that organizational practices can influence the level of commitment that is experienced by organization members.

Definitions of the concept of commitment vary. Commitment has been defined as: the willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of organizational goals; a strong desire to stay with the organization; an unwillingness to leave the organization for increments in pay, status, or professional freedom; a positive evaluation of the organization; the adoption of organizational goals and values as one's own; a feeling of affection for the organization; and as combinations of these elements (Buchanan, 1977).

Operational measures of these definitions also vary, with many researchers using short, a priori scales (Brown, 1969; Buchanan, 1974; Grusky, 1966; Hall et al., 1970; Hrebiniak and Alutto, 1972; Sheldon, 1971). Perhaps the most popular measure of commitment, and one which possesses good psychometric properties is the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974). This scale measures an individual's acceptance of and belief in organizational values and goals, a willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organization, and a definite desire to maintain organizational membership. Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) report that this scale measures a single, common underlying construct.

This research focuses on commitment as a dependent variable. What follows is a brief review of the literature on organizational commitment as an independent variable; a more extensive review of the literature on commitment as a dependent variable; a discussion of organizations as pluralistic, coalitional entities; and an overview of the role that conflict plays in commitment. The specific hypotheses of this study are then presented.

Organizational Commitment

The literature on organizational commitment can be roughly divided into two main categories, one of which deals with commitment as an independent variable leading to such outcomes as performance, attendance, and tenure. The second category includes those approaches to the study of commitment that have emphasized its antecedents, that is, where commitment is the dependent variable of interest. Because only a few researchers have treated commitment as a mediating variable, these articles will be grouped in both categories where appropriate.

Commitment as an Independent Variable

Studies which treat commitment as an independent variable have tended to focus either on the relationship between commitment and withdrawal behaviors or on the commitment/performance relationship. Steers (1977), for example, reported that for a sample of scientists and engineers, commitment is positively and significantly related to desire and intent to remain with the organization and to attendance. He also found that commitment is negatively related to turnover among hospital employees. In a similar vein, Porter et al. (1974) reported that commitment has more of a discriminating influence on a person's decision to stay or leave than does job satisfaction. Porter, Crampon, and Smith (1976) found a significant difference in commitment levels between "stayers" and "leavers" for a sample of managerial trainees. However, Marsh and Mannari (1977) found that commitment had no effect on turnover for a large sample of Japanese employees of an electrical plant. Their measure of commitment assessed an employee's adherence to the norms and values of lifetime commitment to a particular organization.

Because this latter study reflects a uniquely Japanese orientation to commitment, it may not be comparable to the work done on the commitment/turnover relationship in this country.

With respect to the commitment/performance relationship, the results of the few studies that address this issue are inconclusive. Van Maanen (1975) found that commitment is associated with the performance of rookie police officers after two months on the job. In a review of organizational literature, Evan (1977) concluded that commitment is related to overall organizational effectiveness. On the other hand, Steers (1977) found no significant relationship between commitment and individual performance for a sample of hospital workers, scientists and engineers.

Despite the equivocal results of research that attempts to relate commitment to behaviors such as turnover, attendance, and performance, the idea that commitment <u>should be</u> a determining factor in these outcomes is an appealing one. When commitment is conceptualized in motivational terms, that is, as an acceptance of organizational goals <u>and</u> as a willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of organizational goals, one would expect a positive relationship between commitment and performance. However, factors other than motivation, such as ability and role clarity are necessary prerequisites to effective performance. A lack of ability or conflicting role expectations could reduce even a highly motivated individual to a less than effective performer. The fact that commitment has been positively associated with performance in some studies, is, perhaps, indicative of its importance as a motivational component of behavior, since <u>willingness</u> to exert effort on behalf of organizational goals is probably

synonymous, in many cases, with the actual exertion of that effort. Yet, motivation or commitment is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for performance, and Steers did not assess other antecedents of performance such as ability and role clarity in his study. Until researchers can agree on a more coherent and precise conceptualization of organizational commitment, and until researchers assess commitment as only one factor in performance, it is perhaps unrealistic to expect consistent, strong relationships between commitment and behavioral outcomes. The articles discussed in the next section deal with the nature of the construct itself and its antecedents.

Commitment as a Dependent Variable

There have been three, not always distinct, streams of research on organizational commitment as a dependent variable. These approaches are termed here either structural/situational, psychological/personal, or behavioral in orientation. A few studies have combined two or more of these approaches in an attempt to account for differing levels of commitment.

Structural Approaches

Structural approaches to commitment generally apply Becker's (1966) concept of side bets as a determinant of commitment or focus on organizational practices and procedures that induce loyalty in employees. Side bets refer to people's decisions with regard to one aspect of their life (e.g., working for a particular organization) that have consequences for other interests and activities not directly related to that decision. So, for example, people may be unwilling to change organizations because they do not want to be perceived as job

hoppers. In this case, people make side bets by staking their reputation for stability on the decision to remain with a particular organization. Sometimes, according to Becker, organizations make side bets for employees through practices that lock them into post hoc commitments. Non-portable pensions, organization-specific perquisites, status, and other benefits are all examples of side bets that result from the organization's policies and which may lead to commitment on the part of employees.

Tests of structural approaches to commitment have generally yielded encouraging results. For example, Sheldon (1971) showed that investments such as age, length of service, and position in an organization were significantly related to commitment among research scientists. Similar results were reported by Alutto, Hrebiniak, and Alonso (1973) for a sample of school teachers and nurses. Farrell and Rusbult (1981) found that commitment was a function of rewards, costs, job alternatives, and investments for a sample of college students and industrial workers. Collectively, these variables accounted for fifty-one percent of the variance in commitment. Thus, while it appears that investments and side bets are significant contributors to commitment, about half of the variance in commitment levels remains unexplained by this approach.

Psychological/Personal Approaches

Psychological approaches to the study of commitment have tended to focus on the process of identification with the organization's goals and values. Identification is said to exist when people define themselves, at least in part, in terms of organizational membership, or when the goals of the individual and the organization are congruent.

Organizational identification should not be confused with concepts such as job involvement (Rabinowitz and Hall, 1977) or with job attachment (Koch and Steers, 1978). For example, Rabinowitz and Hall report that job involvement concerns both an identification with one's job and the derivation of self-esteem as a result of effective job performance. Koch and Steers characterize job attachment as an attitudinal response to one's job that is reflected in a congruence between one's real and ideal jobs. Research on these constructs has demonstrated their positive association with job satisfaction and their negative relationship to turnover. Both concepts have been shown to be more strongly related to personal factors such as age, education, and adherence to work ethic norms than to situational factors such as job characteristics.

Job attachment and job involvement, when it is defined as identification with one's job, are constructs which are similar to organizational commitment, and to each other. All three represent psychological linkage variables or are indicators of some form of congruence between the individual and the job. However, organizational commitment is a variable that has been conceptualized at a higher level of abstraction. It concerns the individual's attachment to or involvement with the organization, rather than the particular job the individual holds. No empirical support for this theoretical distinction among the concepts exists, but researchers have been fairly consistent in making conceptual distinctions, on the basis of level of abstraction. Involvement and attachment, then, represent psychological linkages to a job, while commitment represents a psychological linkage to the organization as a whole.

Identification has been conceptualized as a synonym for commitment (Becker and Carper, 1956; Kagan, 1958; Schneider, Hall, and Nygren, 1974) and as an antecedent of commitment (Foote, 1951; March and Simon, 1958). For example, Becker and Carper (1956) maintain that commitment to task and commitment to particular organizations are two dimensions of occupational identification among graduate students. Their view of identification is that it is a multi-dimensional construct that includes commitment. In a similar approach, Schneider, Hall, and Nygren (1974) define identification as the adoption of the organization's goals and values as one's own. This definition of identification is very close to current definitions of commitment which include an acceptance of and belief in organizational goals and values (Mowday et al., 1979).

In a somewhat different vein, Foote (1951) defines identification as the appropriation of a particular identity or series of identities through the introjection of the goals and values of significant others. Significant others include family members and groups (school, church, work, etc.) of which the individual is a member. Through the roles that individuals play, they come to associate their membership in the group with their concept of themselves. Thus, identification with the goals and values of others is the process whereby individuals are linked to groups of which they are members.

As the identity forming process proceeds and individuals become more certain of who they are in all their identifications, motivated behavior (conscious, goal-directed behavior) becomes possible. Identification is, therefore, an antecedent condition for the release of energy employed in the pursuit of various goals. To the extent that

current definitions of commitment are very motivational in orientation, identification can be seen as an antecedent of commitment. That is, when commitment is defined as a belief in organizational goals and a willingness to exert effort on behalf of organizational goals, then identification with those goals precedes commitment to them.

March and Simon (1958) also conceive of identification with group goals as antecedent to an individual's willingness to exert effort on behalf of those goals. These theorists identify five major influences on the strength of an individual's identification with a group, including the extent to which goals are perceived as shared, the amount of competition within the group, the frequency of interaction among members of the group, the perceived prestige of the group and the number of individual needs satisfied in the group. Empirical studies of identification have tended to focus on its antecedents, rather than its outcomes, particularly on the role that need satisfactions play in identification.

So for example, Brown (1969) reported that identification with an organization increases as a function of the individual's opportunity to satisfy symbolic motivational states, particularly needs for achievement. In a similar approach, Hall, Schneider, and Nygren (1970) found that identification in the U.S. Forest Service is related to the satisfaction of affiliation and security needs.

Lee (1969, 1971) provides empirical support for other aspects of the March and Simon (1958) model, in addition to the importance of need satisfactions. Lee reported that, for a sample of professional scientists, variables associated with organizational and professional

prestige, congruence of individual and management goals, and length of service were all significant correlates of organizational identification.

The research on identification as a correlate of commitment draws attention to the idea that commitment is in part an investment of the self in the organization. That is, identification with an organization, implies that one's sense of who one is is derived from organizational membership. This psychological link between the individual and the organization is synonomous with commitment when commitment is defined as the adoption of the organization's goals as one's own. When commitment is defined in more motivational terms, as the willingness to exert effort in the pursuit of organizational goals, Foote (1951) and March and Simon (1958) have reasoned that identification is a prerequisite to commitment. A lack of longitudinal designs in the empirical work that has been done on identification makes it impossible to determine if identification is an antecedent of commitment or merely an aspect of commitment. However, it seems clear that identification and commitment are related at least in a correlational sense, if not, a causal one. The major reason for this relationship between the two constructs is their conceptual similarity. Identification concerns an internalization of the group's goals and values. Commitment has been defined as an acceptance of the organization's goals and a willingness to work towards them. Thus, current conceptions of commitment tend to include identification as one aspect of commitment.

Behavioral Approaches

Behavioral approaches to commitment have defined commitment as an attribution that individuals make in order to maintain consistency between behaviors and attitudes. For example, Kiesler and Sakumura (1966) note that commitment involves a binding of the individual to behavioral acts. In a laboratory study, they showed that individuals who were paid very little for performing an act which was consistent with their prior beliefs were more likely to remain uninfluenced by a counter-communication than were individuals who were paid a great deal for performing the same act. They interpret these findings to mean that people attribute an attitude of commitment to themselves when there is no strong, external incentive for engaging in a particular behavior.

Salancik (1977) has expanded on the work of Kiesler and Sakumura in defining four characteristics of acts which influence the amount of commitment an individual will feel after having engaged in a particular behavior. Behaviors that are explicit (undeniable), irrevocable, volitional, and public have the effect of binding the individual to the behavior and therefore causing greater degrees of commitment. Salancik's approach to commitment is based on the idea that people attribute attitudes like commitment to themselves in order to rationalize their behavior after the fact.

Staw and Fox (1977) reported that escalation of commitment to a course of action, defined as spending additional resources to continue a particular policy, increases when individuals feel personally responsible for the initial decision to commit resources. Escalation of commitment tends to decrease over time, but the relationship between

escalating levels of commitment and time was not shown to be a stable one.

The behavioral approach to commitment discussed above focuses attention on the retrospective, attributional nature of commitment. This approach also draws attention to the importance of behavior, per se, as a determinant of commitment as an attitude.

Combination Approaches

Combination approaches to the study of organizational commitment have included structural, psychological, and/or behavioral variables in multivariate analyses of commitment. For example, Buchanan (1974) found that situational characteristics of the organization such as first year job challenge and organizational dependability were significantly correlated with commitment for a sample of 279 managers. In addition, he showed that personal/psychological characteristics such as feelings of personal importance to the organization were predictive of commitment. Similarly, Steers (1977) found that job characteristics and work experiences (situational factors), as well as personal/psychological characteristics such as need for achievement were all significant correlates of organizational commitment. Schneider, Hall, and Nygren (1974) showed that both self-image and job characteristics were correlates of organizational identification among foresters. Their definition of identification is very close to current conceptualizations of commitment (Mowday et al., 1979).

Table 1 presents a summary of six combination approaches to the study of commitment. The Morris and Sherman (1981) study is the most recent and most relevant to the present research. These researchers

selected variables that, based upon a review of the commitment literature, they thought were representative of three important categories of antecedent variables. Thus, the personal chracteristics category was represented by age, level of education, and sense of competence, while role characteristics were represented by leadership style, because these researchers felt that the leader's degree of consideration and initiating structure represented the primary vehicle through which employees assimilate normative information about their work context.

Morris and Sherman, as noted in Table 1, reported significant correlations between all three categories of variables and organizational commitment measured with the OCQ. In addition, they reported analyses which indicate that the influence of job level, job focus (direct vs. indirect client care), and organizational context was negligible. These analyses suggest that their results may be generalizable across jobs, levels, and organizations.

Summary

On the basis of the foregoing discussion of commitment as a dependent variable, it seems that many factors are related to the level of commitment experienced by individuals in work settings. However, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about the strongest correlates of commitment due to: (1) the variety of measures of commitment used, and (2) the dearth of studies assessing the same structural, personal, and behavioral correlates concurrently. One conclusion that can be drawn is that research designs that employ more than one orientation (i.e., structural, psychological, or behavioral) to the study of commitment as

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF COMBINATION APPROACHES TO ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AS A DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Researcher(s)	Date	Sample	Significant Correlates
1. Hrebiniak and Alutto	1972	school teachers and nurses (N = 713)	tension, tenure, dissatisfaction with organizational policies, sex (females more committed than males)
2. Buchanan	1974	managers in eight manufacturing and government agencies (N = 279)	feelings of personal importance, first-year group attitudes toward the organization, organizational dependability, organizational commitment norms, first-year job challenge, current group attitudes toward organization, peer group cohesion
3. Schneider, Hall, and Nygren	1974	U.S. Forest Service professionals (N = 141)	tenure, self-image, job challenge, job involvement
4. Steers	1977	hospital employees, research scientists, and engineers (N = 501)	need for achievement, group attitudes toward the organization, education, task identity, organizational dependability, personal importance, feedback
5. Stevens, Beyer, and Trice	1978	supervisors in 71 government agencies (N = 611)	role overload, tenure in organization, job involvement, skill level of subordinates, positive attitude toward change, tenure in current role
6. Morris and Sherman	1981	employees of three state facilities for the care and training of developmentally disabled persons (N = 506)	sense of competence, role conflict, education, leadership style, age, role ambiguity

a dependent variable are necessary. No one approach in isolation has proved completely satisfactory in understanding the nature of commitment.

A second conclusion that can be drawn is that commitment is related to both situational and individual characteristics. When commitment is defined as the individual's desire to maintain organization membership, attributes of the situation which promote the maintenance of membership (e.g., status, length of service, etc.) have been shown to be antecedents of commitment. When the approach to commitment is more psychological in nature--as in identification with organizational goals--opportunities to satisfy needs have been shown to be correlates of commitment.

A third conclusion that can be drawn is that researchers and writers in the area of organizational commitment have conceptualized organizations as uni-dimensional entities. That is, the organization is assumed to be a global, non-differentiated entity that elicits the commitment of individuals for a variety of reasons. This approach to the organization and to organizational commitment fails to account for the complex, multi-faceted nature of organizations. The next section discusses organizations as being composed of coalitions, or groups of individuals, any or all of which may inspire commitments from organization members.

Organizations as Coalitional Entities

Some macro organizational theorists view organizations as composites of coalitions--groups of individuals which have multiple competing goals (Cyert and March, 1963; March and Simon, 1958).

This view portrays organizations as political entities, in that various sub-groups or coalitions "lobby" for the organization's attention to their own particular vested interests. So, for example, members of the sales department of an organization pressure the organization's top management for increased resources devoted to marketing, sales promotions, bonuses for sales reps, etc. On the other hand, members of the production subsystem put pressure on organization decision makers for updated equipment, higher quality raw materials, and the like. Cyert and March (1963) discuss several methods by which conflicts over goals are resolved, including local rationality--whereby subunits are assigned coherent subgoals, and sequential attention to goals, so that organizations do not pursue conflicting goals simultaneously. However, Cyert and March maintain that goal conflict in organizations is never fully resolved, and that there is considerable disagreement even over subgoals.

This view of organizations as coalitional entities is echoed by Pennings and Goodman (1979). They use the term "constituency" to refer to those interest groups both inside and outside the organization that contribute to and help define organizational effectiveness. An example of a constituency would be the "dominant coalition" (March and Simon, 1958), or that group of individuals with whom the decision making power regarding a particular issue rests. The dominant coalition in an organization is usually the constituency that provides the formally adopted definition of organizational effectiveness. When its goals are met, the organization is said to be performing effectively.

In a similar vein, Blau and Scott (1962) use the term "publics" to describe the various groups that may benefit from organizational

functioning. They distinguish four such groups (rank and file employees, clients or customers, top management or owners, and the public at large) and classify organizations based on which of these publics is the organization's primary beneficiary. They recognize, however, that organizations exist to meet the needs of more than one public. This recognition is similar to the Cyert and March conceptualization of organizations as composites of coalitions.

Recently, in discussing the coalitional nature of organizations, Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) emphasize that there is no necessity for organization members to share vested interests or singular, paramount goals. Groups of individuals within and outside the organization, in their view, can and do make demands and evaluate organizational effectiveness based on non-overlapping goals.

Empirical support for theoretical, coalitional conceptions of organizations is sparse. However, Friedlander and Pickle (1968) in a study of 97 business organizations, report low and negative correlations among the effectiveness criteria used by seven different internal and external interest groups. Similarly, Whetten (1978) documents the existence of conflicting goals faced by the directors of 67 manpower agencies in New York State. His findings indicate that agency administrators face incompatible expectations from staff, clients, and community leaders. These studies lend support to the macro conception of organizations as being composed of members who are subjected to conflicting effectiveness criteria that arise from the different goals held by internal and external coalitions.

Indirect empirical support for the idea that organizations have multiple constituencies can be inferred from reference group theory.

Gouldner (1958) defines reference groups as those groups with whom individuals identify and refer to in making judgments about their own effectiveness. Identification with reference groups and the group's recognition of the individual's membership in them constitute the individual's social identities. This formulation of reference group theory is similar to Foote's (1951) work on identity and identification, to the extent that identity is seen by both Foote and Gouldner to result from the accumulation of social roles, and results from the individual's introjection of group goals and values.

Gouldner makes a distinction between manifest social roles and latent social roles. Manifest roles are those that are relevant in a particular context, such as the role of student or teacher in the classroom. A latent social role or identity is one which is irrelevant in that context, such as male, female, American, or union member. Gouldner reasoned that latent social roles are important because they exert pressure upon manifest social roles and may impair conformity with the requirements of the manifest role system. He defined two latent social roles for organization members, which he termed "cosmopolitan" and "local." Cosmopolitans are those members who identify with and use an outer reference group (outside the organization) to judge their own performance, while locals use an internal reference group. Factor analyses of Gouldner's cosmopolitan/local scales revealed that individuals do not fall neatly into one of these two categories. Based on a sample of college professors, Gouldner found that there are several types of cosmopolitans and more than one kind of local. Similarly, Bennis, Berkowitz, Affinito, and Malone (1960) found that Gouldner's cosmopolitan/local distinction was not clear cut for a sample

of nurses in the outpatient department of a hospital. They concluded that additional classification categories for nurses are necessary based on the multiple reference groups with whom nurses may identify.

The relationship between reference group theory and organizations as coalitional entities is neither direct nor clear cut. However, the idea that individuals in organizations may identify with multiple reference groups, both internal and external, seems to suggest that employees themselves are aware of the multiple coalitions relevant to their organizations. Employees may feel drawn to or identified with these various coalitions and, hence, cannot be neatly classified according to one particular reference group. The parallel here is between reference groups and coalitions. Both reference groups and coalitions refer to groups that make demands upon the individual to perform or behave in certain ways, and both represent standards against which individual effectiveness may be judged. In a very real sense then, coalitions are to organizations what reference groups are to individuals. That is, organizations accept the goals and values of multiple coalitions or constituencies and assess organizational effectiveness based upon the degree to which the organization meets the effectiveness criteria of these groups. Individuals, in an analogous process, identify with various constituencies as reference groups, derive their identities from membership in these groups, and judge their own performance in accordance with the standards that various reference groups hold.

Summary

The foregoing discussion of organizations as coalitional entities has shown that some macro conceptions of the nature of organizations emphasize the political and conflictful aspects of organizational life. It is probable that organizations are not necessarily characterized by consensually validated, overarching goals; rather organizations and organization members are frequently subjected to competing demands, inconsistent effectiveness criteria, and non-overlapping goals. This conception of organizations stands in contrast to the conception offered by commitment theorists and researchers. Researchers in the area of organizational commitment have focused on "the" organization and "the organization's goals and values" as if these were coherent, uni-dimensional phenomena. The question for commitment researchers, and the research question of interest here, therefore, is--how is the coalitional nature of organizations reflected in global organizational commitment? If organization members are forced to choose among non-overlapping sets of goals and values, how does the conflict they experience over these endorsements relate to their commitment to the organization?

The next section discusses the role that conflict plays in organizational commitment. Conflict is related to questions of commitment at two levels of abstraction. First, it has already been suggested that organizations must deal with goal conflicts, as they are promulgated by various coalitions and constituencies. Organizational theorists have offered several explanations for the ways in which organizations deal with these conflicts and their implications for effectiveness. The relevance for goal conflicts to conceptualizations

of commitment lies, simply, in the assertion that such conflicts exist. Thus, it is assumed that individuals in organizations must pick and choose among the conflicting goals and values of several coalitions, and that the conflict engendered by this choice process affects the individual's commitment to the organization as a whole.

The second level at which conflict is important to an understanding of commitment lies in the relationship between the degree of conflict experienced in endorsing one set of goals over another and the individual's level of global organizational commitment as it is usually measured. What follows is an overview of the conflict literature with particular emphasis given to role conflict and its relationship to outcome variables.

Conflict

Most of the literature on conflict has focused on (1) defining and differentiating the concept from other concepts, (2) enumerating the antecedents or contributing conditions which give rise to conflict, (3) building models of conflict, primarily as aids to understanding the concept at a theoretical level, or as guides to intervention and management strategies, and/or (4) the relationship between conflict (usually role conflict) and other variables such as satisfaction, self-perceived effectiveness and turnover or turnover intentions. A complete review of this vast literature is not undertaken here. However, an overview is presented to provide a theoretical base and to indicate how the present research builds upon and differs from earlier work.

Definitions

A good deal of theoretical work on conflict has been concerned with defining and clarifying what the term means (Kahn and Boulding, 1964; Maddi, 1976; Patchen, 1970; Pondy, 1967; Rahim and Bonoma, 1979; Schmidt and Kochan, 1972; and Thomas, 1976). For example, Schmidt and Kochan (1972), define conflict as a process composed of perceived goal incompatibility coupled with actual interference in the goal attainment attempts of a second party. Pondy (1967), on the other hand, adopts a much broader definition of conflict, maintaining that conflict is a process that includes latent conflict, perceived conflict, felt conflict, manifest conflict, and conflict aftermath. Thomas (1976), after an extensive review of the conflict literature, concludes that theorists do not agree on a single definition for the term, but that the adoption of a broad and general definition is appropriate if work in this area is to proceed. Thomas provides such a definition--conflict exists when one party perceives that another has frustrated or is about to frustrate some concern of his. It should be noted that this definition precludes what Pondy refers to as latent conflict, or conflict that is not yet perceived by the parties.

Some conflict theorists have attempted to add precision to the construct by specifying types of conflict. Thus, Maddi (1980) classifies all conflicts as either intra-psychic (within the individual) or psycho-social (between the individual and a group). Rahim and Bonoma (1979), taking a slightly different approach, classify types of conflict as either intra-personal, intra-group, or inter-group. Pondy (1967), focusing on intra-organizational conflict, makes a distinction between frictional conflicts, or those that result in no change in authority

relationships, and strategic conflicts which are deliberate attempts to induce a reallocation of resources or authority.

While it may appear that there is as much diversity in types of conflict as there is among definitions of the construct, all the classificatory schemes for conflict types rest upon the assumption that conflict, when it exists, always exists between two parties. These two parties may exist within the same person, as in the conflict between two incompatible needs, or between two individuals, an individual and a group, and so forth.

The definition of conflict adopted for the present research is based on the definitions provided by Thomas (1976) and Rahim and Bonoma (1979). Conflict exists when there is a perceived incompatibility between one goal, value, or need and another goal, value, or need. These incompatible concerns, to use Thomas's word, may exist within the same person, or between a person and another party. The classificatory scheme for types of conflict, which will be adopted in the present research, is Maddi's conception of the two major kinds of conflict--intra-psychic and psycho-social.

There are two reasons why this definition and these two types of conflict have been chosen for use in this research. (1) the literature itself provides no clear basis for selecting the "best" definition or typology of conflict. Rather, researchers seem to have evolved and adapted conceptualizations of conflict that have seemed appropriate for the issues they chose to explore and for the settings in which they conducted research. And, (2) based on extensive interviewing and a clinical knowledge of the organization in which this research was conducted, the definition and types of conflict used here just seem to

"fit." That is, no other definition or classificatory scheme seems broad enough, nor paradoxically, precise enough to capture the essence of conflict in this particular organization.

Antecedents

A second subset of the conflict literature has focused on enumerating the antecedents to conflict or the conditions that contribute to episodes of conflict. For example, Rahim and Bonoma (1979) have classified all antecedents into two categories: personal/cultural and structural. Personal/cultural sources of conflict include divergent attitudes, beliefs, and skills which lead to different viewpoints and organizational objectives. Structural sources of conflict include multiple lines of authority, multiple incongruent goals, and organizational roles, such as boundary spanner, professional and first-line supervisor. These roles frequently have the effect of creating a "man in the middle" whose job performance depends on satisfying two or more sets of incompatible demands. Particular roles and the role conflicts associated with them are discussed in greater detail in a subsequent section.

Walton and Dutton (1969) present additional structural sources of conflict including mutual task dependence, assymetry in patterns of initiation of interaction between parties, rewards, and reinforcements that are based on individual, rather than group, performance, and dependence on common resources.

In a slightly different approach, Whetten (1978) and Friedlander and Pickle (1968) have focused on the organization's environment as a source of conflict for individuals and groups within

the organization. As discussed earlier, these researchers report that organizations and administrators frequently face incompatible expectations from groups within and outside the organization with respect to effectiveness criteria. Conflict arises, then, not only from sources within the person and within the structure of the organization, but also because organizations can face mutually exclusive demands from members of their organization set.

Models

A third body of literature dealing with conflict has as its focus the development of models of the conflict process. These models serve both as heuristic devices to aid understanding of conflict at the theoretical level, and as bases upon which to diagnose and manage conflict. So, for example, Thomas (1976) presents two models of conflict, one which focuses on the psychological processes that occur during episodes of conflict, and another which emphasizes structural properties (such as rules and procedures or incentive structures) which may influence the occurrence and resolution of conflict. Additional models of conflict have been offered by Patchen (1970), and these focus on cognitive, learning, and reaction processes which occur between two individuals or parties to a conflict. Patchen suggests that expectancy theory can be used as an underlying framework to integrate these various approaches.

The foregoing models of conflict are important when an understanding conflict behavior itself is the primary goal of the research or theory. These models and others have been put forth by organizational behaviorists, economists, learning theorists, labor relations

experts, and political scientists in an attempt to explain a wide variety of conflictful situations. The next section deals with the model of conflict which is perhaps most familiar to organizational behaviorists--that of role conflict and the conflict episode (Katz and Kahn, 1964; Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman, 1970; Van Sell, Brief, and Schuler, 1981). This model has been selected for more extensive review here because it provides the most appropriate theoretical basis for the present research.

The role episode model (Graen, 1976; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthall, 1964; Katz and Kahn, 1978) defines a role as a set of behaviors that persons expect from occupants of a particular position and specifies several key concepts. Role senders are individuals who have some stake in the focal person's performance, perhaps because they are evaluated in terms of it or because their own role behavior depends upon it in some way. The expectations of role senders are communicated to the focal person as the sent role, and the sent role may or may not be totally consistent with role expectations. The received role is that set of prescriptions and proscriptions about task performance that the focal person actually perceives and understands. The received role may be discrepant from the sent role due to "noise" in communication channels, or other impediments to comprehension. Role behavior is composed of the actions which the focal person takes in response to the received role.

Role conflict is defined as the simultaneous occurrence of two or more role expectations such that compliance with one makes compliance with the other either more difficult, or in extreme cases, impossible. Kahn et al. (1964) distinguish among person-role conflicts

(conflicts between the individual's perception of how the role should be performed and the sent role), inter-role conflicts (those arising because the focal person plays two or more incompatible roles), inter-sender conflicts (those where two or more role senders make conflicting demands on the focal person), and intra-sender conflicts (those where the same role sender makes conflicting demands).

Role conflict is usually discussed in conjunction with role ambiguity (Kahn et al., 1964; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman, 1970). Role ambiguity is defined as uncertainty about what the role incumbent is supposed to do. This uncertainty may center around the membership of the role set, the ends to be served by role behavior (goals), the sanctions which are contingent upon role behavior, allocation of time, and/or clarity of directives. As ambiguity in a role decreases, the opportunity to detect various types of role conflicts may increase.

Research has shown that the incumbents of certain roles are more prone to role conflict than others. For example, Adams (1976) has argued that boundary spanners--people whose jobs are functional linkages between the organization and elements of its environment--are particularly subject to role conflict. This is so, he argues, because boundary role persons (BRPs) are more distant psychologically, organizationally, and sometimes physically from other organization members than they are from one another. In addition, BRPs are sometimes closer to external organizations and the agents of external organizations than to their own organization. This has the effect of isolating BRPs from their "home" organization and making them more aware of the goals and demands of external groups.

On the other hand, some aspects of the boundary role may act to increase the attachment of incumbents to their home organization. For example, BRPs act as representatives of their organization to the outside world, and they also frequently act as agents of influence over external organizations. An example of this phenomenon in a boundary role would be the purchasing agent of a large organization. A purchasing agent may spend more time interacting with suppliers than with fellow employees, yet the agent exercises considerable influence over small contractors and suppliers with respect to quality, quantity, and pricing requirements for the goods the suppliers provide. Thus BRPs are subjected to two opposing sets of forces--one set acts to decrease the BRP's attachment to the home organization (psychological and physical distance), while the other set of forces acts to increase the attachment (representative function and influence agent). This classic push/pull phenomenon is one of the hallmarks of role conflict.

Elaborating on the work of Adams (1976), Aldrich and Herker (1977) reasoned that the management of commitment among boundary spanning personnel is problematic in most organizations. Because boundary spanners are subjected to conflicting push/pull forces between the home organization and external agents and groups, their loyalty to their organization may be undermined.

Empirical support for this theoretical position is offered by Parkington and Schneider (1979). They found that the conflict between boundary spanning employees' service orientation and top management's service orientation resulted in several outcomes, including role conflict, dissatisfaction with the organization, frustration, and intentions to quit. They reasoned that the discrepancy between the two

orientations represented a lack of employee/organization integration. These findings lend support to the ideas offered by Aldrich and Herker (1977) that organizational commitment among boundary spanners may be adversely affected by the multiple constituencies that boundary spanners serve.

A second role which is presumed to be more prone to role conflict for incumbents than other roles is that of the professional in organizations. Early work on the conflicts that professionals experience in organizations centered on the conflicts between sources of authority and direction of loyalty (Blau and Scott, 1962; Gouldner, 1958; Hall, 1968). Professionals were presumed to prefer collegial, rather than hierarchical, authority; to be concerned with personal, profession-related goals and values; and to be more loyal to clients and colleagues than to the employing organization. This view portrays professionals as being caught between two opposing sets of goals and values; those engendered by the bureaucratic organization's desire for efficiency and centralized control mechanisms, and those engendered by professionals' client-centered orientation and desires for autonomy.

More recent work on the role conflicts experienced by professionals in organizations has tended to support and further refine the earlier conceptualization. For example, in a study of 264 certified public accountants, Sorensen and Sorensen (1974) showed that the discrepancy between accountants' professional orientation and the degree of bureaucratization of the firms in which they worked resulted in such outcomes as lower job satisfaction and more frequent intentions to quit. However, Bartol (1979) has shown that degree of bureaucratization per se is not the important determinant of role stress and other

attitudinal outcomes. Her results, derived from a sample of 250 computer specialists, indicate that the dysfunctional outcomes associated with the conflict between professional and bureaucratic norms, are vitiated entirely by reward systems that reinforce professional behaviors and orientations. She reported no significant relationships between professionalism and role stress or turnover.

Thus, while it has been shown fairly conclusively that boundary spanners experience more role conflict than non-boundary spanners (Whetten, 1978), the relationship between the professional role and experienced role conflict is less consistent. However, additional research, focusing on top administrators and first line supervisors (Miles, 1976; Rogers and Molnar, 1976) when considered in conjunction with the research on boundary spanners and professionals seems to indicate that, in general, individuals whose roles expose them to the conflicting demands of multiple role senders or coalitions do experience higher levels of role conflict. This is not surprising, given that role conflict is defined as such an experience. It should be noted, however, that Bartol's results indicate that professionally-oriented reward systems reduce experienced role stress for the incumbents of professional roles.

The foregoing discussion of the role episode and the relationship of certain roles to role conflict indicates that role conflict arises from the incompatible demands made upon a focal person by one or more role senders. Certain roles, i.e., boundary spanner and professional, are more likely to produce role conflict for incumbents precisely because incumbents in these roles are "in the middle" of two or more sets of demands which incumbents cannot simultaneously satisfy.

The next and last section of the review of conflict presented here deals with the relationship between conflict and other outcomes.

Relationship Between Conflict and Other Variables

Almost all of the work on conflict/outcome relationships has dealt with the link between role conflict and other outcomes. However, Kahn and Boulding (1964) have provided a theoretical basis for the relationship between conflict, in a more general sense, and individual reactions to it. In their view, individuals respond to conflicts in one of three ways; aggression, role changing, or acceptance. Aggressive reactions are those in which the individual actively tries to injure the organization, for example through sabotage, work slowdown, strikes, or more subtle forms of passive aggression. Role changing reactions, on the other hand, are said to occur when the individual attempts to influence role senders in order to change their expectations. Acceptance of conflict occurs when the individual simply goes along with the demands made upon him by others. However, a distinction is made between two kinds of acceptance. Apathetic acceptance of conflict occurs when the individual does not identify with the organization, but "goes through the motions" of his assigned tasks. Committed acceptance occurs when the individual identifies himself with the organization or work group and, therefore, finds some personally meaningful significance in a role.

Empirical research on the relationship between role conflict and individual reactions to it has focused on the by-products of acceptance reactions. That is, the focus has been on apathetic reactions to role conflict which manifest themselves as various withdrawal behaviors

and negative attitudes. For example, Aram, Morgan, and Esbeck (1971) showed that low levels of interpersonal conflict were significantly associated with satisfaction of self-actualization needs and self-perceived effectiveness for 110 employees of a research and development laboratory. Similarly, Miles (1976) reported significant negative correlations between role conflict and tension, job satisfaction, and attitudes toward role senders among 202 employees of nine different research and development organizations. Research by Parkington and Schneider (1979) and Sorensen and Sorensen (1974), discussed previously, also indicates that dysfunctional outcomes such as decreased satisfaction and intentions to quit are associated with role conflict. In addition, two reviews of the role conflict literature, published eleven years apart, have also indicated that tension, dissatisfaction, and psychological withdrawal are the typical consequences of role conflict (Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman, 1970; Van Sell, Brief, and Schuler, 1981).

The relationship between role conflict and organizational commitment has rarely been researched, but the results of the research that has been done seem to indicate that role conflict and commitment vary inversely. For example, Baird (1972) showed that lower levels of role conflict and role ambiguity (collectively termed "role stress") were associated with higher levels of commitment to professional norms and values for a sample of 689 graduate students. It should be noted that Baird did not assess commitment to a particular organization, but rather commitment to the role for which the students were preparing.

In an assessment of the antecedents of organizational commitment, Stevens, Beyer, and Trice (1978) reported a significant negative

correlation between role overload, which is one component of role conflict, and commitment for a sample of 634 managers in 71 federal government organizations. Other elements of role conflict were not measured in this study.

Recently, Morris and Sherman (1981) reported a significant negative relationship between role conflict and organizational commitment for a sample of 506 employees in three branches of a mental health organization. These results represent the strongest support for Kahn and Boulding's (1964) hypothesized relationship between conflict and apathetic acceptance. None of the research on the conflict-commitment relationship supports their alternative hypothesis which is that conflict may result in committed acceptance.

Summary

The overview of the conflict literature presented here has yielded several conclusions which are relevant to the present research. First, broad, general definitions and typologies of conflict are appropriate in order to make advances in the area of conflict research. Second, antecedents of conflict include personal attributes such as divergent attitudes and beliefs, as well as structural attributes, especially multiple incongruent goals and incumbency in particular roles. Third, the role episode and role conflict models which are most familiar to organizational behaviorists are also most appropriate as theoretical bases for the present research, even though the present research differs from these conceptualizations in several important ways (to be discussed subsequently). And, fourth, the relationship between role conflict and withdrawal behaviors and attitudes, such as

self-perceived effectiveness, satisfaction, intention to quit and turnover is fairly well-documented in the literature. The relationship between role conflict and organizational commitment has been less frequently studied, but results seem to indicate that higher levels of role conflict are associated with decreased organizational commitment.

Comparison of Present Research to Earlier Work

Earlier work that has addressed the conflict/commitment relationship has used classic conceptualizations and measures of role conflict and related this variable to global organizational commitment. The present research is similar to these past efforts in that the focus here is on the conflict/commitment relationship. However, this research is different from previous work in several ways.

First, the conceptualization of conflict employed here differs from role conflict. This study uses Maddi's (1980) conception of conflict, which classifies all conflicts as either intra-psychic or psycho-social. This conception of conflict is appropriate because it allows for an examination of conflicts between individuals and groups. Role conflict, on the other hand, centers on the conflicts that exist between a focal person and individual members of his/her role set. Maddi's conception also seems more appropriate because it allows for intra-psychic conflicts among various sets of goals and values that individuals hold. It is also useful because its inclusive nature does not limit conflicts to those that are engendered with respect to the particular duties or tasks that a role incumbent performs. The conflicts examined in this research concern the conflicting goals and values that individuals and groups hold for the way in which the

organization as a whole should function. Thus, intra-psychic and psycho-social conflicts over the goal orientations of the total organization represent conflicts at a higher, more macro level of abstraction than do role conflicts over the way in which an individual should perform a job.

A second difference between the present research and previous work on conflict and commitment centers around the coalitional conception of organizations used here. Since organizations, in this view, are composed of constituencies which have conflicting goals for organizational functioning, and since some individuals adopt the goals and values of several of these groups, individuals experience multiple commitments to the organization's internal and external constituencies. Thus, this research does not assume that commitment is a uni-focal construct--the one focus being organizational goals and values. Rather, individuals experience multiple commitments to the goals and values of multiple groups with whom they identify.

Third, the present research employs both structural and psychological variables as antecedents to organizational commitment. As noted earlier, multivariate approaches to commitment as a dependent variable are needed, since no one orientation (structural, psychological, behavioral) in isolation has proved entirely satisfactory. The present research employs organizational tenure as representative of the structural characteristics which are associated with commitment, and conflict over constituency endorsements as the psychological variables of interest.

Hypotheses

The dependent variable of interest in the present research is commitment to the total organization. The independent variables are the degree and type of conflict experienced among the goals and values of competing constituencies. The intra-psychic-conflict that is experienced exists within individuals over which constituencies' goals and values to endorse. The psycho-social conflict that is experienced exists between the individual and the organization's top management over which constituencies to endorse. In addition, the effect of tenure on commitment will be assessed. Tenure is a summary, structural antecedent which has been shown in previous work to be strongly associated with commitment.

Hypothesis 1

The psycho-social conflict that an individual experiences between his/her own endorsements of the goals and values of several constituencies and top management's endorsements is significantly, negatively related to the individual's level of commitment to the total organization. Psycho-social conflict is defined as the discrepancy between personal orientations to various constituencies and beliefs about top management's endorsements of these constituencies.

Hypothesis 2

The intra-psychic conflict an individual experiences over the endorsement of the goals and values of several constituencies is significantly, negatively related to levels of commitment to the total organization. Intra-psychic conflict is defined as the standard deviation of the individual's endorsements of several constituencies.

Hypothesis 3

Intra-psychic and psycho-social conflicts over constituency endorsements contribute significantly to explained variance in commitment over and above the variance explained by tenure alone.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

This chapter begins with a description of the research site, followed by a description of the sample. The development of one of the survey instruments is then discussed and the psychometric properties of formerly developed instruments are presented. A description of the data collection procedures follows and the chapter concludes with a discussion of the data analysis techniques used in this study.

Research Site

The organization in which this research was conducted is a three-county, community mental health agency, located in the Midwest, and termed "CMH" (Community Mental Health) throughout. CMH employs approximately 396 professional, paraprofessional, clerical and administrative employees who are engaged in providing and supporting a variety of mental health and mental retardation services. For example, CMH provides a comprehensive substance abuse treatment program, prevention and consultation services for children, and outpatient, day, and residential programs for mental health and mental retardation clients. Funding for this organization comes from state (76%), private (10%), county (9%), and federal (5%) sources.

CMH is directed by a 12-member Board of Directors who are appointed by County Boards of Commissioners. This Board appoints one Director to serve as chief executive officer and administrator of the

tri-county programs. The structure of the organization is relatively flat with only three levels of supervision and management beneath the Board of Directors. Most employees of CMH are engaged in direct forms of client care (74%) with a smaller proportion of clerical and administrative employees (26%) providing staff support for client services.

Sample

The research participants in this study were the professional employees of CMH. These individuals provide mental health services (therapies of various kinds) to clients, and because of the nature of this position serve as boundary spanners between the organization and the primary public that is served. Of the 250 employees at CMH who responded to the survey, 124 (77.6%) classified themselves as professionals, and it is these individuals who constitute the research participants in this study. Of these, 68.5% had graduate degrees (Masters or Doctorate), 27.4% had a Bachelors degree, and 3.2% had completed less than four years of college. Sex of the respondents is 62% female and 38% male. The group is composed of 83% Whites, 5% Blacks, the rest being Hispanic, or Pacific Islanders. Their average age is 28 years old, 64% are married, and 51% have one or more children.

Survey Instruments

The instruments used to assess the variables of interest in this study consisted of the Constituency Endorsement Measure (CEM) which was developed specifically for use in this research, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday et al. (1979), a one-item response ("manipulation") check on the degree of intra-psychic conflict experienced by the respondents, and a one-item, self-report

indicator of the respondents' tenure at CMH. Since the data collected for this study were part of a larger survey designed to assess organizational effectiveness, additional instruments that may have relevance for the present research were also used. These additional measures include the Rizzo et al. (1970) measure of role conflict and role ambiguity, a measure of job involvement (Rabinowitz and Hall, 1977) the Faces scale of job satisfaction developed by Kunin (1955), single item assessments of self-perceived effectiveness of both the individual and the organization, and a measure of employee burnout.

Development of the Constituency Endorsement Measure (CEM)

The conceptual framework for the CEM was derived from macro conceptions of organizations that indicate that organizations frequently face multiple constituencies that often make conflicting demands and frequently employ non-overlapping sets of effectiveness criteria (Blau and Scott, 1962; Cyert and March, 1963; Pennings and Goodman, 1979; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). In addition to this theoretical underpinning for the instrument, interviews conducted with employees at CMH indicated that the organization was faced with meeting the goals of four primary constituencies; the organization's top management, the funding agencies that supply financial resources to CMH, the clients and larger public that CMH serves, and the professional standards and values of some employees of CMH.

Structured interviews with 20 randomly selected employees at CMH and five employees who were specifically selected to add representativeness (resulting in a stratified random sample) were conducted. These interviews, which lasted for about one hour each, were designed

to elicit employee perceptions of organizational and individual effectiveness. Sample interview questions appear in Table 2. All interviewees answered questions in the same order, but respondents were encouraged to elaborate on any issue(s) which seemed of particular concern to them. Interviewees were assured of anonymity and interviews were tape recorded with the respondents' permission. Notes were made by the interviewer after each session, and some tapes of the interviews were transcribed and analyzed for recurring themes. One theme which recurred throughout many of the interviews, but particularly in interviews conducted with professional and managerial employees, was the perception that individuals in the organization attempted to serve many "masters." That is, some professionals indicated that they faced expectations from management that conflicted with their own goals and values regarding client care. For example, a number of professionals wanted to develop and maintain ways to assess client care on a qualitative basis, while they felt that management's concern seemed to be with the number of clients served and how rapidly they were moved through the system. Managers who were interviewed, frequently spoke of the difficulty in providing quality client care in light of the financial constraints imposed by funding agencies. It seemed clear, after an analysis of the interview tapes, that many individuals in the organization were aware of the multiple constituencies that CMH attempts to serve, and that when aware, they experienced conflict between their own goals and values and the goals and values of these several groups.

TABLE 2

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CONCERNING INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

1. If someone asked you what kind of place this is to work in, what would you tell them?
2. What kinds of things interfere with your ability to do a better job?
3. If you were going to make changes in the organization, what kinds of things would you change?
4. What do you see as some of the major problems for the entire organization?
5. Can you think of anything in particular, that happened recently, that made you feel good about working here?
6. Can you think of anything in particular, that happened recently, that made you feel bad about working here?

The CEM was designed to represent conflicts among the goals of the four main constituencies at CMH. Thus, each constituency was paired with every other constituency, yielding six cells, and three items per cell were written to reflect the goal conflicts between the paired constituencies. Table 3 shows the cells and items which comprised the Constituency Endorsement Measure. Items were presented to respondents in random order, and respondents were requested to answer each item using a two-point scale; 1 = should be done, 2 = should not be done. This either/or response format was chosen because it represented the most realistic conception of these issues. That is, the interviews revealed that respondents felt that the goal conflicts they faced were not amenable to integrative solutions, but rather were "yes" or "no" propositions. Respondents were directed to respond to each item based upon

TABLE 3

CONSTITUENCY ENDORSEMENT MEASURE

Cell #1--Top Management/Professionals Goal Conflicts

Familiarizing oneself with financial issues at CMH, rather than leaving financial concerns only to top management.

Planning and implementing changes based more on top management's cost/benefit considerations, than on input from professional staff.

Designing ways to assess client care on a more qualitative basis, rather than on a quantitative basis.

Cell #2--Top Management/Clients-Public Goal Conflicts

Following all CMH rules and procedures, even if they sometimes interfere with providing what the public wants.

Soliciting input from other client-support agencies in order to decide how resouces should be spent, rather than having top management alone make these decisions.

Focusing on short term therapy, even though some clients who come to CMH say they need longer term care.

Cell #3--Top Management/Funding Agencies Goal Conflicts

Having top management decide which new programs will be started up at CMH, rather than having funding agencies decide.

Having funding agencies decide which programs at CMH will be cut, rather than having top management decide.

Having funding agencies decide how money will be split up among various programs at CMH, rather than having top management decide.

TABLE 3--Continued

Cell #4--Professionals/Clients-Public Goal Conflicts

Relying on one's own professional judgment, even when it conflicts with a client's demands.

Assigning clients to therapists based more on a client's needs than on trying to maintain a balanced case load.

Continuing with a particular treatment program, even if a client maintains it isn't helping.

Cell #5--Professionals/Funding Agencies Goal Conflicts

Accepting the monetary constraints imposed by funding agencies, rather than pressing for greater salary increases.

Choosing to live with current budget constraints, rather than putting pressure on funding agencies to increase CMH's budget for client services.

Requesting better facilities (office space, therapy rooms, other equipment for use with clients) rather than accepting the limitations imposed by funding agencies.

Cell #6--Clients-Public/Funding Agencies Goal Conflicts

Sometimes putting the requirements of funding agencies first, and clients second.

Doing an assessment of community needs to determine what services to offer, rather than relying on the preference of funding agencies.

Having funding agencies decide which client groups to serve, rather than trying to serve all those clients who ask for help.

their own opinions as to which goals should be endorsed, as well as on the basis of their perceptions of the way in which top management would respond to the items. Because of this format and these directions, it was possible to assess what each individual thought should be done with respect to the goals of CMH's various constituencies, and also to assess the discrepancy between individual goal orientations and perceptions of top management's goal orientations.

Items for the CEM were written by members of the research team who conducted the original interviews. Content for the items was drawn from the transcriptions of the interviews and generated during several group discussions among research team members. Extreme care was taken in writing items to ensure that each half of each item reflected an equally desirable alternative. This was done in an attempt to minimize social desirability response bias as well as to reflect the conflict that is inherent in choosing between two desirable alternatives. Items were then classified according to the cell each represented, and research team members who were not involved in the initial classification were requested to reclassify each item into its appropriate cell. Disagreement over reclassifications was resolved by rewriting some items and discarding others. After several iterations of this process, 100% agreement among four raters was reached on the appropriateness of item content and item placement within cells. A preliminary version of the CEM was then presented to the Director of Personnel and the Director of Evaluation Research at CMH for their comments and suggestions. The CEM was then revised, to include items which these managers suggested. These new items were then subjected to the same classification, rewrite, and reclassification procedures

as before. The final version of the CEM was judged by the Director of Personnel and his staff at CMH to be an accurate reflection of organizational realities. The entire process, from preliminary interviews to the development of the final version of the CEM took approximately three months to complete, and involved the participation of approximately 27 CMH employees, including two top administrators, and a four-member research team.

The CEM is scored twice, once for individual responses which represent the degree of intra-psychic conflict experienced in endorsing the four constituencies, and once for psycho-social conflict, which is represented by the discrepancy between individual endorsements and beliefs about top managements' endorsements. Because of the ipsative nature of the CEM, which means that respondents must endorse one constituency or another each time they respond to an item, their total score on the measure always equals 18, or one point for each item. However, the distribution of their endorsements, across the four constituencies, varies and ranges from 0-9 for any one constituency. For example, an individual might endorse clients over all other constituencies, except professionals, and the scoring profile depicted in Figure 1 would result. The mean endorsement across the four constituencies is equal to 4.5 (or 18 items divided by 4 constituencies). However, it is the standard deviation of the individuals' responses from this mean of 4.5 which is the operationalization of the degree of intra-psychic conflict. This approach to the measurement of intra-psychic conflict rests on the assumption that an approximately equal endorsement of all four constituencies represents an inability to choose strongly in favor of any <u>one</u> constituency, and hence is indicative of conflict.

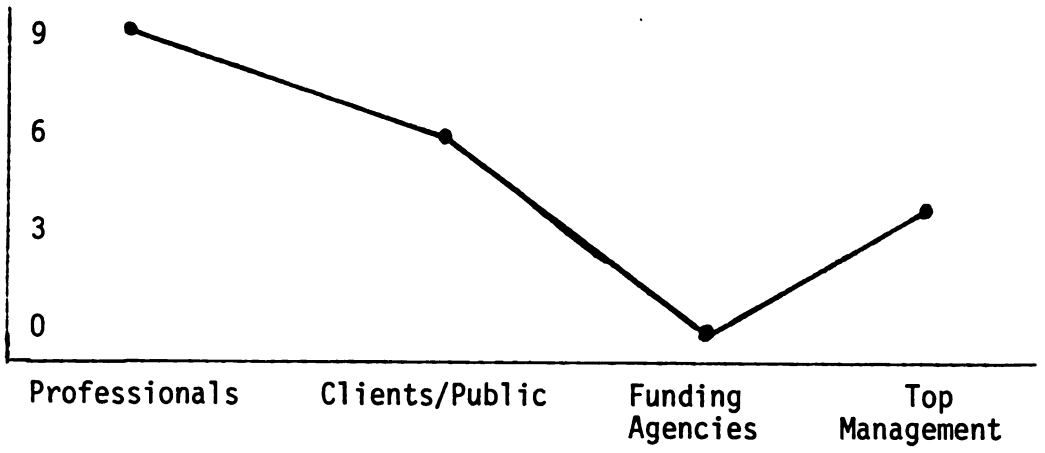

FIGURE 1

EXAMPLE OF CONSTITUENCY ENDORSEMENT PROFILE

Thus, higher levels of intra-psychic conflict are represented by lower standard deviations from the mean, as this indicates an almost equal endorsement of each of the four constituencies. On the other hand, lower levels of intra-psychic conflict are represented by higher standard deviations, since they represent a respondent's clear preference or endorsement of one constituency over the others. This kind of response shows that an individual is <u>not</u> having difficulty deciding in favor of a particular group and so is not as conflicted as the person whose endorsements are more evenly spread out. The advantage of this method of measuring intra-psychic conflict is that the standard deviation of endorsements yields a continuous variable which can be employed in a multiple regression analysis. And, because this measure does not purport to capture the absolute level of constituency endorsements, but rather the degree of conflict associated with those endorsements, the problem of the non-independence of responses that is associated with ipsative measures is avoided.

Psycho-social conflict is also operationalized using the CEM and is the difference between the individual's constituency endorsements and the individuals' perceptions of top managements' endorsements. This number is derived by computing the absolute difference for each item and summing across items. This measure uses the generalized Euclidean distance formula (d) which is based on absolute difference scores (Cronbach and Gleser, 1953). This method of operationalizing psycho-social conflict also yields a continuous variable which can be used in a multiple regression exploration of the correlates of commitment.

The Response Check on Intra-Psychic Conflict

Because the CEM, which is the primary instrument used to assess intra-psychic conflict, was developed on the basis of interviews and the literature, it was necessary to include an item which assessed directly the degree of conflict that all individuals experienced in answering the CEM. That is, the CEM was developed with the intention of capturing and reflecting the relevant goal conflicts that professionals at CMH experience. However, it was necessary to include a question that asked respondents directly for their perceptions of the conflict they experienced in answering the CEM items in order to provide an independent check on the degree of conflict experienced. This question and the directions to the respondents appear in Table 4. It was reasoned that respondents who chose either option #1 or option #2, indicating some difficulty in deciding on the goals that CMH should pursue, experienced intra-psychic conflict over constituency endorsements. Because each question represented the competing goals of two constituencies, difficulty in deciding which goals to pursue represents conflict

TABLE 4

RESPONSE CHECK ITEM

Consider the questions in Part 2 above (refers to CEM questions). Think about how easy or difficult it was for you to decide how things should be done at CMH. Then answer the question below using the following key.

1 if it was very difficult to decide.

2 if it was somewhat difficult to decide.

3 if it was neither difficult nor easy to decide.

4 if it was somewhat easy to decide.

5 if it was very easy to decide.

Overall, how difficult was it for you to decide how you think things should be done at CMH?

over which constituency serves as the focus for the individual's commitment. This conflict is also represented by the standard deviation of the individuals' responses to the CEM. Therefore, a significant positive correlation between degree of conflict expressed in this response check item and a low standard deviation of endorsements of the four constituencies yields an indication of convergent validity for intrapsychic conflict.

The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

The OCQ was developed by Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974) and Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) and is one of the more popular measures of organizational commitment used in current research. This instrument reflects a definition of commitment which is both psychological and motivational in nature. The psychological aspects of

this measure of commitment reflect an identification with and acceptance of organizational goals and values. The motivational element in this operationalization is reflected in items which assess the individual's willingness to exert effort on behalf of organizational goals. This 15-item measure, shown in Table 5, employs a 7-point Likert type response format which ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Mowday et al. (1979) report good psychometric characteristics for the OCQ including high internal consistency reliabilities, adequate test-retest reliabilities, some evidence for convergent, discriminant and predictive validities, and norms for a large and diverse sample.

TABLE 5

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (OCQ)
(Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1979)

1. I am willing to put in a good deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.

2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.

*3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization.

4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.

5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.

6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.

*7. I could just as well be working for a different organization, as long as the type of work was similar.

8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.

*9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.

10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.

*11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely.

*12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees.

13. I really care about the fate of this organization.

14. For me, this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.

*15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.

*When these items are deleted, those that remain constitute the short form of the OCQ.

For example, the OCQ was developed using a sample of 2,653 employees working in a variety of jobs in nine different organizations. This sample included state government workers, university employees, psychiatric technicians, scientists and engineers, and employees of banks, hospitals, telephone companies, and an automobile manufacturer. Table 6 presents sample sizes, means, standard deviations, and internal consistency (coefficient alpha) reliabilities by sample.

TABLE 6

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE OCQ
(Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1979)

	N	Mean	SD	Coefficient Alpha
Public employees	569	4.5	.90	.90
Classified university employees[1]	243	4.6	1.30	.90
Hospital employees[1]	382	5.1	1.18	.88
Bank employees	411	5.2	1.07	.88
Telephone company employees	605	4.7	1.20	.90
Scientist and engineers[1]	119	4.4	.98	.84
Auto company managers	115	5.3	1.05	.90
Psychiatric technicians	60	4.1	1.04	.87
Retail management trainees	59	6.1	.64	NA

[1]The short form of the OCQ was used in this study.

In addition, Mowday et al. (1979) report test re-test reliabilities of .53, .63, and .75 over 2-, 3-, and 4-month periods respectively for the sample of psychiatric technicians. A short form of the OCQ, which contains only positively worded items, was used on a subsample of 859 employees (out of the original sample of 2,653) and the results of the analyses reveal no appreciable differences in psychometric properties for the short form.

Evidence of convergent validity is provided by correlations of the OCQ with measures of other variables to which commitment is presumed to be related. So, for example, the OCQ correlated, on the average, .71 with a measure of organizational attachment, -.42 with intentions to quit, .44 with intrinsic motivation, and .42 with motivational force to perform. Evidence for discriminant validity is provided by correlations of the OCQ with job involvement ($r = .49$), career satisfaction ($r = .39$), and job satisfaction ($r = .38$).

Table 7 presents evidence for the predictive validity of the OCQ. Since committed employees are presumed to exhibit their psychological attachment to the organization through behavioral manifestations of attachment, significant negative relationships between commitment and absenteeism and turnover are predicted, whereas significant positive relationships between commitment, tenure and performance are predicted. Table 7 shows that these relationships generally hold up for samples of five different types of employees.

TABLE 7

PREDICTIVE VALIDITIES FOR THE OCQ
(Mowday, Steers, and Porter, 1979)

	Turnover	Tenure	Absenteeism	Performance
Public Employees	-.19***	.23***	-.13***	.05
Hospital Employees	-.17***	.26***	.08	.07
Scientists and Engineers			-.28***	.11**
Psychiatric Technicians	-.30**			.10**
Retail Management Trainees	-.42**			.30*

*p $\leq$ .10
**p $\leq$ .05
***p $\leq$ .01

In the present research, the short form of the OCQ, which contains only positively worded items, was used and the response format was changed from a 7-point scale to a 5-point scale. The short form was adopted for use here in order to conserve space on the survey, and because this form of the OCQ has psychometric properties which are comparable to the longer version (see Table 5). A 5-item response format (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree) was used in this research, instead of the usual 7-point scale (the anchors are the same for the 7-point scale, but two additional points are included; 2 = moderately disagree, 6 = moderately agree) in order to, again, conserve space, and because marked sense answer sheets were used to collect the data for this

study. These answer sheets allow for a maximum of only five possible responses per item. The OCQ is scored by summing the responses to each item and dividing by the number of items.

The psychometric properties of the OCQ are not without some weaknesses. Specifically the evidence presented by Mowday et al. (1979) regarding the discriminant and convergent validity of the OCQ is not entirely convincing. However, the OCQ was chosen for use in the present study because of its popularity among commitment researchers. This popularity allows for some comparability among the many different research efforts that have focused on organizational commitment.

The only other measure of direct bearing on the hypotheses examined in this study is a one-item self-report indication of the respondent's tenure at CMH. This item appears below in Table 8.

TABLE 8

TENURE ITEM

How long have you worked at CMH?
1 = less than one year
2 = 2+ to 3 years
3 = 3+ to 5 years
4 = 5+ to 10 years
5 = 10+ years

This item was included as one of the predictors in the regression equation (along with intra-psychic and psycho-social conflict measures) because of previous research that indicates that organizational commitment tends to be positively associated with tenure

(Hrebiniak and Alutto, 1972; Schneider et al., 1974; Sheldon, 1971; Stevens et al., 1978).

Analyses

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis is used to test the hypotheses of this study. Hierarchical regression was chosen as appropriate because it is a technique that allows for specification of the order of entry of predictor variables into the equation. This approach is called for when there is a theoretical reason to believe that some independent variables will have greater ability to explain variance than others (Cohen and Cohen, 1975). In this case, the results of earlier research indicate that tenure is a variable which has great potential for explaining the variance in organizational commitment levels, so tenure is entered before intra-psychic and psycho-social conflict variables.

In addition to regression analysis, zero order correlations are performed among measures of role conflict, role ambiguity, job satisfaction, job involvement, commitment, intra-psychic, and psycho-social conflict. These correlations provide some evidence of discriminant and convergent validity among constructs where such evidence exists. The results of all analyses are reported in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of data analyses designed to test the hypotheses of this study. First, the psychometric properties of the OCQ are presented and compared to those reported in previous research. Then the measurement characteristics of the CEM are presented, including correlations between the CEM and measures of other constructs such as job satisfaction, job involvement and role stress. These are presented in order to provide some evidence for the construct validity of the CEM. These latter data and the results of the multiple regression analyses are reported and discussed in light of the specific hypotheses presented in Chapter One.

Properties of the OCQ

The internal consistency reliability estimate (Cronbach's alpha) for the short form, 5-point response format of the OCQ used in the present research was an acceptable .88. The mean response to the measure was 2.88 with a standard deviation of .73. Converting these figures to the 7-point response format more frequently used in previous research yields a mean of 4.03 and a standard deviation of 1.02. This mean of 4.03 is not significantly different from the means of approximately 4.80 which Mowday et al. (1979) reported. Some caution in

interpreting this comparison may be warranted, however, since the transformation of the mean and standard deviation from a 5-point scale to a 7-point scale provides for a rough comparison at best.

Table 9 presents the intercorrelations among measures of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, job involvement, role conflict, role ambiguity, and burnout. These correlations are comparable

TABLE 9

INTERCORRELATIONS OF COMMITMENT WITH OTHER VARIABLES

	Commitment	Job Satisfaction	Job Involvement	Role Conflict	Role Ambiguity	Burnout
Commitment	(.88)					
Job Satisfaction	-.66**	(1.00)				
Job Involvement	.21*	-.05	(.70)			
Role Conflict	-.39**	-.32**	-.05	(.77)		
Role Ambiguity	-.45**	-.55**	-.01	.39**	(.75)	
Burnout	-.64**	-.74**	.00	.45**	.63**	(.93)

Internal consistency reliability estimates (alpha) appear in parentheses along the diagonal, except for the one-item measure of job satisfaction.

*$p \leq .02$

**$p \leq .001$

to some, but not all of Mowday et al.'s figures on the convergent and discriminant validity of the OCQ. For example, Mowday reported an average correlation between commitment and job satisfaction of .38, but the magnitude of this correlation varied widely from sample to sample. So, for his sample of scientists and engineers, the correlation between commitment and the "work itself" scale of the JDI was .63. For another sample of psychiatric technicians this figure was .58. These two samples may be more similar to the sample of professionals used in this study than are his other samples of bank, telephone, and auto company employees.

The correlation between commitment and job satisfaction for the present research was -.66 (job satisfaction was scored in the opposite direction from commitment). This figure is very close to those reported by Mowday for some of his samples, even though the job satisfaction measure used in this research (The Faces Scale; Kunin, 1955) is a one-item measure of global job satisfaction, while the JDI (used by Mowday) is a multi-dimensional, multi-item scale.

With respect to job involvement, Mowday reported a correlation of .30 with the OCQ for the sample of scientists and engineers. The present finding of r = .21 represents a significant correlation between the two constructs, and is consistent with previous research.

Commitment, job satisfaction, and job involvement were the only constructs assessed both in the present research and by Mowday et al. However, commitment was correlated with additional constructs, in the present research, in order to examine its relationship to other organizational attachment variables. For example, organizational commitment was found to be strongly, negatively (r = -.64) related to a measure of

employee burnout. This burnout measure consists of thirty-four items arranged in a semantic differential format (i.e., dissatisfied-satisfied, worried-unworried). Factor analysis of the measure revealed five factors which were named satisfaction, efficacy, fear, support, and time control and which were all moderately intercorrelated. The first principal component of burnout (satisfaction) seemed to capture satisfaction-with-the-work-itself issues and was strongly related ($r = .74$) to the Faces measure of job satisfaction used in the present research. The OCQ correlated -.64 with burnout and -.66 with job satisfaction. Thus, it seems that satisfaction, burnout, and commitment are all highly intercorrelated constructs, at least among the professional employees sampled here. It should be noted, however, that while these constructs are strongly related in a statistical sense, they are conceptually distinct. Satisfaction, and to a large extent burnout, are after-the-fact evaluations that employees make about their jobs and working conditions. Commitment, on the other hand, is a present and future-oriented construct that involves an identification with organizational goals and values.

Correlations between commitment and role conflict (-.39) and between commitment and role ambiguity (-.45) were significant and in the expected direction. Recall that Baird (1972) and Morris and Sherman (1981) reported negative relationships among these constructs, and the magnitude of the correlations from previous research is comparable to that reported here. Overall, the properties of the OCQ, as measured in this research, are fairly consistent with results of earlier research.

Properties of the CEM

The Constituency Endorsement Measure was used to operationalize the important independent variables in this study, namely psycho-social conflict and intra-psychic conflict. Psycho-social conflict was operationalized as a difference score between individual goal orientations and perceptions of managements' goal orientations. The CEM reflects the goals and values of four different constituencies and these comprise, in effect four different subscales of the CEM. Since responses to any one of these scales are dependent upon the individual's responses to other subscales, separate reliability analyses for differences between subscales are not appropriate. With respect to the reliability of the difference scores for the measure as a whole, it was not expected that this figure would be high due to the multi-dimensional nature of the instrument. And indeed, the alpha coefficient computed across all eighteen items of the CEM was found to be .21.

With respect to the second variable, intra-psychic conflict, that was assessed with the CEM, no reliability data are available. This is because internal consistency reliability measures (whether alpha or KR-20, etc.) depend upon a common scale for all responses in order to compare the pattern of one individual's responses to another's. Ipsative measures such as the CEM assess an internal preference ordering that individuals experience. That is, the CEM reveals nothing about the absolute magnitude of endorsements, rather it captures the relative strength of endorsements among constituencies. Because of the potential for highly idiosyncratic preference orderings,

it cannot be assumed that individuals respond on the basis of a common, underlying scale. This makes the across-individuals comparisons, which are necessary for internal consistency reliability estimates, impossible.

A more appropriate form of reliability for intra-psychic conflict as assessed by the CEM is test-retest reliability which could indicate the stability of the conflict over time. However, since the data for the present research were collected at only one point in time, test-retest reliability estimates are unavailable.

In order to present some evidence for the construct validity of the CEM, Table 10 presents the intercorrelations among psycho-social conflict, intra-psychic conflict, role conflict, role ambiguity, and the one-item response check which was designed to be a more direct measure of intra-psychic conflict. This item asked respondents to report the degree of difficulty (or ease) they experienced in endorsing the various constituencies represented in the CEM. As can be seen in Table 10, the overall pattern of correlations among types of conflict seems to indicate that psycho-social conflict and intra-psychic conflict are fairly independent constructs. For example, psycho-social conflict was correlated with the response check item at the $r = .04$ (n.s.) level of magnitude, while intra-psychic conflict correlated $r = .31$ ($p \leq .001$) with this item. Similarly, psycho-social conflict was more strongly related to role conflict ($r = .45$) and role ambiguity ($r = .34$) than was intra-psychic conflict ($r = .14$ and $.18$ respectively).

This pattern of results (and those depicted in Table 11) is consistent with the definitions of these conflicts discussed in

TABLE 10

INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG CONFLICT MEASURES

	Psycho-Social	Intra-Psychic	Response Check	Role Conflict	Role Ambiguity
Psycho-Social Conflict	(.21)				
Intra-Psychic Conflict	.23**	(---)			
Response Check Item	.04	.31***	(---)		
Role Conflict	.45***	.14	.10	(.77)	
Role Ambiguity	.34***	.18*	.08	.39***	(.75)

Internal consistency reliability estimates (alpha) appear in parentheses along the diagonal, where applicable.

*$p \leq .05$

**$p \leq .01$

***$p \leq .001$

Chapter One. Recall that role conflicts arise from several sources, including an incumbent playing two or more incompatible roles (inter-role conflicts) and an incumbent having a different perception of how a role should be performed compared to the perception of a role sender (person-role conflicts). In addition, role conflict may arise when the same role sender has incompatible expectations for the incumbent (intra-sender conflicts). These types of role conflicts are conceptually much more similar to psycho-social conflict, which arises

between an individual and another individual or group, than to intra-psychic conflict. Intra-psychic conflict arises solely from within the individual, perhaps as a result of multiple identifications or some other form of ambivalence. Table 11 shows the correlations between specific elements of role conflict and psycho-social and intra-psychic conflict. In most instances, psycho-social conflict is more strongly related to all three types of role conflict than is intra-psychic conflict.

TABLE 11

INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG SPECIFIC TYPES OF CONFLICT

	Psycho-Social Conflict	Intra-Psychic Conflict
Person Role Conflict		
I have to do things that should be done differently.	.32*	.21*
I work on unnecessary things.	.25*	.07
Intra Sender Role Conflict		
I receive an assignment without the manpower to complete it.	.31*	-.01
I receive an assignment without the resources to execute it.	.36*	.10
Interrole Conflict		
I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.	.15	.01
I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.	.29*	.15
I have to buck a rule in order to carry out an assignment.	.37*	-.04
I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person, but not accepted by others.	.28*	.25*

*$p \leq .05$

The next set of data which exhibits some of the measurement properties of the CEM concerns the relationship of conflicts to other organizational attachment variables such as job satisfaction, job involvement, and burnout. Table 12 presents these correlations.

TABLE 12

INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG CONFLICT MEASURES AND MEASURES OF ORGANIZATIONAL ATTACHMENT

	Psycho-Social	Intra-Psychic	Job Satisfaction	Job Involvement	Burnout
Psycho-Social Conflict	(---)				
Intra-Psychic Conflict	.23*	(---)			
Job Satisfaction	-.51**	.11	(1.00)		
Job Involvement	-.16	.00	-.05	(.70)	
Burnout	.51**	.13	-.74**	.00	(.93)

Internal consistency reliability estimates appear along the diagonal, where applicable.

*$p \leq .05$

**$p \leq .001$

These data indicate that psycho-social and intra-psychic conflict are significantly, positively correlated ($r = .23$). However, this correlation is of a magnitude which precludes serious multi-colinearity problems with respect to the regression analysis which follows. These

figures also indicate that while psycho-social conflict and job satisfaction are correlated at the r = -.51 level, the degree of "overlap" between these constructs is not sufficiently high to conclude that the two constructs are identical. It seems plausible that a high degree of psycho-social conflict may contribute to a lack of job satisfaction, although the lack of a causal design in the present research makes such an idea purely speculative.

Figure 2 portrays the average endorsement profile for the respondents in this sample. This profile indicates that, in general,

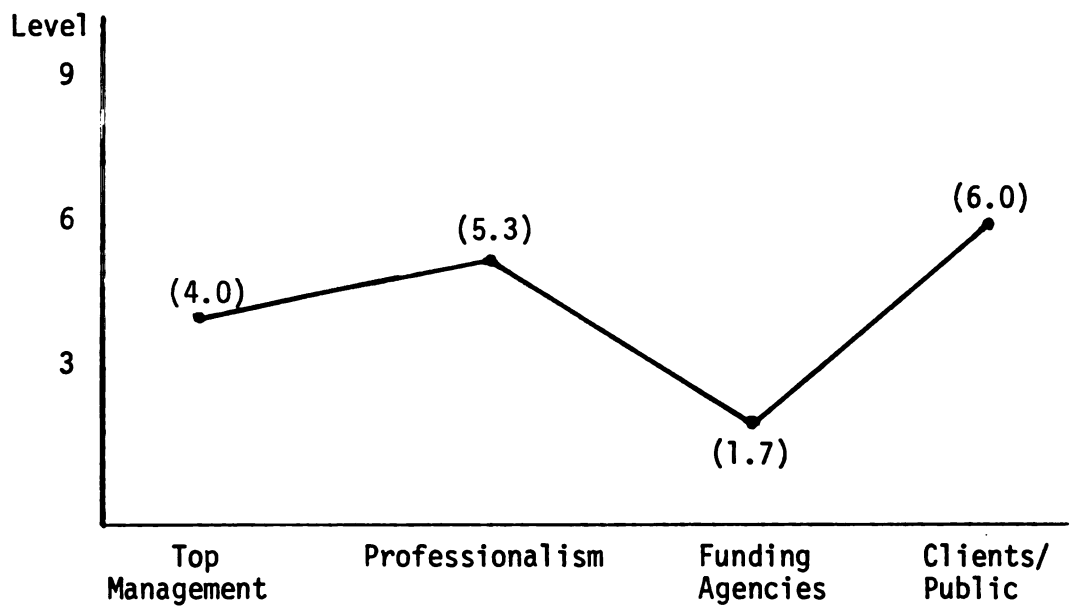

FIGURE 2

AVERAGE CONSTITUENCY ENDORSEMENT PROFILE

funding agencies received the lowest average endorsement, while professionalism and clients were endorsed at approximately equal levels. Any one constituency's range of endorsement was as low as zero or as high as nine. In addition, endorsement scores were correlated with levels of commitment to the total organization with the following results.

TABLE 13

CONSTITUENCY ENDORSEMENT SCORES
AS CORRELATES OF COMMITMENT

	Organizational Commitment	
Top Management	.25*	($p \leq .01$)
Professionalism	-.07	(n.s.)
Funding Agencies	.13	(n.s.)
Clients/Public	-.13	(n.s.)

*This correlation is not significantly different from .13 (funding agencies), but is significantly different from -.07 and -.13.

These results seem to indicate that commitment at CMH, is in part, a function of the individual's endorsement of managerial goals and values, and perhaps those of funding agencies as well.

Tests of Hypotheses

Table 14 presents the means and standard deviations for the predictor variables (intra-psychic conflict, psycho-social conflict, and tenure) and the dependent variable (organizational commitment) of interest in this study.

TABLE 14

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MAJOR VARIABLES

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cases
Intra-psychic Conflict	.71	.34	119
Psycho-social Conflict	1.49	.22	119
Tenure	2.66*	1.17	119
Commitment	2.88	.73	119

*A mean tenure rating of 2.66 indicates that, on average, respondents had been employed at CMH for approximately three years.

The hypotheses presented in Chapter One are restated below.

Hypothesis 1

The psycho-social conflict that an individual experiences (between his/her own endorsements of constituencies and perceptions of top managements' endorsements) is significantly, negatively related to organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2

The intra-psychic conflict that an individual experiences (over personal endorsements of constituencies) is significantly, negatively related to organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 3

Tenure in the organization is significantly, positively related to organizational commitment.

Table 15 presents the zero-order intercorrelations among the independent variables and organizational commitment.

TABLE 15

INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG PREDICTORS AND CRITERION VARIABLE

	Intra-Psychic	Psycho-Social	Tenure	Commitment
Intra-Psychic Conflict	(---)			
Psycho-Social Conflict	.23*	(.21)		
Tenure	-.08	.11	(---)	
Commitment	-.02	-.51**	-.12	(.88)

Internal consistency reliabilities appear along the diagonal, where applicable.

*$p \leq .05$

**$p \leq .01$

Table 16 presents the summary statistics for the hierarchical regression analysis which was performed in order to assess the relative importance of each of the predictors in explaining the variance in organizational commitment. The tenure variable was entered first into the equation because of its importance in previous research as a significant correlate of commitment. The order of entry of the next two

TABLE 16

SUMMARY OF HIERARCHICAL MULTIPLE REGRESSION

Step	Variable Entered	Multiple R	R Squared	R Squared Change	Overall F	Significance
1	Tenure	.12	.01	.01	1.88	.17
2	Intra-psychic Conflict	.16	.03	.01	1.71	.18
3	Psycho-social Conflict	.52	.27	.24	14.24	.00

variables (the conflict measures) was not specified because there is no theoretical basis that can be used to determine which type of conflict may be more important in explaining variance in commitment. When these regressions were computed specifying various other orders of entry of the variables, no appreciably different results were found. Thus, the results reported in Table 16 above, are identical to the results obtained when psycho-social conflict is entered before intra-psychic conflict.

The results depicted in Tables 15 and 16 provide strong support for Hypothesis 1, which posited a significant, negative relationship between psycho-social conflict and organizational commitment. These results do not support Hypothesis 2, concerning the relationship between intra-psychic conflict and commitment, nor Hypothesis 3, which dealt with the positive relationship between tenure and commitment.

There is one final consideration concerning the results presented in this chapter, and it concerns a potential limitation of this

research known as the percept-percept problem. The percept-percept problem may be inherent in all forms of research which rely solely on one method of collecting data. In this research, two methods of data collection were employed (surveys and interviews), although only the survey results were employed in empirical analyses.

The percept-percept problem is so called because psychological research often attempts to correlate perceptions of some phenomenon measured on one part of a survey with perceptions of another phenomenon measured on the same survey. Because individuals are presumed to be somewhat consistent within themselves and because of the common method bias associated with using only one form of measurement, some empirical relationships which result are thought to be spurious. That is, correlations as high as .30 are sometimes dismissed as the result of nothing more than percept-percept problems.

There are several obvious solutions to this problem, including reliance on more than one form of data collection (i.e., individual perceptions correlated with ratings from others, or individual perceptions correlated with individual behaviors), and data collection at more than one point in time. While these approaches were not possible in this research, other steps were taken to minimize the percept-percept problem.

One step that was taken involved the format of the survey itself. The survey was subdivided into two major sections, and respondents were made aware of the separation. The first section of the survey contained items and scales which called for a <u>description</u> of organizational events, practices, and procedures. Respondents were requested to report on these events as accurately as they could. The

Constituency Endorsement Measure was included in Part I of the survey. The second part of the survey contained items which called for emotional and attitudinal responses to various aspects of organizational life. Respondents were requested to give their true feelings about these items. The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire was included in this part of the survey. In this way, by asking respondents to separate their descriptions from their emotional responses, and by separating these scales on the survey itself, an attempt was made to reduce any spurious correlations which might result from the relationship between two or more global perceptions.

There is a second means of determining the extent of percept-percept problems in mono-method research designs, and this involves a comparison of the magnitudes of various correlations obtained through a single measurement method. If indeed the internal consistency within individuals' attitudes coupled with mono-method bias results in spurious relationships among constructs, then all relationships obtained from the same sample of subjects, at the same point in time and through a single method ought to be of approximately the same magnitude. In other words, if significant relationships among constructs result only because of percept-percept correlations, then these correlations should all be approximately equal.

Recall Table 11 which depicted the intercorrelations among intra-psychic conflict, psycho-social conflict, and various types of role conflict. These correlations ranged from -.01 (intra-psychic conflict with intra-sender role conflict; non-significant) to .37 (psycho-social conflict with interrole conflict; $p \leq .05$). The data which were analyzed to produce these results were all mono-method and collected at

the same point in time. These results are perhaps the strongest evidence against the existence of a telling percept-percept problem in the present research.

At some level, the controversy surrounding research results obtained through percept-percept correlations is a reflection of larger philosophical issues regarding the nature of reality itself. Those who argue that percept-percept correlations are largely spurious assume that reality is a concrete entity that exists outside of individuals. This argument rests on the idea that some perceptions of reality are more legitimate than others, for example, that supervisory ratings of performance are somehow more veridical than self-perceived effectiveness ratings. While this approach may be valid when the perceptions of others (such as supervisors) are the criteria of interest, this argument loses its force when a particular research design demands intra-individual perceptions as potential correlates of other intra-individual perceptions. That is, in the present research, psycho-social conflict has been defined as the perception of incompatibility between individual and managerial goal orientations. The extent of the "actual" incompatibility is virtually irrelevant, since it is the individual's definition of reality which accounts for the individuals' reactions to reality. Thus, while percept-percept problems may be relevant in some research designs, the approach taken here demands a perceptual account of psycho-social conflict.

In summary, this chapter has presented information on the measurement characteristics of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, the Constituency Endorsement Measure, and the results of analyses designed to test the hypotheses of this study. A discussion of

the percept-percept problem has indicated that such a problem is not particularly telling in the present research. The next chapter focuses on a discussion of these results, implications for theory and practice, and directions for future research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter focuses on a discussion of the results of this study. Potential explanations for the hypotheses which were not confirmed are offered. Implications of the present approach to the study of organizational commitment are then presented, followed by conclusions.

Discussion

Hypothesis One

The confirmation of Hypothesis One which dealt with the negative relationship between commitment and psycho-social conflict, appears to be consistent with the psychological approaches to organizational commitment presented in Chapter One. Recall that previous research on organizational commitment from a psychological perspective (as opposed to a structural or behavioral perspective) emphasized the role that identification with organizational goals and values plays in commitment to the organization. Identification is said to exist when individuals define themselves in terms of their membership in an organization or when there is congruence between individual and organizational goals. In this research, congruence between individual and managerial goal orientations was found to be significantly related to commitment. The substitution of managerial for organizational goals

was effected because a multiple-constituency conception of the nature of organizations guided this research. That is, one of the major underlying assumptions here was that different constituencies (e.g., management, employees, clients) possess potentially conflicting goals and values. The importance of congruence between individual and managerial goals as a correlate of commitment was hypothesized because of managements' presumed role as the dominant coalition. Since the dominant coalition in an organization has, by definition, the power to enact policies, rules, and procedures which further its own goal orientations--commitment to organizational goals and values must, presumably, reflect commitment to managements' goals and values. This seems to suggest that one focus for what has been termed "organizational commitment" in previous research is, in part, managerial goals and values. Thus, to the extent that individual goal orientations are congruent with perceptions of managerial goal orientations, individuals are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment to the organization as a whole.

An interesting aspect of this finding that organizational commitment is a correlate of commitment to managerial goals and values deals with the particular organization in which this research was conducted. At CMH, the content analyses of the interviews that were conducted revealed that managers, professionals, paraprofessionals, and even some clerical employees tended to see themselves as advocates of clients. That is, regardless of job type, almost all the individuals at CMH who were interviewed indicated that their goals, values, and priorities were focused on providing the best possible service to clients. Indeed, a comparison of managers' average constituency

endorsement profile with that of professionals in this organization indicates that both groups endorsed clients' goals and values at approximately equal (and relatively high) levels (6.0 for professionals; 5.8 for managers). The only substantial discrepancy between these two groups' endorsement profiles occurs with respect to the level of endorsement of managerial goals and values. Managers at CMH endorsed themselves, in effect, at the level of 5.1 (out of a total possible endorsement of 9). Professionals, however, endorsed managerial goals and values at a level of 4.0. Thus, the psycho-social conflict that exists between managers and professionals at CMH may not be the result of conflict over which constituency should be paramount. It seems clear, for example, that both managers and professionals place the highest priority on serving clients. However, the source of the psycho-social conflict that is experienced may center on the issue of which group is better qualified to determine how clients' needs will be met. In other words, there seems to be agreement at CMH that clients' needs come first. However, because professionals endorse managerial goals and values at a lower level than managers themselves do, the conflict seems to be related to which group will have primary responsibility for deciding how best to meet the needs of clients.

These results seem to suggest that the conflict engendered over constituency endorsements, and the relationship of this conflict to commitment, may be a more complex phenomenon than originally proposed and discussed in Chapter One. That is, it is possible for several different constituencies in an organization to agree on the organization's superordinate goals (in this case, client care), but to still experience conflict over which constituency is best suited to define

the means through which these goals will be attained. Organizational commitment, then, may not only be an identification with organizational goals and values, but, perhaps, must also include a perception on the part of individuals that they influence the means to goal attainment. This may be particularly true for professional employees, whose training engenders in them a sense of exclusive competence to deal with particular issues (i.e., client care). An organization, such as CMH, where commitment is positively associated only with the endorsement of managerial goals and values, may represent a situation in which professionals feel more or less disenfranchised with respect to influence and decision making power. Thus, the concept of organizational commitment among professionals may require further refinement to include not only congruence between individual and managerial goals, but also the power to influence the means of goal attainment.

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis, which dealt with the negative relationship between intra-psychic conflict and organizational commitment was not confirmed by the data collected for this research. Initially, this hypothesis was based upon the reasoning that individuals who are conflicted with respect to the primary focus for their commitment are, by definition, incapable of committing themselves to any one entity. Their position could perhaps be most accurately described as ambivalent rather than committed. An ambivalent individual manifests intra-psychic conflict by perceiving "good" and "bad," "positive" and "negative," or "advantage" and "disadvantage" in the goal orientation of any particular constituency. This is exhibited in the individual's

even-handed endorsement of the four constituencies, relevant in the present research, and results in a relatively low standard deviation of responses across the four goal orientations.

When the hypothesized negative relationship between intra-psychic conflict and organizational commitment was not confirmed, additional, post hoc analyses were conducted to explore the possibility that the source of the conflict, and not the absolute level, was an important correlate of organizational commitment. The reasoning here was that different intra-psychic conflict profiles may be associated with various levels of commitment to the organization.

Accordingly, four subgroups were identified based upon intra-psychic conflict types. For example, one subgroup consisted of those individuals for whom the greatest degree of conflict centered on professional vs. client endorsements. A second subgroup consisted of those professionals whose endorsement of funding agencies was greater than or equal to four (an unusual group, in that most professionals endorsed funding agencies at a level of two). A third subgroup was composed of professionals whose client endorsement score was less than or equal to five (again, an unusual profile), and the fourth subgroup consisted of respondents with an "even split" on managerial, professional, and client-oriented goals and values.

The results of this subgroup analysis revealed no significant correlations between any particular conflict profile and organizational commitment. Thus, neither the absolute level of intra-psychic conflict, nor the source or type of intra-psychic conflict was associated with commitment to the organization.

It seems likely, given these results, that intra-psychic conflict is an internal phenomenon which does not manifest itself in the relationship between the individual and the organization. That is, organizational commitment is a form of psychological attachment between persons and organizations, and a truly intra-personal phenomenon like intra-psychic conflict over constituency endorsements, is not something that individuals can resolve by withdrawing from the organization. Individuals cannot resolve intra-psychic conflicts by withdrawing from the organization, simply because the organization is neither the focus nor the source of the conflict.

This is not meant to suggest that intra-personal conflicts never manifest themselves in the person-organization relationship. Extreme instances of intra-personal conflicts, such as marital problems or the stress associated with the death of a parent, for example, sometimes are exhibited in work-related outcomes such as performance, commitment, and satisfaction. However, with respect to this research, there are no norms available against which to judge the relative magnitude of the conflicts experienced by the respondents in this sample. Thus, it may be the case that the level of intra-psychic conflict experienced by professionals at CMH, is not great enough to have any impact on individual/organizational attachments such as commitment.

Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis dealt with the positive association between tenure in the organization and commitment. This hypothesis was based on previous research which used a structural approach to the study of organizational commitment, an approach based on Becker's

(1966) idea that over time, individuals become committed to organizations as a result of the accumulated investments they have made in organizational membership. Organizational policies and procedures which contribute to an individual's sense of investment, such as non-portable pensions, perquisites, and organization-specific skills, enhance feelings of organizational commitment. In previous research (Alutto et al., 1973; Farrell and Rusbult, 1981; Sheldon, 1971), tenure has been used as a summary variable--a variable which captures the essence of individual investments over time. Because of the consistent, positive relationship found between tenure and commitment in the past, the tenure variable was entered first in the hierarchical regression analysis. Regardless of the order of entry, however, a non-significant relationship between tenure and commitment was found for this sample.

Frequently, when hypothesized relationships which are based on theory and previous research do not materialize, restriction in range is a plausible explanation. For this sample, tenure ranged from a minimum of less than one year to a maximum of over ten years, and these anchors were the extremes of a five-point scale. Within the range imposed by the scale there was considerable spread. For example, approximately twenty percent of the respondents had been employed at CMH for less than one year, twenty-four percent had been at CMH for more than one year but less than three years, and about twenty-eight percent had been employed at CMH for three to five years. However, only six respondents (4.8 percent of the sample) had been employed at CMH for more than ten years, and anecdotal information indicated that none of the respondents had been with CMH for more than fifteen years.

This information, coupled with the fact that the average age of the respondents is less than thirty years old (sixty-seven percent are thirty-five years of age or younger), may indicate that the investments associated with middle-age and long-term tenure are simply not operative for this sample. Thus, it appears that Becker's structural approach to organizational commitment may only be valid for those individuals whose age and/or length of service result in a perception of being "locked into" a particular organization. This definition of commitment as being, in a sense, "no other alternatives" represents a passive, post-hoc interpretation of what constitutes commitment. The psychological approach taken in the present research conceives of commitment as an active, identification phenomenon which is forward-looking. Commitment, as here conceived, is more than a perceived lack of alternatives generated through years and years of what might be termed "organizational monogamy."

Additional anecdotal evidence, provided by the Director of Personnel at CMH, indicates that many respondents in this sample see their current jobs as "stepping stones" to better jobs in other organizations at some future time. In addition, he reports that the pension benefits offered at CMH are not particularly advantageous; it takes employees ten years to become fully vested in what pension benefits are available; and, employees see themselves as fairly mobile with respect to future job prospects. It seems plausible, then, that because few, if any, of the respondents in this sample were truly long-term employees, and because CMH employs relatively few inducements for long-term organizational membership, that tenure would have little relationship to commitment for this sample.

Of the three variables tested as correlates of commitment in this study, only one, psycho-social conflict was found to be significantly associated with commitment to organizational goals and values. The magnitude of this relationship indicates that about twenty-five percent of the variance in commitment can be explained by this variable. The strength of the relationship between psycho-social conflict and commitment may perhaps be stronger for individuals in this sample than for other samples. The relatively flat organizational structure at CMH may have the effect of making psycho-social conflicts somewhat more salient for the present respondents. Individuals who work in organizations where top management is further removed, in a structural sense, may not find psycho-social conflicts over goal orientations as personally meaningful.

These results also suggest that one focus for what has been termed "organizational" commitment is really an identification with managerial goal orientations. These findings have been interpreted as an indication of the importance that influence over the <u>means</u> of goal attainment plays as a correlate of commitment. It seems plausible, that for professionals in organizations, commitment is associated not only with congruent goal orientations (between professional and perceived managerial orientations), but also with the power to influence the means of goal attainment.

In a related vein, an examination of the participation-in-decision-making literature (Locke, 1968; Maier, 1963) reveals that participative decision making (or PDM) results in a perception on the part of individuals of what has been termed "ownership of the problem." This means that people who are invited to participate in problem

definition and resolution come to identify with (or take as their own) the problem and its resolution. This obfuscation of the boundaries between organizational and individual problems may be analogous to the obfuscation of organizational and individual identities which is a hallmark of commitment. On a very micro level of analysis, then, asking a person to participate in and influence decisions, presumably, results in an attachment between the individual and the problem itself. At a higher level of abstraction, allowing some individuals (specifically professionals) the power to influence the means to goal attainment, may result in an increased attachment between the individual and the organization as a whole. One manifestation of this attachment, may be organizational commitment. Recent thinking on organizational commitment (Mowday, Porter, and Steers, 1982) supports this idea, in that, these researchers emphasize Salancik's (1977) contention that any aspect of the work environment that increases an employee's sense of responsibility is associated with increased commitment.

Implications

The original discussion on the correlates or antecedents of commitment presented in Chapter One outlined three, not always distinct, approaches to the study of organizational commitment. These three approaches, structural, psychological, and behavioral, represented a convenient way to organize and summarize current thinking and research. The research presented here suggests some refinements in our understanding of structural and psychological approaches to commitment and perhaps gives some indication of the boundary conditions surrounding these approaches to the topic.

Specifically, structural correlates of commitment seem to be operative only for those individuals whose age and length of service in an organization combine to produce perceptions of a lack of alternatives in organization choice. This suggests that there may be discrete break points in people's lives, points before which commitment is not associated with tenure, but after which tenure has a major influence on feelings of commitment and loyalty. Thus, time may play a significant role in determining what kinds of variables (structural, psychological, behavioral, or others) are associated with organizational commitment. Future research should focus on what might be called career commitment, in an attempt to determine whether or not different experiences or perceptions operate at different times in individuals' careers as antecedents of continued organizational commitment.

The present research also allows for the specification of some boundary conditions with respect to psychological approaches to the study of commitment. For example, it was suggested that the intra-psychic conflict or ambivalence experienced by professionals at CMH is not manifested in a form of organization withdrawal such as decreased commitment. This suggests that research on organizational commitment from a psychological perspective should focus on elements of individuals' organizational lives which foster or inhibit identification and attachment. A psychological variable such as psycho-social conflict regarding goal orientations and the means to goal attainment, reflects much more accurately an individual-organizational linkage phenomenon, than does a purely within-person variable such as intra-psychic conflict.

The present research also begins to specify more precisely the nature of a global construct such as organizational commitment. Using a multiple constituency conception of organizations, an attempt was made here to investigate the focus for commitments. It was reasoned that individuals in organizations may experience multiple commitments to the goals and values of several groups. The conflict engendered by these multiple commitments (represented as constituency endorsement scores) was investigated as a psychological correlate of commitment. However, an additional aspect of the present research was the discovery that organizational commitment, as it is usually measured, reflects commitment to managerial goals and values. This preliminary finding suggests that additional research on multiple commitments and the foci for organizational commitment may allow for a refinement of the commitment construct in a way similar to the refinements undergone by the construct of job satisfaction. That is, job satisfaction has been conceptualized and measured as a unidimensional construct (using the Faces Scale, for example), and it has been broken down into its component parts (the JDI captures facet satisfactions with the job itself, co-workers, supervision, etc.). In an analogous way, a complete understanding of the concept of commitment may await further thinking and research which takes a multiple commitments (or facet) approach. Indeed, one of the most interesting questions raised by the findings presented here deals with the unexplained variance in global organizational commitment. Recall that managerial goals and values correlated significantly with commitment measured by the OCQ, but endorsements of other constituencies (such as clients and professionalism, for example)

did not. Future research, then, should be focused on identifying additional foci for organizational commitments.

A summary of the foregoing implications is presented in Figure 3 as a comprehensive model for thinking about organizational commitment. Although the present research did not explore behavioral correlates of commitment, this approach is included in Figure 3 because of its importance in the literature on organizational commitment. This figure emphasizes the role of time and career stages as determinants of important antecedent variables in organizational commitment(s). It indicates for example, that in very early career stages, psychological attachments to the organization (or constituencies of the organization) may be the primary antecedents of continued commitments. Over time, as the individual engages in various acts which bind him/her to the organization, individuals may come to attribute an attitude of commitment to themselves. In late career stages, not only do psychological and behavioral linkages operate to produce commitments on the part of individuals, but, structural variables such as investments and lack of opportunity elsewhere, may combine to cement the individual's attachment to the organization. This figure also suggests some implications for the management of commitments in organizations.

Specifically this research suggests the importance of participation in decision making as a potential correlate of commitment among professionals. In the same way that PDM produces feelings of ownership of the problem, influence over the means to goal attainment may result in enhanced individual-organizational linkages manifested as commitment. Managers of organizations that employ significant

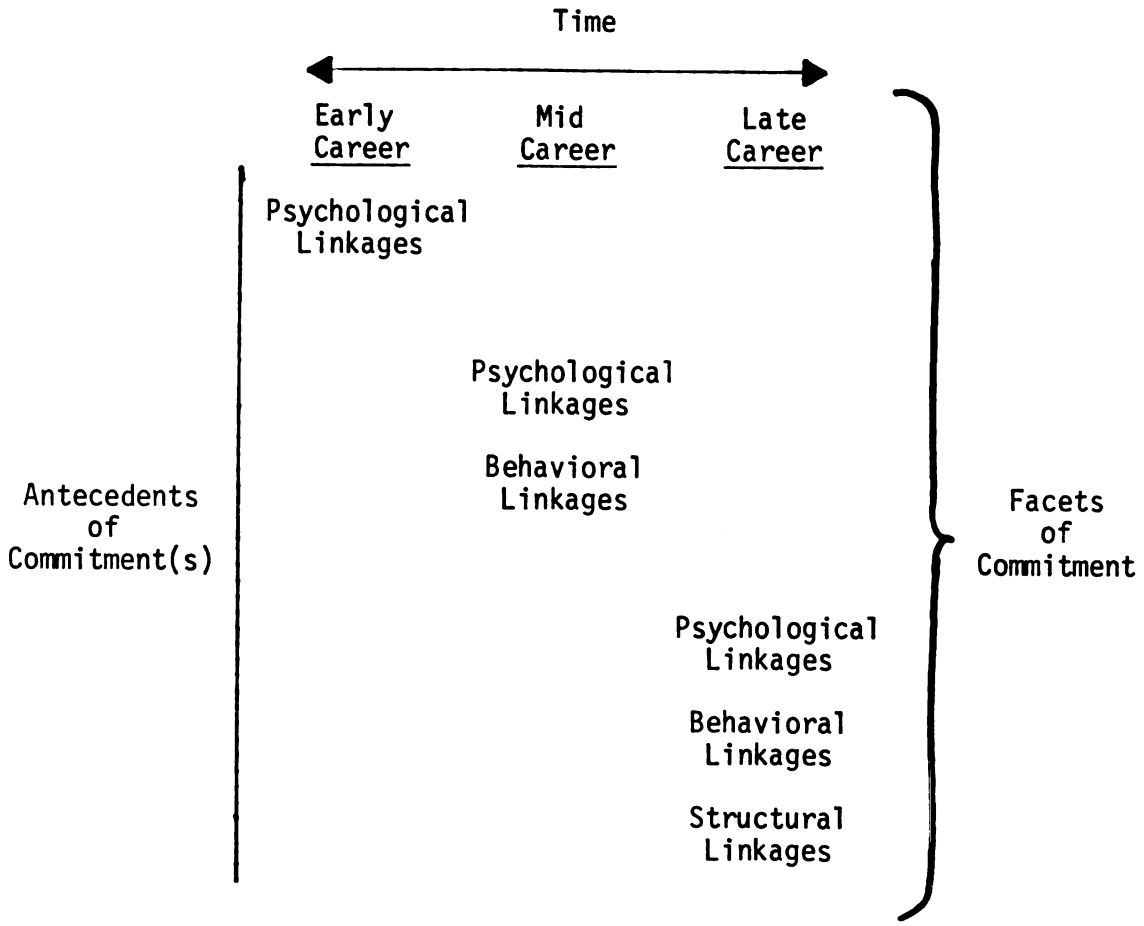

FIGURE 3

ANTECEDENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENTS

numbers of professionals, then, must be willing to share decision making power in an effort to secure commitment among professionals.

A second implication for the management of commitment concerns the relative importance of different kinds of organization-employee linkages that occur at different stages of career progression. Figure 3 suggests that the management of commitment among newcomers may be most problematic, if only because behavioral and structural contributors to commitment have not yet had a chance to develop. Related research on the role of met expectations (Wanous, 1980), early

job challenge (Berlew and Hall, 1966), and need fulfillment among newcomers (Buchanan, 1974) tends to support the idea that initial experiences in organizations are important contributors to commitment. It is suggested here that experiences which enhance a newcomer's feelings of identification with the organization are the primary means through which managers can attempt to enhance commitment in early career stages.

Conclusions

Organizational commitment among a sample of professional employees in one organization was found to vary as a function of perceived psycho-social conflict regarding the goals and values of several constituencies. Predicted tenure effects and both the level and type of intra-psychic conflict experienced were not associated with organizational commitment.

The implications of these findings suggest the importance of time as a determinant of the role that psychological, behavioral, and structural variables play as antecedents to commitments at various career stages. Suggestions for additional research include a more thorough exploration of the construct of commitment itself. Specifically, commitment may be a multi-dimensional construct composed of various facets which act as foci for commitments among organization members.

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