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# A Test Of Seven Work Commitment Models

Keith Lynn Zabel  
*Wayne State University,*

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**A TEST OF SEVEN WORK COMMITMENT MODELS**

by

**KEITH L. ZABEL**

**THESIS**

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

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Advisor

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Commitment has been studied in many different forms in the psychological literature. According to Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005), commitment can be defined as “a willingness to persist in a course of action” (p. 241). Examples of commitment forms include goal commitment (Donovan & Radosevich, 1998), religious commitment (Anderson, 1998), family commitment (Friedman & Weissbrod, 2005), and school commitment (Jenkins, 1995). Perhaps the most researched form of commitment is work commitment (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005). By definition, those with high levels of work commitment tend to persist in work-related actions more than those with low levels of work commitment. As one might expect, employees with high levels of work commitment enjoy more positive work-related attitudinal outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction), as well as more positive work-related outcomes (e.g., e.g., job performance) compared to employees with low levels of work commitment (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005).

Although there seems to be consensus in the work commitment literature about which variables underlie work commitment (i.e., Protestant work ethic; PWE, job involvement, career commitment, continuance commitment, and affective commitment), there is little consensus on the interrelationships and structural process of work commitment. The first two work commitment models were created by Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow (1993). Randall and Cote’s (1991) model placed job involvement as a mediator of the relationship between PWE and career commitment, affective commitment, and continuance commitment (see Figure 1), whereas Morrow’s (1993)

model placed job involvement as a final endogenous variable in the work commitment process (see Figure 2).

Since those two original work commitment models were conceptualized, five revised models have been created (Carmeli & Gefen, 2005, Cohen, 1999, Freund & Carmeli, 2003). Each revised work commitment model has slightly different structural paths between the five different work commitment constructs. Furthermore, all five revised models were created using modification indices and for the most part have not been validated in subsequent models. The need to determine which work commitment model has the best empirical support is augmented by the fact that more recent work commitment models have begun including turnover intentions, turnover, and absenteeism (e.g., Carmeli & Gefen, 2005), even though there is still no consensus on which work commitment model is best. Therefore, the purpose of the study is two-fold:

1) To determine which family of work commitment models (Randall and Cote vs. Morrow) has the best fit.

2) To determine within the family model that is best supported, which specific work commitment model has the best fit.

#### *Overview of the History of the Five Work Commitment Facets*

Morrow (1983) was the first researcher to devise a taxonomy of four different types of work commitment. By creating this taxonomy, Morrow (1983) laid the foundation for both the work commitment forms and theoretical paths that were included in future models (e.g., Morrow, 1993; Randall & Cote, 1991). Morrow (1983) argued that although at least twenty-nine different forms of work commitment had been

operationalized and studied in the literature, each form could fit into one of four major foci of work commitment, including value, career, job, and organization.

Morrow (1983) defined the *value* focus of work commitment as the “intrinsic value of work as an end in itself” (p. 488). She stated that PWE was the most common way to measure the value focus of work commitment. Morrow (1983) defined the *career* focus of work commitment as the “perceived importance of one’s career” (p. 488). According to Morrow (1983), the most common measures of the career focus of work commitment were career commitment, career salience, and commitment to a profession. She defined the *job* focus of work commitment as one’s “degree of daily absorption in work activity” (p. 488). According to Morrow (1983), even though job involvement was by far the most common measure of the job focus of work commitment, other measures included job orientation, job attachment, and work as a central life interest. Finally, Morrow (1983) defined the *organization* focus of work commitment as one’s “devotion and loyalty to one’s employing firm” (p. 488). Morrow (1983) argued that organizational commitment was the only measure of the organization focus of work commitment, even though there was disagreement among researchers regarding the underlying dimensions of organizational commitment.

By condensing all twenty-nine forms of work commitment into four main foci and determining that the most used measures of work commitment were PWE, career commitment, job involvement, and organizational commitment, Morrow (1983) developed a way for future researchers to conceptualize the interrelationships between work commitment facets. Thus, across all competing work commitment models, PWE, career commitment, and job involvement will represent the *value* focus, *career* focus,

and *job* focus, respectively. In addition, the *organization* focus of work commitment will be represented by affective and continuance commitment.

### *Protestant Work Ethic (PWE)*

According to Morrow (1993), the most common and best construct to measure the value focus of work commitment is PWE. The idea of PWE originated in the writings of Max Weber (1958), who argued that egalitarian principles, a disdain of leisure activities, and the belief in the importance of hard work were responsible for economic successes seen in Europe during the turn of the century. Even though PWE has religious roots in the writings of Weber (1958), the current conceptualization of PWE is not religious, but rather the endorsement of the values and virtues associated with placing work central to one's life.

By definition, individuals with high levels of PWE tend to engage in positive work-related behaviors to a greater extent than those with low levels of PWE. For example, Lounsbury, Gibson, and Hamrick (2004) found that individuals with high levels of PWE tended to work longer hours with the purpose of becoming successful as opposed to those with lower levels of PWE. Greenberg (1978) found that individuals with high levels of PWE engaged in work behavior on a train and perceived the commute to work as part of the workday more than individuals with low levels of PWE. Hooker and Ventis (1984) found that individuals with high levels of PWE had lower levels of retirement satisfaction than individuals with low levels of PWE. Indeed, once retired, those with high PWE are no longer able to place work central to their life. In addition, PWE is a personality variable that remains relatively stable over time (Morrow, 1983) and impacts the way individuals perceive both work and leisure activities. PWE has also been linked

to positive outcomes in the workplace (e.g., success; Ghorpade, Lackritz, & Singh, 2006).

Meta-analytic evidence suggests that PWE is correlated moderately with job involvement ( $r = .30$ ) and weakly with career commitment ( $r = .18$ ), affective commitment ( $r = .08$ ) and continuance commitment ( $r = .09$ ; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005). In addition, PWE was positively correlated with job satisfaction ( $r = .17$ ), job performance ( $r = .16$ ) and negatively related, albeit weakly, to both turnover intentions ( $r = -.08$ ) and turnover ( $r = -.11$ ). There was virtually no relationship between PWE and job performance ( $r = -.01$ ; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005). These results suggest that although PWE is related to other forms of work commitment, the correlation is rather weak.

#### *Career Commitment*

According to Morrow (1993), the best construct to measure the career focus of work commitment is career commitment (Blau, 1985). Career commitment can be defined as “one’s attitude towards one’s profession or vocation” (Blau, 1985, p. 278). Morrow (1983) explained that other measures that attempted to measure the career focus of work commitment (e.g., career salience, career involvement) were marked by several problems, most notably lack of reliability, convergent validity, and divergent validity. Therefore, Morrow (1983) argued that career commitment was the best construct developed to measure the career focus of work commitment.

Research findings suggest career commitment is weakly to moderately correlated with the other work commitment facets, as well as other workplace attitudes and outcomes. Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that career commitment

correlated moderately with job involvement ( $r = .35$ ) and affective commitment ( $r = .34$ ), and weakly with PWE ( $r = .18$ ) and continuance commitment ( $r = -.07$ ). In addition, career commitment was positively correlated with job satisfaction ( $r = .33$ ) and job performance ( $r = .16$ ), and negatively related to both turnover intentions ( $r = -.24$ ) and turnover ( $r = -.05$ ). Results suggest that career commitment has a stronger relationship to other work commitment facets than PWE.

### *Job Involvement*

Job involvement was first introduced by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) and defined as “the degree to which a person’s work performance affects his self esteem” (p. 25). The majority of studies that have examined job involvement have used the 20-item measure developed by Lodahl and Kejner (1965). This use has not been without controversy. Kanungo (1982) argued there are three reasons why Lodahl and Kejner’s (1965) job involvement scale does not have adequate construct validity. Their first reason is that Lodahl and Kejner’s scale measures both job involvement and intrinsic motivation. Their second reason is that Lodahl and Kejner’s (1965) measure defines job involvement as both a cognitive and affective state. Their third reason is that Lodahl and Kejner’s (1965) measure does not distinguish between job involvement and work involvement. Kanungo (1982) developed a new job involvement scale and defined job involvement as one’s “belief regarding one’s relationship with one’s present job” and a “function of how much the job can satisfy one’s needs” (p. 342).

Several researchers have noted the commonalities between job involvement and other workplace attitudinal variables (e.g., job satisfaction in Brooke, Russell, & Price, 1988; work engagement in Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006). Brooke et al. (1988) argue that

whereas job satisfaction is commonly conceptualized as one's positive emotional state regarding one's job, job involvement is typically conceptualized as one's cognitive belief regarding one's job. Brooke et al.'s (1988) conceptualization of the differences between job involvement and job satisfaction assumes one uses Kanungo's (1982) conceptualization of job involvement. Because Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) conceptualization of job involvement is the extent to which performance affects self-esteem, their measure taps more into an emotional state as opposed to Kanungo's (1982) measure. In a meta-analysis on job involvement, Brown (1996) found that the relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction was stronger in studies that used Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) job involvement measure (.50) as opposed to Kanungo's (1982) measure (.46), although the difference was not statistically significant. Meta-analytic evidence suggests that job involvement and job satisfaction are moderately correlated, yet distinct constructs. Indeed, Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found a meta-analytic correlation of .35 between job involvement and job satisfaction. This correlation came from the average of 462 studies.

In regards to commonalities and differences between job involvement and work engagement, Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002) define work engagement "as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 74). Thus, Schaufeli et al. (2002) view work engagement as being a blend of an emotional and cognitive state. Hallberg and Schaufeli (2006) argue that typically work engagement is studied as the opposite of job burnout. Thus, whereas work engagement refers more to a positive energy and vigor towards one's job, job involvement, as defined by Kanungo (1982), refers more to one's

cognitive belief regarding their job, with less of an emphasis placed on energy or affective states. Research supports this distinction between job involvement and work engagement. Hallberg and Schaufeli (2006) found moderate to strong negative correlations (ranging from -.30 to -.57) between work engagement and emotional exhaustion, cynicism, depressive symptoms, somatic complaints, and sleep disturbances. On the other hand, Hallberg and Schaufeli (2006) found no significant relationship between job involvement and any of those five health complaints. These results, in tandem with Hallberg and Schaufeli's (2006) finding that a moderate positive relationship exists between job involvement and work engagement (.35), suggest that job involvement and work engagement are related, yet distinct job-related attitudes.

Even though issues exist in measuring job involvement depending upon whether one uses Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) measure or Kanungo's (1982) measure, meta-analytic evidence suggests that job involvement is related to the work commitment facets. Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that job involvement correlated moderately with career commitment ( $r = .35$ ), PWE ( $r = .30$ ), and affective commitment ( $r = .40$ ) but weakly with continuance commitment ( $r = .11$ ).

### *Organizational Commitment*

According to Morrow (1993), of all four foci of work commitment, the most difficult to measure is the organizational focus. At least five facets of organizational commitment have been conceptualized, including calculative commitment, attitudinal commitment, continuance commitment, affective commitment, and normative commitment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Because all seven work commitment models examined in this study only include affective commitment and continuance

commitment when conceptualizing the organization focus of commitment, only affective commitment and continuance commitment will be discussed further.

*Affective and Continuance Commitment.*

Meyer and Allen (1984) define affective commitment as the extent to which employees feel “positive feelings of identification with, attachment to, and involvement in, the work organization” (p. 375). Meyer and Allen (1984) define continuance commitment as “the extent to which employees feel committed to their organizations by virtue of the costs associated with leaving” (p. 375). Restated, employees with high levels of affective commitment tend to be committed to their organization because they have positive feelings towards working with the organization, whereas employees with high levels of continuance commitment are committed to their organization because of the perceived internal costs associated with leaving the organization (e.g., moving, psychological, stress).

One line of research has focused on the antecedents of both affective and continuance commitment. For example, Allen and Meyer (1990) found that job challenge and role clarity significantly predicted affective commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990) also found that education and perceived alternatives are negatively associated with continuance commitment, whereas having a pension is positively associated with continuance commitment. In a meta-analysis of the work commitment literature, Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that affective commitment correlated moderately with career commitment ( $r = .34$ ) and job involvement ( $r = .40$ ), but weakly with PWE ( $r = .08$ ). Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that continuance

commitment was weakly correlated with job involvement ( $r = .11$ ), PWE ( $r = .09$ ) affective commitment ( $r = .10$ ), and continuance commitment ( $r = -.07$ ).

Another line of research has examined the relationships between affective and continuance commitment and workplace outcomes. Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found affective commitment was positively correlated with job satisfaction ( $r = .50$ ) and job performance ( $r = .22$ ), and negatively related to both turnover intentions ( $r = -.48$ ) and turnover ( $r = -.17$ ). Continuance commitment was weakly correlated with job satisfaction ( $r = .09$ ), job performance ( $r = -.09$ ), turnover intentions ( $r = -.15$ ) and turnover ( $r = -.20$ ). Thus, meta-analytic evidence suggests that affective commitment is strongly related to the other four facets of work commitment and outcomes in the workplace, whereas continuance commitment is rather weakly correlated with the four other facets of work commitment and outcomes in the workplace. However, because the correlation between affective and continuance commitment is small ( $r = .10$  in Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005), there is utility in including both affective and continuance commitment in work commitment models.

#### *Summary of the Work Commitment Facets*

Given the substantial overlap between the five work commitment facets, empirical evidence suggests that Morrow's (1983) conceptualization of four major forms of work commitment, represented by PWE, job involvement, career commitment, affective commitment, and continuance commitment is well-founded. Since Morrow's (1983) conceptualization, two original and five revised work commitment models have been created. In the following paragraphs, I will explain each of the structural paths

proposed in Randall and Cote's (1991) and Morrow's (1993) original work commitment models. After doing so, I will discuss each of the five revised work commitment models.

#### *Randall and Cote Model*

The first work commitment model was Randall and Cote's (1991) model. Randall and Cote (1991) argued that all studies examining different forms of work commitment had used a bivariate approach, making it impossible to determine causality or temporal order between various forms of work commitment. Randall and Cote (1991) argued the structural relationships between different forms of work commitment needed to be examined using a multivariate framework to determine if the theoretical linkages between different forms of work commitment held.

In their model, Randall and Cote (1991) examined how five types of work commitment (i.e., PWE, work-group attachment, organizational commitment, career salience, and job involvement) were linked. It is worth noting that subsequent work commitment models (e.g., Carmeli & Gefen, 2005; Cohen, 1999) have not included work-group attachment because no empirical support was found for that construct in Randall and Cote's (1991) original work. In addition, Randall and Cote (1991) measured career salience, which has been conceptualized in all other work commitment models as career commitment (e.g., Freund & Carmeli, 2003; Morrow, 1993). I have followed suit in this study as well using career commitment as opposed to career salience when describing Randall and Cote's (1991) work commitment model (See Figure 1). Randall and Cote (1991) hypothesized that job involvement mediated the relationships between PWE and career commitment, PWE and affective commitment, and PWE and continuance commitment. Thus, Randall and Cote's (1991) model hypothesizes that the

relationship between both the *value* and *career* focus of work as well as the *value* and *organization* focus of work is mediated by job involvement. Rationale provided by Randall and Cote (1991), as well as from authors of revised models is provided for each path.

*PWE to Job Involvement.*

Several researchers (e.g., Furnham, 1990; ter Bogt, Raaijmakers, & van Wel, 2005) have examined how PWE beliefs emerge in early adolescence. Ter Bogt et al. (2005) examined how parental beliefs and demographic factors (e.g., parental educational level) impact child PWE. Results suggested that parental social class and education level predicted parental political orientation. In turn, child PWE was negatively associated with PWE and parent conservative political orientation. As Randall and Cote (1991) argue, even at an age before adolescents have begun working, PWE has been developed through interactions with their parents. This may be why Brief and Aldag (1977) argued “a person’s degree of job involvement is presumed to vary from job to job, while adherence to the PWE is presumed to be invariant across jobs” (p. 100). Thus, it makes sense that PWE is the most stable and exogenous variable in Randall and Cote’s (1991) model.

Furthermore, an abundance of empirical evidence suggests that a moderate to strong relationship exists between PWE and job involvement. For example, in his meta-analysis on the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of job involvement, Brown (1996) placed PWE as an antecedent of job involvement, finding a meta-analytic correlation between PWE and job involvement of .45. A more recent meta-analysis (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) also found a moderate positive correlation

between PWE and job involvement (.30), suggesting that placing work central to one's life does in fact relate to increased levels of job involvement. Given that two separate meta-analyses have found a moderate to strong relationship between PWE and job involvement (Brown, 1996; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) and evidence suggests that PWE is a stable construct that develops early in life through socialization processes, (ter Bogt et al., 2005), Randall and Cote's (1991) path from PWE to job involvement seems reasonable.

*Job Involvement to Career Commitment.*

An abundance of previous research suggests a strong, positive relationship exists between job involvement and career commitment. In his job involvement meta-analysis, Brown (1996) placed career commitment as a correlate of job involvement as opposed to an antecedent or consequence. He explained that it was clear that career commitment was significantly related to job involvement, but the causal order of the paths was unclear. Brown (1996) found a meta-analytic correlation of .60 between job involvement and career commitment. Similarly, Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found a meta-analytic correlation of .44 between job involvement and career commitment. Given the strong correlations between job involvement and career commitment found in two meta-analyses, there is clearly a link between job involvement and career commitment.

The theoretical underpinnings of the link from job involvement to career commitment are not as obvious. According to Blau (1985), one explanation is that most individuals have a desire to learn and grow in their current jobs and this thirst to develop in one's job leads to increased commitment towards one's career. Simply put, before

one can be committed to a career, one must be committed to a job within that career. A different argument for the existence of a path from job involvement to career commitment was made by Cohen (1999). Using Kanungo's (1982) definition of job involvement, Cohen argued job involvement is a function of one's experiences on the job. Furthermore, Cohen argued that social exchange theory (Emerson, 1976) causes those who have high levels of job involvement to be committed to their career when they believe that their chosen career or type of career is responsible for their positive job experiences. To the extent to which employees are constantly trying to develop in their current role (Blau, 1985) and think about their career when they think about why they've had positive experiences on the job, it seems reasonable that a path exists from job involvement to career commitment.

*Job Involvement to Affective Commitment.*

Another path in Randall and Cote's (1991) model is from job involvement to affective commitment. It stands to reason that those who have a positive attitude regarding their present job will have greater feelings of identification, attachment, and involvement with their organization than those with more negative attitudes regarding their present job. Indeed, a recent meta-analysis (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) found a moderate, positive correlation between job involvement and affective commitment (.40). Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran's (2005) meta-analytic finding supports results of a previous job involvement meta-analysis (Brown, 1996), which found a meta-analytic correlation between job involvement and organizational commitment of .50. Brown (1996) argued that although the job involvement-organizational commitment relationship could be reciprocal, it was more likely that

individuals become committed to their organization only after their “psychological needs” (p. 239) [from the job] are successfully fulfilled over time. Although Brown (1996) only calls the variable organizational commitment, it is clear he is conceptualizing the affective component of organizational commitment.

There is more evidence to suggest that a path exists from job involvement to affective commitment. Pierce and Dunham (1987) examined how pre-employment propensity for organizational commitment and initial work experiences predicted organizational commitment after three months on the job. They found that, indeed, pre-employment propensity for organizational commitment and initial work experiences creating a sense of responsibility were significant predictors of future organizational commitment. Thus, it seems that Kanungo’s (1982) definition of job involvement as one’s “belief regarding one’s relationship with one’s present job” (p. 342) lends job involvement to typically be a predictor of one’s organizational commitment.

Similar to Cohen’s (1999) argument that social exchange theory can explain the path from job involvement to career commitment in Randall and Cote’s (1991) model, Cohen (1999) argues that social exchange theory can explain the path from job involvement to affective commitment found in Randall and Cote’s (1991) model. Specifically, individuals with high job involvement have positive attitudes about their job that need to be attributed to something. To the extent to which those positive attitudes are attributed to individuals within an organization such as co-workers or managers, or to the organization itself (e.g., values, culture), job involvement will lead to affective organizational commitment.

*Job Involvement to Continuance Commitment.*

The relationship between job involvement and continuance commitment seems to make less intuitive sense than the other three paths of Randall and Cote's (1991) model. The relationship between job involvement and continuance commitment is much weaker than the relationship between job involvement and affective commitment (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005), suggesting that job involvement shares a much stronger relationship with an individual's affective ties to their organization as opposed to the costs associated with leaving the organization.

Perhaps some theoretical rationale can be gained from Cohen's (1999) work. Cohen (1999) examined the relationship between job involvement and two components of continuance commitment, namely *personal sacrifices* and *low alternatives*. The personal sacrifices dimension refers to the extent to which individuals feel committed to their organizations by virtue of the personal sacrifices associated with leaving that organization (e.g., pay, benefits; Allen & Meyer, 1990). On the other hand, low alternatives refers to the extent to which individuals feel committed to their organization by virtue of the lack of viable employment opportunities that exist outside that current organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Cohen (1999) found a small, significant relationship between job involvement and personal sacrifices but no relationship between job involvement and low alternatives. Thus, to the extent to which those with high levels of job involvement are pre-disposed to feel that leaving an organization will result in significant personal sacrifices, the path from job involvement to continuance commitment makes theoretical sense.

*Results of Randall and Cote's Path Analysis.*

Randall and Cote's (1991) findings indicated that job involvement mediated the relationships between PWE and both organizational commitment and career commitment. Randall and Cote (1991) summarized their findings in terms of the important role that job involvement plays in linking different forms of work commitment. Even though significant paths were found in Randall and Cote's (1991) model, fit indices did not support Randall and Cote's model. The normed fit index (NFI) was low (.72). Several possibilities were offered for why the NFI was so low, including the low reliability found in many of their scales, random measurement error, and that several constructs (i.e., other forms of work commitment) may have been missing from their model. In addition, Randall and Cote (1991) argued that future models of work commitment should test the possibility that a link exists between PWE and organizational commitment. This point was not missed by future researchers, several of whom incorporated a direct link from PWE to continuance commitment in their models (e.g., Morrow, 1993).

Randall and Cote's (1991) model marked an important beginning in the development of work commitment models. Their results influenced several different researchers to examine the validity of Randall and Cote's (1991) model. Indeed, every study that created a revised work commitment model mentioned the Randall and Cote model (1991), and typically used modification indices from a test of Randall and Cote's (1991) original model to create a revised model. Soon after Randall and Cote's (1991) model was created, Morrow (1993) developed her own work commitment model,

placing job involvement as a final endogenous variable as opposed to mediating variable.

### *Morrow Model*

Morrow's (1993) model suggested that two facets of organizational commitment (continuance commitment and affective commitment) mediate the relationship between PWE and job involvement. Her model placed PWE as the most stable variable over time, whereas job involvement was placed as the most situational and unstable over time. Morrow's (1993) model proposed a path from PWE to both career commitment and continuance commitment. She also argued that paths should exist from career commitment to continuance commitment and affective commitment, and from continuance commitment to affective commitment. Finally, she argued that paths should exist from both continuance commitment and affective commitment to job involvement (See Figure 2). Unlike Randall and Cote (1991), Morrow (1993) did not empirically test her proposed model. Even though Morrow did not give much theoretical reasoning for her model, I will discuss each of her proposed paths.

#### *PWE to Career Commitment.*

Even though Morrow (1993) agreed with Randall and Cote (1991) that PWE was the first exogenous variable in the work commitment process, Morrow (1993) argued that PWE predicts both career commitment and continuance commitment as opposed to job involvement, as hypothesized in Randall and Cote's (1991) model. To the extent to which one needs a career to express high levels of PWE, the relationship between PWE and career commitment makes sense. Indeed, often before one can have a job or be part of an organization, they must first have a career they wish to pursue. A successful

career path guarantees one can place work as central to their lives as long as they wish.

According to Cohen (1999), Holland's (1973) theory that individuals are attracted to organizations that fit their knowledge, skills, and interests, and enjoy surrounding themselves with individuals who support their interests is strong theoretical rationale for the link from PWE to career commitment. Thus, Cohen (1999) argued that those with high levels of PWE self-select into careers that fit their personality and interests, and value work as central to their lives. Similarly, Cohen (1999) argued that those with low PWE self-select into careers that do not value high levels of PWE. Previous meta-analysis evidence suggests a positive relationship exists between PWE and career commitment ( $r = .18$ ; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005).

*PWE to Continuance Commitment.*

Similar to the relationship between PWE and career commitment, the relationship between PWE and continuance commitment makes sense when one thinks about the costs associated with leaving an organization not in terms of money, but in the psychological costs of unemployment. An individual who places work central to their life needs to be employed in order to express their PWE. Even if they are not necessarily satisfied with their organization, an individual with high PWE will be committed to that organization because the costs of unemployment could be damaging to their ability to place work central to their life. Meta-analytic evidence suggests a weak, positive relationship exists between PWE and continuance commitment ( $r = .09$ ; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005).

*Career Commitment to Continuance Commitment.*

Unlike Randall and Cote's (1991) model, which did not hypothesize any causal paths between career commitment and organizational commitment, Morrow's (1993) model placed paths from career commitment to both continuance commitment and affective commitment. Both of these paths seem reasonable when one takes into account the importance those with high levels of career commitment place on their careers. In regards to continuance commitment, those with strong levels of career commitment should be committed to their organization because of the costs associated with leaving the career, when one thinks of costs in terms of lost career benefits. When one leaves an organization and the move to the next organization is lateral or downward, it can be assumed that an individual with high levels of career commitment would be upset because they are committed to their career and the move may not necessarily have a positive impact on their career.

As Cohen (1999) points out, the path from career commitment to continuance commitment also makes sense within Schneider's (1983) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework. Specifically, ASA suggests that individuals are attracted to organizations for a variety of reasons (e.g., knowledge, skills, abilities, interests), are selected to organizations when organizations need employees, and leave the organization for a variety of reasons (e.g., better job, termination, retirement, family reasons). Even though individual differences play an important role in deciding how individuals are attracted to careers and organizations, and why one leaves an organization, it seems more likely that individuals are attracted to organizations that are suitable given their career as opposed to being attracted to careers that suit their

organization. Thus, if one chooses an organization based upon their career, it is likely the perceived alternatives and personal sacrifices that would be made leaving that organization should be high. To the extent to which individuals are likely to self-select into organizations that fit their career goals and desire to stay in that organization because their career goals are being met, the path from career commitment to continuance commitment makes sense. Contrary to Morrow's (1993) hypothesis, previous meta-analytic evidence suggests a weak negative relationship exists between career commitment and continuance commitment ( $r = -.07$ ; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005).

*Career Commitment to Affective Commitment.*

Similar to the relationship between career commitment and continuance commitment, the relationship between career commitment and affective commitment makes sense when one takes into account Schneider's (1983) ASA framework, as well as findings that we tend to like those who have similar interests as we do (e.g., Neimeyer & Mitchell, 1988). Specifically, ASA theory suggests individuals are attracted to organizations that fit their career interests. To the extent to which workers self-select to work at organizations that fit their career interests and develop a commitment to their organization based upon that attraction, the path from career commitment to affective commitment seems plausible.

In addition, lots of previous research suggests individuals are attracted to those who have similar interests to them (Neimeyer & Mitchell, 1988). When an individual is attracted to a certain career, he/she is likely to meet individuals who are also attracted to that career. Even though the individual reasons for why each individual may be

attracted to the career could differ, the underlying attraction to the career should be similar. Given that individuals who are attracted to the same career and organization have two major similarities between them, it seems reasonable that career commitment should lead to increased levels of attachment and identification with one's organization and those working within the organization. After all, the organization is supplying the means by which an employee can carry out their career goals and ambitions. Indeed, a previous meta-analysis found a moderate positive relationship between career commitment and affective commitment ( $r = .34$ ; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005).

*Continuance Commitment to Affective Commitment.*

Morrow (1993) also hypothesized that a path existed from continuance commitment to affective commitment. As explained by Cohen (1999), one theoretical explanation for the path from continuance commitment to affective commitment is dissonance reduction. Originally mentioned by Steers and Porter (1983), the dissonance reduction theory in regards to the continuance commitment-affective commitment link has been discussed in several empirical studies (e.g., Cohen, 1999; McGhee & Ford, 1987, Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990). Specifically, this theory posits that individuals who feel they need to remain in an organization due to the high costs of leaving engage in "psychological bolstering" (Steers & Porter, 1983, p. 348) in order to justify their feelings of *needing* to stay with the organization as opposed to *wanting* to stay with the organization. Indeed, Meyer et al. (1990) found a significant path from the continuance commitment dimension of *personal sacrifices* to affective commitment. Thus, it seems the dissonance reduction first proposed by Steers and Porter (1983) leading to increased affective commitment may be driven by commitment one feels to

an organization based on the personal sacrifices that would result from leaving the organization. To the extent to which the personal sacrifices dimension of continuance commitment leads one to engage in dissonance reduction, fostering attachment and identification with one's organization, the path from continuance commitment to affective commitment seems reasonable. Previous meta-analytic research suggests the correlation between continuance and affective commitment is rather weak ( $r = .13$ ; Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005).

*Affective and Continuance Commitment to Job Involvement.*

Unlike Randall and Cote (1991), Morrow (1993) theorized paths from affective and continuance commitment to job involvement as opposed to from job involvement to affective and continuance commitment. In other words, Morrow (1993) theorized that organizational commitment predicts job involvement, whereas Randall and Cote (1991) posited job involvement predicts organizational commitment. It is worth noting that the majority of research has viewed job involvement as a causal agent of organizational commitment. After all, one could make the argument that it is nearly impossible to be committed to your organization without first being committed to your job. It seems that one's commitment to their organization is much more situation-based than one's commitment to their job, thus supporting a causal path from job involvement to organizational commitment.

Even though most research places job involvement as a causal path to organizational commitment, Brown (1996) admitted that to date, no empirical research had tested the causal ordering directly of the job involvement-organizational commitment relationship. Still, Cohen (1999) gave two possible explanations for paths

from both affective commitment and continuance commitment to job involvement. First, Cohen (1999) used Schneider's (1983) ASA model, which posits that one is attracted to certain organizations given the individual differences that are important to that person. Morrow's (1993) model posits that high career commitment predicts both increased continuance and affective organizational commitment. Ergo, according to Morrow (1993), an important individual difference variable that determines the attraction of a certain organization during the job search is career commitment. According to Cohen (1999) this implies that those with high levels of career commitment are more focused on the long-term as opposed to the short-term, and thus will be committed to any organization or job as long as it fulfills their long-term goals and aspirations. Second, Cohen (1999) argued those who choose specialized careers will by definition have fewer alternative employment opportunities, and will thus be highly involved with any job within their given career.

#### *Empirical Support for Randall and Cote and Morrow Models*

Whereas Randall and Cote (1991) tested their proposed model and found rather poor fit, Morrow (1993) did not test her original model. Since their conceptualizations, the Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow (1993) competing work commitment models have been directly compared in four studies (Carmeli & Gefen, 2005; Cohen, 1999; Cohen, 2000; Freund & Carmeli, 2003). In each study, traditional fit indices, significance of path coefficients and related tests (e.g., chi-square difference test) have suggested that Randall and Cote's (1991) model is a superior model to Morrow's (1993) model. However, in all four studies, neither original model has displayed adequate fit. In three of the four studies (i.e., Carmeli & Gefen, 2005; Cohen, 2000; Freund & Carmeli, 2003)

that have compared the Randall and Cote (1991) model against Morrow's (1993) model, modification indices have been used to create revised models.

The use of only modification indices to create the majority of the revised Randall and Cote models and Morrow models is troubling for several reasons. First, nearly all of the revised models were created based solely on empirical evidence as opposed to theoretical evidence. According to Hoyle and Panter (1995), the practice of model generation using modification indices without theory is not desirable, given that the revised model may only be applicable to the specific dataset collected. Second, Hoyle and Panter (1995) argue that using modification indices to create new models becomes extremely problematic when a small sample size exists, as it is less likely that the revised model is generalizable to other types of samples. All three studies that created revised work commitment models (i.e., Carmeli & Gefen, 2005; Cohen, 1999; Freund & Carmeli, 2003) had relatively small samples (all under 250 participants) and were created using only empirical evidence (modification indices) as opposed to theoretical evidence. Furthermore, the revised work commitment models that have been created using modification have, for the most part, not been validated in subsequent studies using a different sample to validate the appropriateness of the revised models. The problems with modification indices withstanding, each of the studies that directly compared Randall and Cote's (1991) and Morrow's (1993) models and created revised models based on modification indices are discussed in the following pages.

#### *Cohen's Revised Models*

Cohen (1999) was the first researcher to test the validity of both Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow's (1993) work commitment models. Cohen (1999) conducted

path analyses to test the two competing models using a sample of nurses. Results suggested that a saturated work commitment model showed significantly better model fit than both the Randall and Cote (1991) model and Morrow (1993) model. Additionally, only three of Morrow's seven hypothesized paths were statistically significant. The only significant paths were from career commitment to affective commitment and from both continuance commitment and affective commitment to job involvement. On the other hand, three of Randall and Cote's four hypothesized paths were significant. All paths were significant except job involvement to continuance commitment. Thus, Cohen's (1999) results suggested that Randall and Cote's (1991) model was better than Morrow's (1993) model.

The modification indices suggested that Randall and Cote's (1991) model would be significantly improved by adding two paths, from career commitment to both continuance commitment and affective commitment. Therefore, Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model had six paths: PWE to job involvement, job involvement to career commitment, job involvement to continuance commitment, job involvement to affective commitment, career commitment to continuance commitment, and career commitment to affective commitment. The only path that was not significant in Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model was the path from job involvement to continuance commitment. The major differences between Randall and Cote's (1991) original model and Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model is that the latter model places career commitment as a mediator of the relationship between job involvement and the two facets of organizational commitment as opposed to a final

endogenous variable. Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model can be found in Figure 3.

Modification indices suggested that Morrow's (1993) model would significantly improve by switching the location of job involvement from the final endogenous variable to mediator and switching affective and continuance commitment from mediator to final endogenous variable. Therefore, Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model had four paths: PWE to job involvement, career commitment to job involvement, job involvement to continuance commitment, and job involvement to affective commitment (See Figure 4). The only path that was not significant in Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model was the path from job involvement to continuance commitment. There are many differences between Morrow's (1993) original model and Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model. Indeed, the latter model places job involvement as a mediator as opposed to final variable, which fundamentally changes the revised model to look more like Randall and Cote's (1991) original model than Morrow's (1993) original model. This drastic difference between the original model and revised model has implications for the way this model should be compared to others, which is discussed in the method section.

#### *Freund and Carmeli Model*

Freund and Carmeli (2003) tested a reconstructed work commitment model that more closely resembled Randall and Cote's (1991) original model as opposed to Morrow's (1993) original model. In their proposed model, the first path was from PWE to job involvement. The second and third paths were from job involvement to both affective commitment and career commitment, respectively. The final path was from career commitment to continuance commitment (See Figure 5). In addition, Freund and

Carmeli's (2003) model specified that the errors of affective and career commitment should be allowed to correlate. Thus, Freund and Carmeli's (2003) model posited that job involvement mediated the relationship between PWE and both affective and career commitment, with career commitment in turn predicting continuance commitment.

Results indicated that Freund and Carmeli's (2003) revised model fit the data well. The major differences between Freund and Carmeli's model (2003) and Randall and Cote's (1991) original model is that Freund and Carmeli (2003) placed continuance commitment as the final endogenous variable and a path from career commitment to continuance commitment, whereas Randall and Cote's (1991) model proposed that paths existed from job involvement to organizational commitment and career commitment. Interestingly, Freund and Carmeli (2003) did not report fit indices for the competing models in their results section. Even though Freund and Carmeli (2003) found their revised model had adequate fit, they offered no theoretical justification for the proposed paths. In addition, their proposed model has never been validated with another sample.

#### *Carmeli and Gefen's Revised Models*

The most recent work commitment models that have been conceptualized and based off Randall and Cote's (1991) and Morrow's (1993) original work commitment models are Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Randall and Cote and revised Morrow models. Carmeli and Gefen (2005) tested the fit of both Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow's (1993) models and then proposed a revised model for each original model using modification indices. It is worth noting that Carmeli and Gefen (2005) included turnover intentions in testing Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow's (1993) models,

thus expanding on previous work commitment models that had only included the five work commitment facets. Although including turnover intentions expanded upon previous work commitment models, its inclusion is somewhat problematic when trying to compare fit indices from Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) models to the original Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow (1993) models.

Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) analyses suggested that neither the Randall and Cote (1991) nor Morrow (1993) model with turnover intentions displayed adequate fit, although Randall and Cote's (1991) model displayed better fit than Morrow's (1993) model. Fit indices of the revised Randall and Cote and Morrow models that were created using modification indices suggested adequate fit for both models. Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Randall and Cote model had five paths: PWE to career commitment, job involvement to career commitment, career commitment to continuance commitment, and both job involvement and career commitment to affective commitment (See Figure 6). Thus, Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Randall and Cote model still has PWE as the first exogenous variable and the two forms of organizational commitment as the final endogenous variables, but places career commitment as the mediator as opposed to the original Randall and Cote (1991) model, which placed job involvement as the mediator.

Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Morrow model had six paths: from PWE to continuance commitment and career commitment, from career commitment to continuance commitment, affective commitment, and job involvement, and from affective commitment to job involvement (See Figure 7). Thus, Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Morrow model is similar to the original model in that the first two paths

are from PWE to career commitment and PWE to continuance commitment, but different because instead of a path from continuance commitment to job involvement, Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Morrow model has a path from career commitment to job involvement. It is important to note that both of Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised models were created using modification indices, and have never been cross-validated using another sample.

#### *Current State of Work Commitment Models Research*

In summary, the Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow (1993) models of work commitment are the two most tested models of work commitment. Even though four studies that have directly compared the models suggest that Randall and Cote's (1991) original is superior to Morrow's (1993) original model, all studies (even Randall and Cote's) have found that neither model has adequate fit. In addition, five of the seven work commitment models were generated using modification indices and in most cases, have not been cross-validated, yet alone compared against each other in the same study. Given that seven models of work commitment exist, but only two have been tested against each other, the current study has important implications for the work commitment literature. By testing all seven models of work commitment against each other using a meta-analytically derived correlation matrix, it can be determined which work commitment model is best supported by the sum of previous work commitment research.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### *Meta-Analytically Derived Correlation Matrix*

Path analyses were conducted using Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran's (2005) meta-analytically derived correlation matrix (see Table 1). The number of studies aggregated to form each sample size weighted correlation seen in Table 1 ranged from 3 (relationship between PWE and continuance commitment) to 163 (relationship between affective commitment and continuance commitment), with an average  $k = 32$  for each meta-analytic correlation. According to Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005), only articles that were published prior to November 2003, reported correlations, used employee samples, and included at least 1 of 26 possible keywords (e.g., work commitment, career commitment) were included in their meta-analysis ( $k = 997$ ). Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran's (2005) final data set included 33 studies that measured PWE (sample size weighted reliability = .67,  $n = 8,053$ ), 466 studies that measured job involvement (sample size weighted reliability = .76,  $n = 153,755$ ), 159 studies that measured career commitment (sample size weighted reliability = .81,  $n = 44,694$ ), 311 studies that measured affective commitment (sample size weighted reliability = .83,  $n = 121,647$ ), and 204 studies that measured continuance commitment (sample sized weighted reliability = .77,  $n = 75,008$ ). Corrected for unreliability meta-analytic correlations are presented in Table 1, along with the sample size used to create each meta-analytic correlation in parentheses.

Given the redundancy of different work commitment constructs (Morrow, 1983), it is not surprising that a number of different scales have been developed to measure

each work commitment construct. Indeed, Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that the most common PWE measures were Blood's (1969) measure (57% of studies included in meta-analysis) and Mirels and Garrett's (1971) measure (43% of studies included in meta-analysis). An example item from Blood's (1969) PWE measure is "Wasting time is as bad as wasting money." An example item from Mirels and Garrett's (1971) PWE measure is "If one works hard enough he is likely to make a good life for himself."

Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that the most common job involvement measures were Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) measure (61% of studies included in meta-analysis) and Kanungo's (1982) measure (30% of studies included in meta-analysis). An example item from Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) measure is "I live, eat, and breathe my job." An example item from Kanungo's (1982) measure is "The most important things that happen to me involve my present job."

Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that the most common career commitment measure was Blau's (1985) measure (52% of studies included in meta-analysis). An example item from Blau's (1985) measure is "I like this vocation too well to give it up."

Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that the most common affective commitment measures were Meyer and Allen's (1984) measure and Allen and Meyer's (1990) measure (55% of studies included in meta-analysis cited one of these measures). Although cited separately, Allen and Meyer's (1990) eight-item measure is identical to Meyer and Allen's (1984) eight-item measure. An example item from Meyer

and Allen's (1984) measure is "This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me."

Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) found that the most common continuance commitment measures were Meyer and Allen's (1984) measure and Allen and Meyer's (1990) measure (51% of studies used for meta-analysis cited one of these measures). Again, although cited separately, Allen and Meyer's (1990) eight-item measure is identical to Meyer and Allen's (1984) eight-item measure. An example item is, "It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to."

#### *Path Analyses*

To execute the objective of determining which work commitment model is best supported using meta-analytic data, path analyses were conducted using Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran's (2005) meta-analytically derived correlation matrix. Analyses were conducted in LISREL 8 using the corrected for unreliability absolute value correlation matrix and maximum likelihood estimation. Because each cell of the correlation matrix had a different sample size, the harmonic mean of the different sample sizes was used as the sample size for the path analysis ( $N = 1869$ ), following Viswesvaran and Ones's (1995) recommendation. According to Hall and Rosenthal (1991), the harmonic mean is defined as "the reciprocal of the average of the reciprocals of the several sample sizes" (p. 442). Compared to the arithmetic mean, the harmonic mean penalizes the mean of a set of scores that have large variability between the individual scores. Indeed, if the arithmetic mean had been used as opposed to the harmonic mean in this study, the sample size used for path analyses would have been 10,187. This large sample size would be almost completely due to the

large sample size used to calculate the meta-analytic correlation between affective commitment and continuance commitment. In fact, only two of the correlations used for path analyses were based on a sample size larger than 10,187. By using the harmonic mean ( $N = 1,869$ ) as the sample size for path analyses, seven of the correlations used for path analyses were based on a sample size larger than 1,869, although the harmonic mean was much closer to the median sample used to create each meta-analytic correlation ( $N = 4,116$ ) compared to the arithmetic mean. Constructs were treated as single-item indicators of latent variables.

#### *Data Analysis Strategy.*

The data analysis process was conducted in two distinct stages, 1) determining which family model (Randall and Cote vs. Morrow) best fit the meta-analytic data and 2) determining among the best-fitting family model, which specific model best fit best. In this case, a family model refers to a model that includes all possible paths from an original model (e.g., Randall & Cote, 1991) and any additional paths included in revisions of the original model (e.g., Carmeli & Gefen's revised Randall and Cote model, 2005; Cohen's revised Randall and Cote model, 1999; Freund & Carmeli's revised model, 2003). Randall and Cote's (1991) original model includes paths from PWE to job involvement, job involvement to continuance commitment, job involvement to affective commitment, and job involvement to career commitment. Cohen's (1999) revision of Randall and Cote's original model included two paths not included in the original model, one from career commitment to affective commitment and one from career commitment to continuance commitment. Freund and Carmeli's (2003) revised model included one restraint not included in the original model, allowing the errors between career

commitment and affective commitment to correlate. Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revision of Randall and Cote's (1991) original model included a path from PWE to career commitment that was not included in any of the previous three models. Thus, the Randall and Cote family model (See Figure 8) included the four original paths from Randall and Cote's (1991) model. It also included the three aforementioned unique paths. Unfortunately, allowing the errors between affective commitment and career commitment to correlate (as proposed in Freund and Carmeli's model) was not included in the test of the Randall and Cote family model because the model already had a direct path from career commitment to affective commitment that had been proposed in two revised Randall and Cote models (i.e., Carmeli & Gefen, 2005; Cohen, 1999). The same process was used to create a Morrow family model (see Figure 9).

It was important to determine whether the Randall and Cote family model or Morrow family model had better fit for several reasons. First, the Randall and Cote models place job involvement as a mediator between PWE and organizational commitment, whereas the Morrow models place job involvement as the final endogenous variable. Given this fundamental difference between the two groups of models, determining which group of models was generally best supported has important implications for the way work commitment researchers use these models in the future. Second, it was expected given the high sample size that it might be difficult to compare individual models against one another using traditional fit indices. Thus, determining whether overall the Randall and Cote family model or Morrow family model had better fit acted as a way to reduce the number of final model comparisons, while at the same

time adequately answering which group of models should be given more attention in the future.

It is important to note the unique paths from Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model were not included in the comprehensive test of Morrow's family model. This decision was made because of the four paths in Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model, three of the paths are actually found in Randall and Cote's (1991) original model. None of the four paths in Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model are included in Morrow's (1993) original model. Given that Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model is much more similar to Randall and Cote's (1991) model than Morrow's (1993) model but was created using modification indices on a test of Morrow's (1993) original model, it was decided not to include the unique paths from Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model in the comprehensive test of the Morrow family model.

To determine whether the Randall and Cote family model or Morrow family model had better fit, comparisons were made using Bentler's (1990) comparative fit index (CFI), the non-normed fit index (NNFI; Tucker & Lewis, 1973), the root squared mean of approximation (RMSEA; Brown & Cudeck, 1993), the standardized root mean residual (SRMR; Bentler, 1995), and Akaike's information criterion (AIC; Akaike, 1987). In line with previous research that has compared models using traditional fit indices, a 0.01 difference between models was used as a threshold for determining a significant difference in fit among models (e.g., Parker et al., 2003; Widaman, 1985).

After deciding which family model best fit the meta-analytic data, each model within that family was tested using path analyses, once again using the harmonic mean as the sample size and treating constructs as single-item indicators. The criteria for

comparison was the same comparisons used to test the overall Randall and Cote family model against the Morrow family model, including the CFI, NNFI, RMSEA, and NFI, SRMR, and AIC. Again, a 0.01 difference was used as a threshold to determine a significant difference in fit between two competing models. Two additional criteria were used to compare models. Specifically, when models were nested, chi-square differences tests were used for comparison, with a significant chi-square difference indicating the model with more paths was a better model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In addition, non-significant path coefficients were used as a way to disqualify a model (s) from being the best model within a specific family model.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

#### *Comparison of Randall and Cote and Morrow Family Models*

The comprehensive Randall and Cote family model (see Figure 8) showed less than adequate fit (see Table 2). The RMSEA of the proposed model was slightly higher than the typical cut-off which ranges from .05 to .08 for good fit and .08 to .10 for mediocre fit (Williams & O'Boyle, 2011). The NNFI was also lower than the established .95 cut-off (Hu & Bentler, 1999). However, both the CFI and NFI met the typical cut-off of .95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The SRMR met the established .05 cut-off for good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1990). All path coefficients were significant (see Figure 8) at the  $p < .05$  level.

The comprehensive Morrow family model showed rather poor fit (see Table 2). The RMSEA, NNFI, CFI, and NFI were all poor considering the typical cut-off values. The SRMR did fall within the .05 to .10 range that Hu and Bentler (1999) designated as an indication of adequate fit. All path coefficients were significant (see Figure 9) at the  $p < .05$  level.

Direct comparisons of the comprehensive Randall and Cote family model and Morrow family models were made by examining differences between traditional fit indices. In the case of the RMSEA, NNFI, CFI, and NNFI, the Randall and Cote family model had superior fit compared to the Morrow family model. When comparing the two models, the smallest difference in fit indices between models was the .10 difference (.95-.85) found when comparing the two models on the NNFI and CFI fit indices. When comparing the SRMR of the two models, the comprehensive Randall and Cote family model SRMR (.043) fell within the widely accepted cut-off for adequate-fitting models

(less than .05), whereas the comprehensive Morrow family model SRMR (.071) fell outside the widely accepted cut-off for adequate-fitting models. In addition the AIC value was significantly lower in the Randall and Cote comprehensive family model (102.82) than in the Morrow comprehensive family model (266.89), suggesting the Randall and Cote family model has better fit than the Morrow family model. In summary, although all fit indices suggest the Randall and Cote comprehensive family model is superior to the Morrow comprehensive family model, neither model displays adequate fit.

#### *Comparison of Four Randall and Cote Models*

Given the more support was found for the Randall and Cote family model, the four Randall and Cote models (Figures 1, 3, 5, and 6) were tested against each other using path analyses. Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Randall and Cote model (see Figure 6) was immediately dropped from consideration because the path coefficient from PWE to career commitment was rather weak (.07) in the test of the Randall and Cote family model. In fact, when employing a stringent  $p$  value ( $p < .001$ ), the path coefficient from PWE to career commitment was not significant. Given the path from PWE to career commitment was only found in one of the four Randall and Cote models, was so weak, and was actually not significant when using a stringent  $p$  value, Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) model was dropped from consideration.

Direct comparisons of Randall and Cote's (1991) original model, Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model, and Freund and Carmeli's (2003) model were made using the RMSEA, CFI, NFI, NNFI, SRMR, AIC, and in the case of two nested models (i.e., Cohen, 1999; Randall and Cote; 1993), a chi-square difference test. Using the critical value of 5.99 based on  $df = 2$ , a chi-square difference test revealed the observed

$\chi^2$  of Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model ( $\chi^2 = 96.31$ ) was significantly less than the observed  $\chi^2$  of Randall and Cote's (1991) original model ( $\chi^2 = 282.71$ ). This finding suggested Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model had better fit than Randall and Cote's (1991) original model

In the case of the RMSEA, NNFI, CFI, and NNFI, Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model had superior fit compared to both Randall and Cote's (1991) original model and Freund and Carmeli's (2003) model. Indeed, Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model had a RMSEA .03 less than Randall and Cote's (1991) original model and .02 less than Freund and Carmeli's (2003) model (see Table 3). The differences in fit indices between Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model and both Randall and Cote's (1991) original model and Freund and Carmeli's (2003) revised model were always above .05, in all cases signifying the best fit with Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model. In addition, the SRMR of Cohen's revised Randall and Cote model (.042) fell within the widely accepted cut-off value for good-fitting models (.05). On the other hand, the SRMR of Randall and Cote's original model (.075), as well as Freund and Carmeli's revised model (.081) fell outside the widely accepted cut-off values for good-fitting models, but did fall within the range indicating adequate fit. Finally, the AIC value was significantly lower in Cohen's revised Randall and Cote model (110.42) compared to both Freund and Carmeli's revised model (188.44) and Randall and Cote's original model (254.61). Thus, results clearly suggest that of all Randall and Cote models, Cohen's revised Randall and Cote (1991) model is best. However, because only two of the five traditional fit indices in Cohen's revised Randall and Cote model fall

within the widely accepted cut-off values (CFI and SRMR), results suggest even the best work commitment model does not have adequate fit.

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

The purposes of this study were to determine which family of work commitment models (Morrow, 1993; Randall & Cote, 1991) had the best fit, and within that family, which specific work commitment model had the best fit. Results suggest the Randall and Cote (1991) family model is a better model than the Morrow (1993) family model. In addition, results suggest that among the Randall and Cote (1991) family of models, Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model is the best fitting work commitment model.

The finding that the Randall and Cote family model fits better than the Morrow family model supports previous research (e.g., Carmeli & Gefen, 2005; Cohen, 1999; Cohen, 2000; Freund & Carmeli, 2003), which found that Randall and Cote's (1991) original model had better fit than Morrow's (1993) original model. Given that four previously published empirical studies, as well as the current study found better fit using Randall and Cote's work commitment model, evidence suggests future extensions of current work commitment models or entirely new models should use Randall and Cote's model as a starting point as opposed to Morrow's model. Given the major difference between the Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow (1993) family models is the role of job involvement as either a mediating variable (as in Randall and Cote's model) or as the final endogenous variable of the work commitment process (as in Morrow's model), it would behoove future work commitment researchers to place job involvement as a mediating variable as opposed to final endogenous variable in the work commitment process.

There are several interesting implications of the finding that among all Randall and Cote models, the best fitting model is Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model. First, results suggest that future work commitment models should place career commitment as a mediator of the relationship between job involvement and the two facets of organizational commitment (affective and continuance commitment). That is, the only differences between Randall and Cote's (1991) original model and Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote's model are paths from career commitment to both affective commitment and continuance commitment found in the latter model. As Cohen (1999) suggested, Schneider's (1983) ASA theory is a possible explanation for why support was found for paths from career commitment to both facets of organizational commitment. Specifically, it seems reasonable that individuals are attracted to organizations that fit their career goals and aspirations. To the extent to which one is attracted to an organization because it fits their career goals, career commitment should lead one to become both attached to the organization (affective commitment), as well as feel there are few alternatives and personal sacrifices that would be involved with leaving (continuance commitment).

Interestingly, results suggest that none of the seven proposed work commitment models have adequate fit. Given that five of the seven proposed work commitment models were created using modification indices and the majority have never been cross-validated in any subsequent sample, this finding is extremely important, and not necessarily unexpected. Modification indices did suggest several changes that could be made to lower the chi-square found in Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model. Specifically, the two largest and most sensible modification indices found within the

beta, gamma, and psi matrices suggested the chi square would be lowered dramatically by adding a path from PWE to affective commitment, as well as allowing the errors between affective commitment and continuance commitment to correlate. After making these two revisions, not surprisingly, the  $\chi^2$  of the modified model ( $\chi^2 = 25.24$ ) was significantly less than the observed  $\chi^2$  of Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model ( $\chi^2 = 96.31$ ). In the case of the RMSEA, NFI, CFI, and NNFI, the revised model based on the two modification indices had significantly better fit than Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model. Indeed, the RMSEA (.079), NFI (.99), and CFI (.99) all exceeded traditional cut-off values. The AIC of the modified model (51.07) was lower than the AIC of Cohen's revised Randall and Cote model. In addition, the SRMR (.025) exceeded the traditional cut-off value indicating good fit. The NNFI (.93) was still slightly lower than the traditional cut-off value. All path coefficients were significant (See Figure 10).

According to Hoyle and Panter (1995), two major problems of using modification indices are revising models based upon a single data set and small sample sizes. Given this study used meta-analytic correlations and the harmonic mean for the sample size, these two typical problems in using modification indices are minimized. Specifically, the use of a meta-analytically derived correlation matrix means that the modifications are based on all studies that have ever examined the interrelationships between these variables. Second, the harmonic mean used for path analyses in this study was a large sample size over five times larger than the typical sample size used in path analyses to develop the two original and five revised work commitment models.

Although none of the seven tested work commitment models proposed a path from PWE to affective commitment, rationale is provided. The path from PWE to affective seems reasonable when one considers that one must be employed with an organization to express PWE. In many instances, it becomes necessary for employees to self-select out of organizations for a variety of reasons (e.g., changing life circumstances, better job opportunities). Given those with high PWE are so committed to always being able to place work central to their life, low levels of affective commitment towards their organization allow those with high PWE to easily leave organizations when it is in their best long-term interests to leave the organization.

It is rather fitting that in the end, the best work commitment model consists of ideas from both Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow's (1993) original models. Specifically, Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model suggests that moving from the most stable to most situational work commitment constructs, the order is one's beliefs about work, job involvement, career commitment, and finally, organizational commitment. This is the same basic structure presented in Randall and Cote's (1991) original model. However, the paths from career commitment to both affective and continuance commitment added in Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model were actually first proposed in Morrow's (1993) original model. Thus, it seems the impact of career commitment on organizational commitment should be conceptualized in future work commitment models using Morrow's (1993) approach. However, results also suggest that future models should conceptualize job involvement as a mediator as opposed to final endogenous variable (as recommended by Randall & Cote, 1991).

### *Limitations*

One limitation of this study is that even though much research (Cohen, 1999; Meyer et al., 1990) has indicated that continuance commitment is a multidimensional scale with two dimensions (i.e., personal sacrifices and low alternatives), the methodology of the current study required that continuance commitment be conceptualized as a single factor. This is especially problematic given that Cohen (1999) found the five work commitment facets are differentially correlated with the two facets of personal sacrifices and low alternatives. Specifically, Cohen (1999) found that job involvement, career commitment, and affective commitment were negatively related to the personal sacrifices dimension of continuance commitment but positively related to the low alternatives dimension of continuance commitment. Furthermore, the correlation between the two dimensions of continuance was rather weak (.37). Perhaps more importantly, Cohen (1999) found that Randall and Cote's revised model and Morrow's (1993) original model fit significantly better with the personal sacrifices dimension of continuance commitment replacing the full scale of continuance commitment. On the other hand, Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model fit significantly better using the full scale of continuance commitment. Clearly, how continuance commitment is represented in path analyses has implications for which of the seven work commitment models has the best fit. However, given the design of this study, this limitation is not something that could be taken into account.

A second limitation revolves around the sample size ( $k$ ) of several of Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran's (2005) meta-analytic correlations used for path analyses in this study. Even though the average number of studies used to determine each meta-

analytic correlation was 32, that average was bolstered by 163 studies that were averaged to determine the meta-analytic correlation between affective commitment and continuance commitment. After deleting the  $k$  used to determine that meta-analytic correlation, the average  $k$  to determine the correlation matrix used in this study for analyses was 17. In addition, two of the meta-analytic correlations used in this study (PWE-affective commitment; PWE-continuance commitment) had a  $k$  below 5. The small  $k$  used for these two meta-analytic correlations requires one to be less confident about the stability of the meta-analytic correlation used in path analyses.

A final limitation revolves around the typical cross-sectional nature of work commitment research. Specifically, Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) admitted that very few longitudinal studies and no experimental studies had explored the interrelationships between different forms of work commitment. Thus, the meta-analytic correlations used for path analyses in this study were based almost entirely on cross-sectional data. Of course, longitudinal studies on work commitment would provide evidence as to how relationships between different work commitment facets change over the course of one's employment and/or life, providing empirical evidence that could be used to bolster arguments as to which work commitment model is best. In one of the only studies to longitudinally examine the interrelationship between several work commitment facets, Vandenberg and Scarpello (1994) found that Time 1 occupational commitment (career commitment) was a significant predictor of Time 2 organizational commitment, but that Time 1 organizational commitment was not a predictor of Time 2 occupational commitment. Even though this finding supports the current study's findings that Cohen's revised Randall and Cote model is the best work commitment model and

the validity of the modified work commitment model, future research needs to examine all five work commitment facets and their interrelationships using a longitudinal design to fully and adequately test the causal paths of Cohen's revised Randall and Cote model and the modified model.

### *Future Research Directions*

The finding that Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model is the best-fitting work commitment model has important implications for future work commitment research, especially when adding traditional workplace attitudes (e.g., turnover intentions, job satisfaction) and traditional outcome variables (e.g., turnover, performance). Some of these important attitudinal and outcome variables in the workplace have already begun to be studied simultaneously with work commitment models. For example, Carmeli and Gefen (2005) placed turnover intentions both within an organization and career when comparing the fit of Randall and Cote's (1991) original model to Morrow's (1993) original model, as well as when comparing the fit of revised Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow (1993) models to the original models. Results suggested that in Morrow's (1993) model there were significant paths from job involvement to both organization and career turnover intentions. In Randall and Cote's (1991) model, there were significant paths from career commitment to career turnover intentions, as well as from both affective and continuance commitment to organization turnover intentions. These same paths coefficients were significant in Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Randall and Cote and Morrow models.

Similarly, Cohen (2000) compared Randall and Cote's (1991) model against Morrow's (1993) model adding turnover intentions, absenteeism and turnover as the

final outcomes. Cohen (2000) concluded that Randall and Cote's (1991) original model with turnover intentions, absenteeism, and turnover was the best work commitment model. Even though Carmeli and Gefen (2005) and Cohen (2000) both concluded that Randall and Cote's (1991) model is superior to Morrow's (1993) original model with or without turnover intentions, absenteeism, and turnover, future studies could examine the predictive utility of the other five proposed work commitment models fit in predicting turnover intentions and behavior in the workplace. Given the costs associated with turnover in organizations, as well as this study's finding that Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model is the best work commitment model, this future research area seems especially valuable.

Even though the largest area for future research revolves around relating work commitment models to outcome variables and attitudes in the workplace, there is also work to be done around the seven work commitment models tested in this study. As described, none of the tested work commitment models had adequate fit. Given that very little thoughtful theoretical rationale has been given across these seven work commitment models for proposed paths, the lack of fit is perhaps not surprising. Given the results of this study, future research that devises work commitment models should use Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model as a beginning point of their model.

Recent work on the three-component model of organizational commitment (Solinger, van Olffen, & Roe, 2008) may provide both theoretical and empirical rationale for two entirely new work commitment models. Specifically, Solinger et al. (2008) use the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) and Eagly and Chaiken's (1993)

attitude-behavior model based upon the theory of reasoned action to explain how affective commitment and continuance commitment represent different concepts. Expanding on Eagly and Chaiken's (1993) model, Solinger et al. (2008) argue that attitudes towards a target (organization) and behavior (perceived costs of leaving an organization) lead to an intention (e.g., turnover intentions), and finally, behavior (e.g., turnover).

Using this framework, Solinger et al. (2008) argue it is clear that affective commitment represents an "attitude towards a target" (p. 73), whereas continuance commitment represents "anticipated outcomes of a behavior" (p. 73). Given Solinger et al. (2008) argue that affective and continuance commitment represent two different kinds of attitudes (i.e., attitudes towards a target vs. attitudes towards a behavior, respectively), they argue the three-component model of organizational commitment does not make sense. Solinger et al. (2008) argue one possible explanation for the finding that affective commitment is more predictive of both behavioral intentions and outcomes in the workplace (e.g., Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) is that affective commitment reflects one's attitude towards an organization, which broadly speaking can include attitude towards a variety of actors (e.g., co-workers, supervisor). On the other hand, continuance commitment reflects one's attitude towards a specific behavior (i.e., leaving the organization). Given this difference, Solinger et al. (2008) argue it makes sense that affective commitment is related to many more variables in the workplace than continuance commitment.

Solinger et al.'s (2008) work has important implications for testing new work commitment models. The most important link between Solinger et al.'s (2008) work and

this study is their conceptualization of two distinct attitudes, including attitude towards targets (e.g., affective commitment) and attitudes towards behaviors (e.g., continuance commitment). Of the five work commitment facets, the facets of PWE, career commitment, job involvement, and affective commitment reflect attitudes towards the *targets* of work, career, job, and organization, respectively. This is actually the same framework developed by Morrow (1983). On the other hand, the facet of continuance commitment reflects one's attitude towards a behavior (leaving the organization). Thus, using Solinger et al.'s (2008) and Morrow's frameworks, it seems future work commitment models might consider placing continuance commitment as the final endogenous variable in the work commitment process.

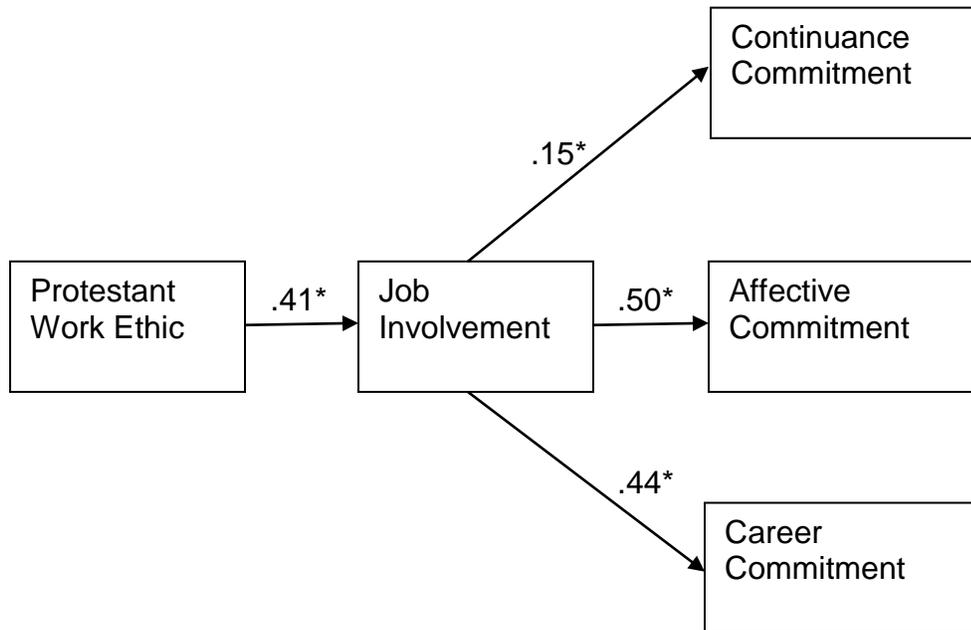
Similarly, Solinger et al.'s conceptualization suggests that paths should not exist between the facets of PWE, career commitment, job involvement, and affective commitment. Indeed, because they each measure an attitude towards a target, Solinger et al. (2008) would likely argue future work commitment models should place paths from PWE, career commitment, job involvement, and affective commitment to continuance commitment. Thus, the described work commitment model would have four paths with four exogenous variables and one endogenous variable (continuance commitment).

Alternatively, since both Randall and Cote (1991) and Morrow's (1993) original work commitment models placed PWE as the exogenous variable in the work commitment process and research suggests that PWE develops early through the socialization processes children have with their parents (ter Bogt et al., 2005), another possible work commitment model could place paths from PWE to career commitment, job involvement, and affective commitment, as well as paths to continuance commitment

from career commitment, job involvement, and affective commitment. Empirical support for the latter model can be gained by meta-analytic evidence (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) that suggests there is substantial overlap between the work commitment facets of career commitment, job involvement, and affective commitment ( $\rho$  range from .42 to .50). Future studies should examine these two work commitment models to see if they garner the type of empirical support that has been found for both Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model and the modification of Cohen's model based on modification indices in this study.

## APPENDIX A FIGURES

Figure 1.

*Randall and Cote's (1991) model*

Note. \* indicates coefficient is significant at  $p < .05$ .

Figure 2.

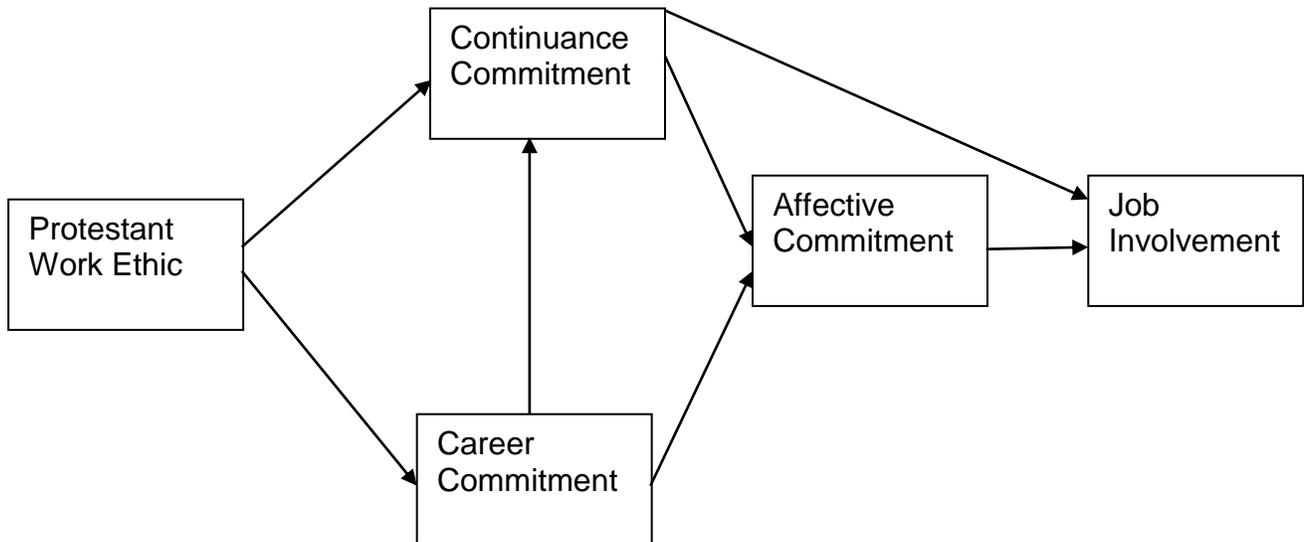
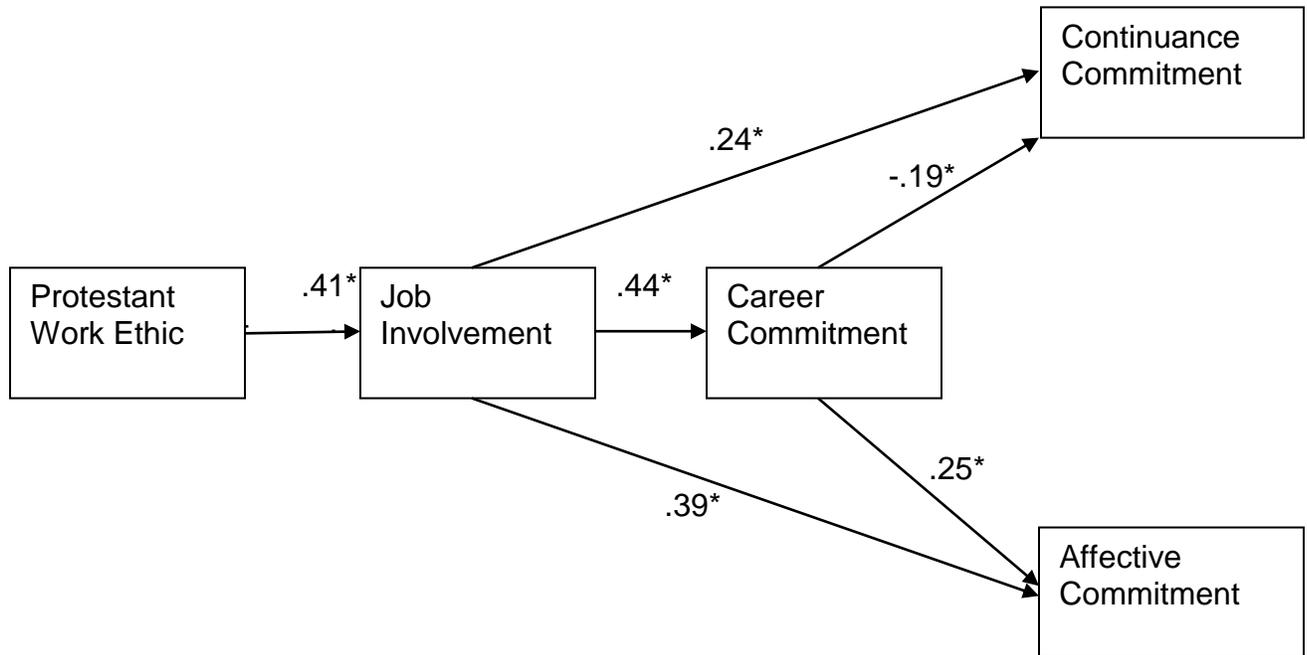
*Morrow model*

Figure 3.

*Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model*



Note. \* indicates coefficient is significant at  $p < .05$ .

Figure 4.

*Cohen's (1999) revised Morrow model*

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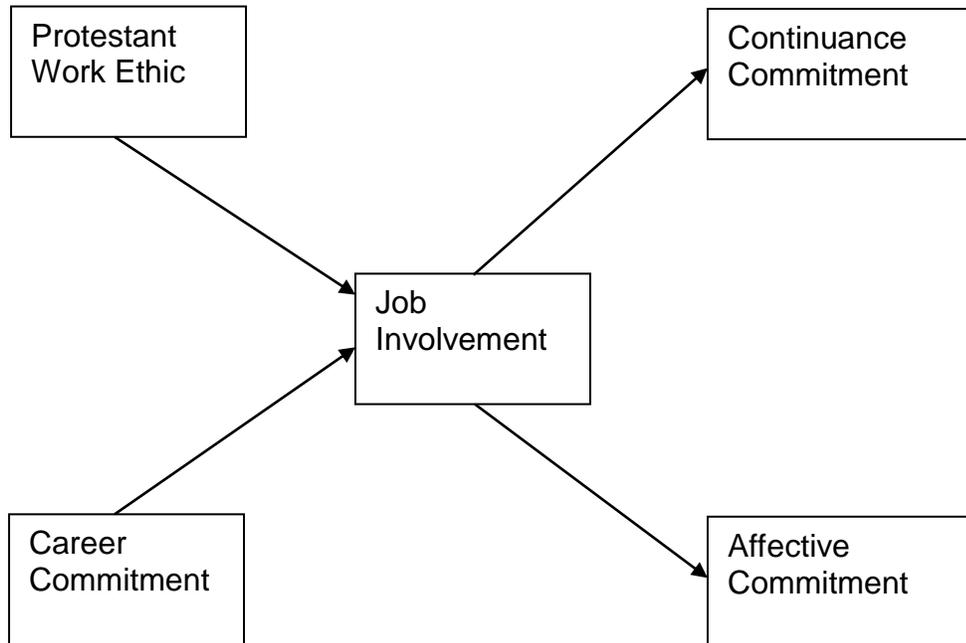
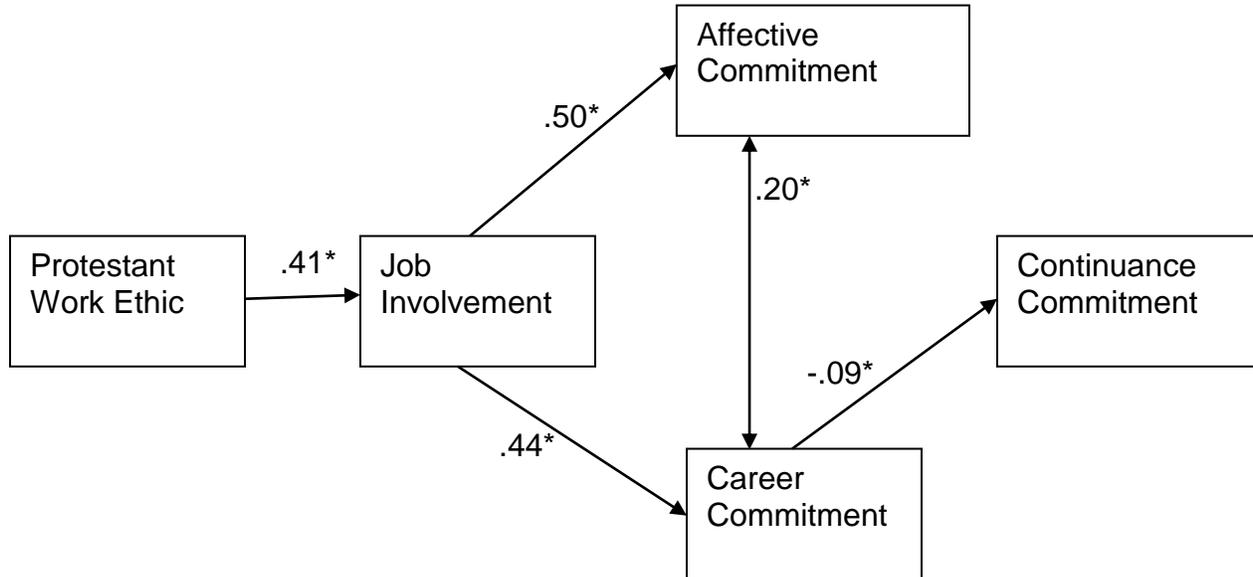


Figure 5.

*Freund and Carmeli (2003) revised model*

Note. \* indicates coefficient is significant at  $p < .05$ .

Figure 6.

*Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Randall and Cote model*

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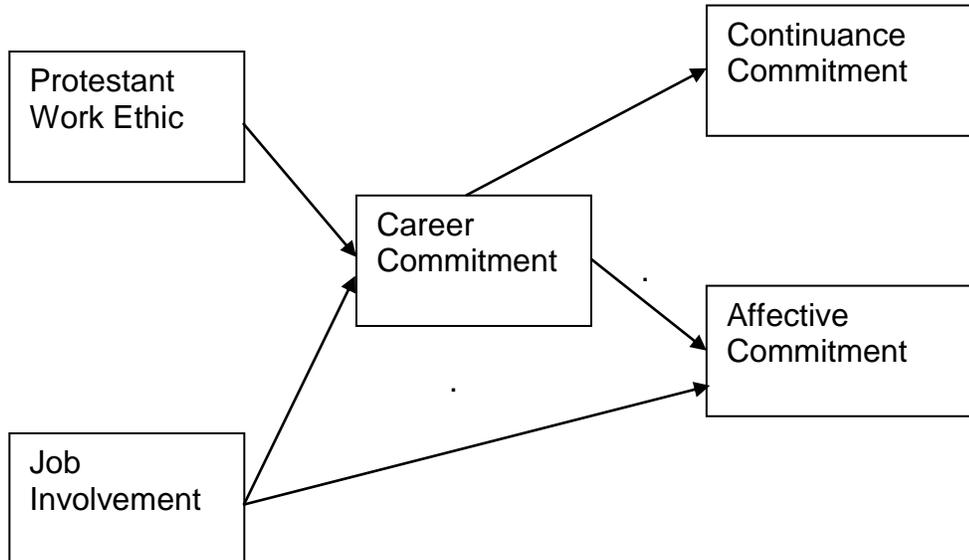


Figure 7.

*Carmeli and Gefen's (2005) revised Morrow model*

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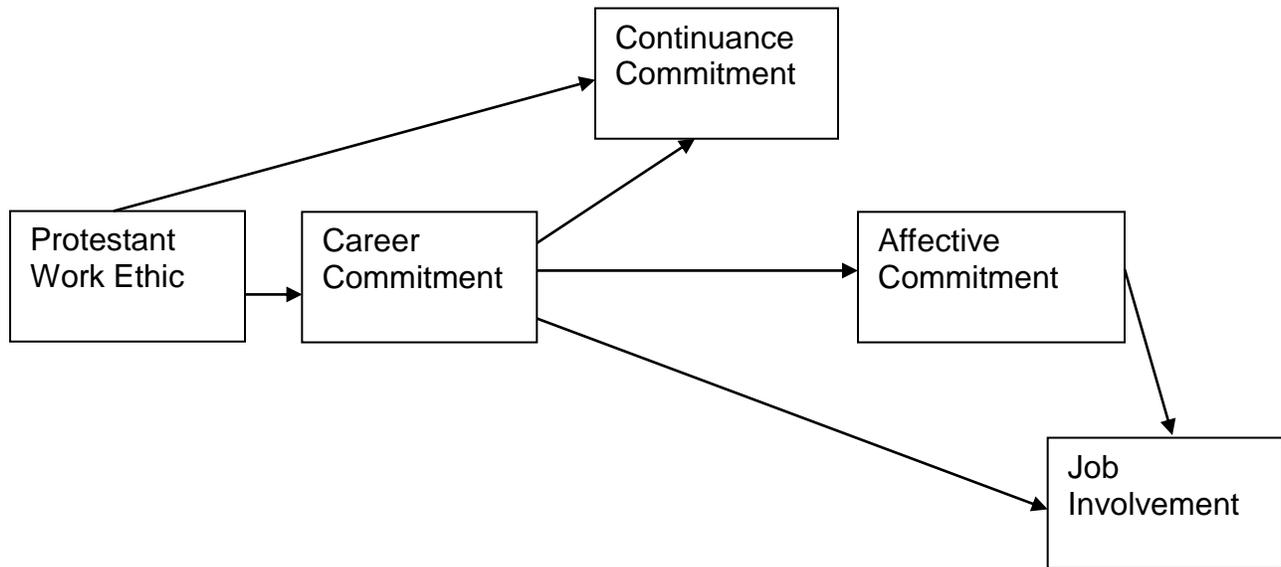
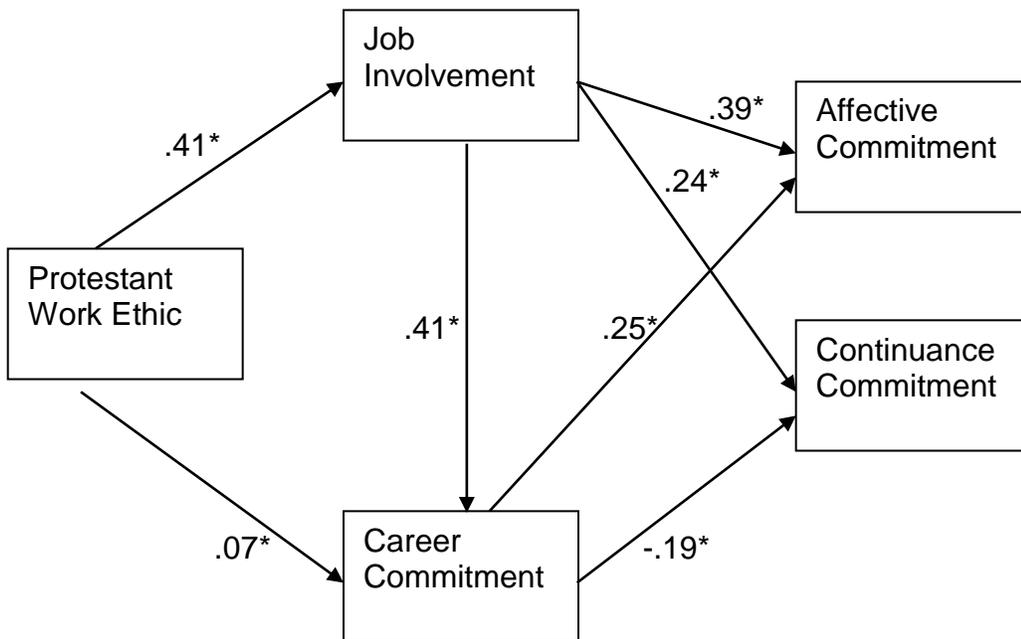
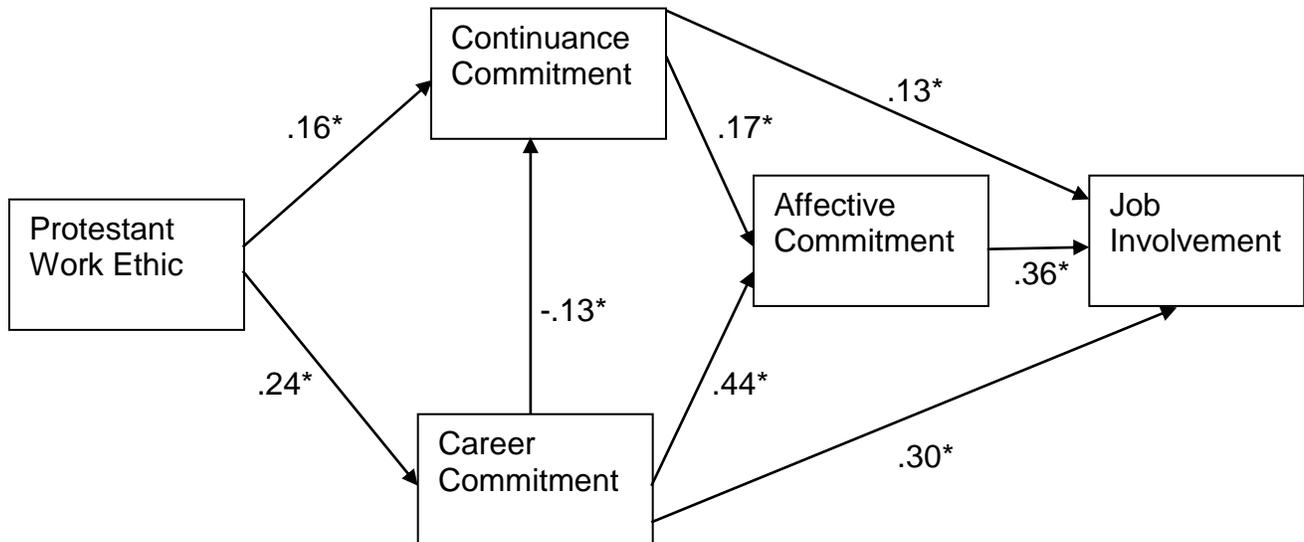


Figure 8.

*Randall and Cote family model*

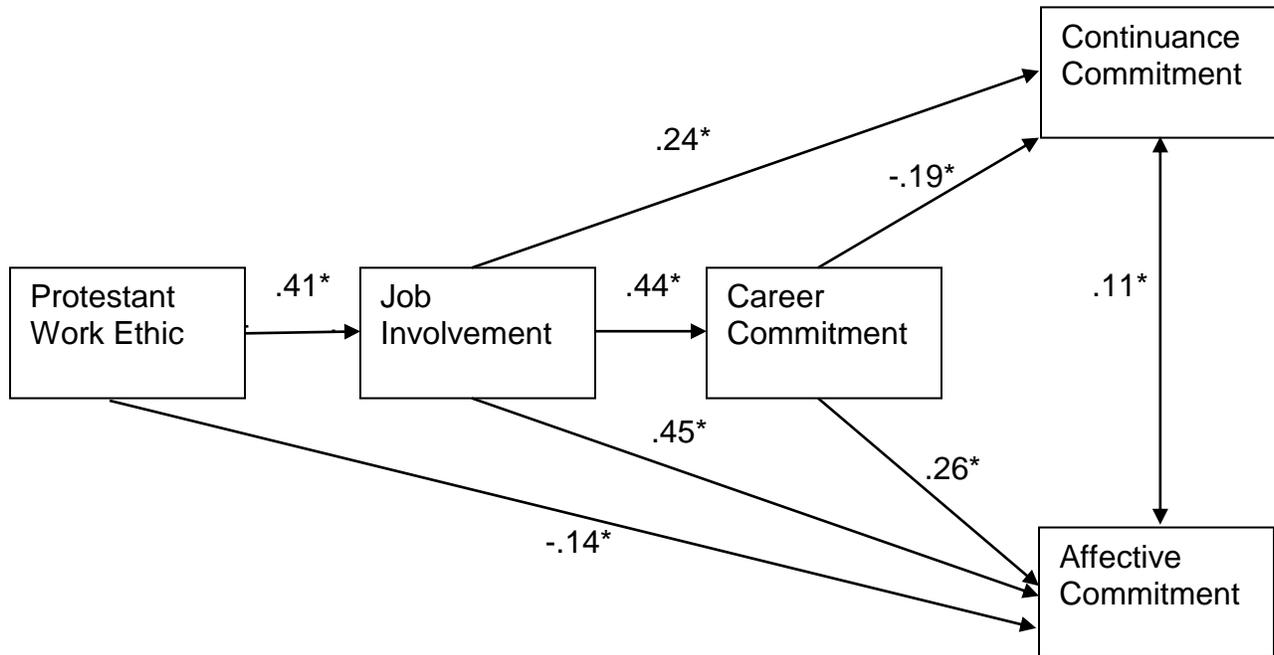
Note. \* indicates coefficient is significant at  $p < .05$ .

Figure 9.

*Morrow family model*

Note. \* indicates coefficient is significant at  $p < .05$ .

Figure 10.

*Modified Cohen model*

Note. \* indicates coefficient is significant at  $p < .05$ .

## APPENDIX B TABLES

Table 1.

*Meta-analytically derived corrected for unreliability correlation matrix*


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	1	2	3	4	5
1. PWE	—				
2. Job Involvement	.41 (7,884)	—			
3. Career Commitment	.24 (1,259)	.44 (14,971)	—		
4. Affective Commitment	.11 (940)	.50 (6,100)	.42 (6,932)	—	
5. Continuance Commitment	.13 (541)	.15 (2,132)	-.09 (1,528)	.13 (59,591)	—

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Table 2.

*Overall fit indices for the work commitment family models*

Model	df	RMSEA	NFI	NNFI	CFI	SRMR	AIC	$\chi^2$
1. Randall & Cote	3	.12	.95	.84	.95	.043	102.82	86.39*
2. Morrow	2	.25	.85	.25	.85	.071	266.89	257.90*

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$

Table 3.

*Overall fit indices for Randall and Cote models*

Model	df	RMSEA	NFI	NNFI	CFI	SRMR	AIC	$\chi^2$
1. Randall & Cote	6	.14	.84	.73	.84	.075	254.61	282.71*
2. Cohen	4	.11	.94	.87	.95	.042	110.42	96.31*
3. Freund & Carmeli	5	.13	.89	.79	.90	.081	188.44	182.20*

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$

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**ABSTRACT****A TEST OF SEVEN WORK COMMITMENT MODELS**

by

**KEITH ZABEL****December 2012****Advisor:** Dr. Boris B. Baltes**Major:** Psychology (Industrial/Organizational)**Degree:** Master of Arts

Two major work commitment models have been proposed in the literature (Morrow, 1993; Randall & Cote, 1991). Since their inception, five revised work commitment models have been created (Carmeli & Gefen, 2005; Cohen, 1999; Freund & Carmeli, 2003) using modification indices and for the most part have not been cross-validated with a subsequent sample. To determine which of seven work commitment models was best supported, structural equation analyses were conducted using a meta-analytically derived correlation matrix. Supporting previous research (Carmeli & Gefen, 2005; Cohen, 1999; Cohen, 2000; Freund & Carmeli, 2003), findings suggested Randall and Cote's (1991) model was superior to Morrow's (1993) model. Results also suggested that among four Randall and Cote models, Cohen's (1999) revised Randall and Cote model showed the best fit. Discussion focuses on the importance of linking work commitment models to workplace attitudes and outcomes and the implications of findings in this study to that end.

## **AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT**

Keith Zabel grew up in Three Oaks, MI. After high school, he attended Albion College in Albion, MI, with his twin brother Kevin. In his first-year seminar class, he met his future fiancé, Lauren Gross. During his years at Albion College, he completed several research projects with his advisor and friend, Dr. Andrew Christopher. He also completed internships at O-H Community Partners and the Chicago Center for Urban Life & Culture, both in Chicago, IL. After receiving his B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Management from Albion College, he entered the Industrial/Organizational Psychology Ph.D. program at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI.

During his time at Wayne State, Keith has taught a number of different classes. More importantly, he has conducted numerous empirical research studies under the guidance of his advisor, Dr. Boris Baltes. The culmination of his efforts occurred in June 2011, when he was awarded a three-year, \$90,000 research fellowship from the National Science Foundation to examine why individuals prefer to initiate same-race mentoring relationships as opposed to cross-race mentoring relationships. He was the only I/O graduate student in the United States to receive the award.

Keith Zabel has two peer-reviewed second-authored publications, is a reviewer for two academic journals, and has presented over ten first-authored poster presentations at seven different professional conferences. In addition, he has completed an internship in the Global Talent Management department at Dell, Inc., in Round Rock, TX. During his time at Dell, Keith assisted in the statistical analyses of Dell's employee engagement survey. In addition, Keith led the global analysis and presentation of engagement data for Dell's HR Organization, which was presented to executive leaders.