WORK COMMITMENT, JOB SATISFACTION, AND JOB PERFORMANCE: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

Abraham Carmeli and Anat Freund*

ABSTRACT. This study examines the relationships between joint work commitments, job satisfaction, and job performance of lawyers employed by private law firms in Israel. Based on Morrow’s (1993) concept of five universal forms of commitment, their interrelationship was tested with respect to the commitment model of Randall and Cote (1991), which appeared to show in previous studies (Cohen, 1999, 2000) a better fit compared to other models. In addition, the study examined the relationship between the commitment model and work attitude and outcome, namely, job satisfaction and job performance. The results show that the commitment model of Randall and Cote was almost fully supported, except for the relationship between job involvement and continuance commitment. This relationship is better understood via career commitment. An interesting finding of this study is that job satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between joint work commitment and job performance. The article concludes with suggestions regarding further investigation of the interrelationships between work commitment constructs, and the relationship between joint commitment forms, job satisfaction, and job performance.

INTRODUCTION

Considerable research attention has been devoted to the subject of work commitment. Scholars and practitioners accord high explanatory power of work outcomes to the concept of work commitment. The concept of organizational commitment appears prominently in the

* Abraham Carmeli, Ph.D., is a faculty member at Graduate School of Business Administration and Department of Political Science, Bar-Ilan University, Israel. His research interest is strategic management, public management and work behaviors. Anat Freund, Ph.D., is a Lecturer, School of Social Work, University of Haifa, Israel. Her research interest is in human resource management in welfare organizations, work commitment, and community social work.

Copyright © 2004 by PrAcademics Press
research literature. Various studies have examined organizational commitment as a predictor of organizational effectiveness (Angle & Perry, 1981), job performance (Brett, Cron & Slocum, 1995), turnover (Cohen, 1993a, 1993b), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Organ & Ryan, 1995; Schappe, 1998).

The ongoing interest in organizational commitment has raised a broad discussion of its forms. Three major forms of organizational commitment have been discussed: calculative, affective and normative. The dominant approach argues that organizational commitment is comprised of at least two major forms: affective organizational commitment and continuance commitment (Morrow, 1993; Morrow, Eastman & McElroy, 1991). This research direction was introduced earlier by Becker (1960), who maintained that employees develop more than one type of work commitment. This rationale was further explored by Ritzer & Trice (1969) who argued that employees, in accordance with their own benefits, develop certain types of work commitments. In their latest study, O’Driscoll & Randall (1999, p. 199) reinforced this approach by claiming that “evidence to date indicates that affective and continuance commitment should be differentiated, both theoretically and empirically.”

In the last decade, studies have emphasized the importance of exploring how different work commitment forms are interrelated (Cohen, 1999; Morrow, 1993; Randall & Cote, 1991) and how they are associated with work outcomes (Becker, 1992; Carson, Carson, Roe, Birkenmeier & Phillips, 1999; Cohen, 2000; Hackett, Lapierre, & Hausdorf, 2001). The rationale behind these studies is that “by failing to consider the larger web of relationships encompassing the various work commitment constructs, researchers may incorrectly identify the strength and direction of the relationship between these constructs” (Randall & Cote, 1991, p. 194). In other words, it would perhaps be better to predict work outcomes by using a multivariate commitment model than by using one distinct and separate commitment. Another difficulty is presented by the need for concentration on work commitment constructs that would be appropriate to as many professionals as possible, and thereby allowing for more validated generalizability.

An essential step towards advancing the research on work commitment was taken by Morrow’s (1993) seminal book, *The Theory and Measurement of Work Commitment*, in which she argued to create a
more validated generalization of work commitment through a concentration on five fundamental constructs of work commitment, termed as universal forms of work commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment (both to the organization), Protestant Work Ethic (work ethic endorsement), career commitment, and job involvement. One other contribution was made recently by Cohen (1999; 2000) to overcome the difficulty, according to which “little research has tried to explore the relationships among the forms of work commitment” (1999, p. 288) by empirical examination of work commitment constructs.

There is a broad range of literature on the influence of job satisfaction on work outcomes (e.g., Hochwarter, Perrewe, Ferris & Brymer, 1999; Porter & Steers, 1973). However, there is a missing link in the evaluation of the relationships between joint commitment constructs and job satisfaction. Mowday, Porter & Steers (1982, p. 28) argue that work commitment and job satisfaction are somewhat different constructs. While work commitment is a reflection of a more stable and general employee attitude, job satisfaction is a reflection of a more fragile and changeable employee attitude. The findings of Shore and Martin (1989) also support this approach. They found that these constructs were associated differently with turnover intentions and performance. Cohen (1993b) showed that correlation between job satisfaction and work outcomes related to more immediate work influences, while the correlation between work commitment and work outcomes related to influences outside of work. Nevertheless, Cohen (1993b) propose not to regard work commitment and job satisfaction as opposing concepts, but to perceive them as complementary concepts. In other words, we need to refer these constructs not as competing, but as complementary concepts.

In this study, we examine the relationships between joint work commitments, job satisfaction, and job performance. First, we evaluate the interrelationships among the five universal work commitment constructs: affective commitment, continuance commitment (both to the organization), Protestant Work Ethic (work ethic endorsement), career commitment, and job involvement. These interrelationships are examined, using the approach of Randall & Cote (1991). The rationale for this choice is in accordance with Cohen’s finding (1999, p. 305) that “Randall and Cote’s model fits the data much better than Morrow’s model.”
Second, we explore the relationship between Randall and Cote’s commitment model and job satisfaction. Finally, we examine whether job satisfaction has a mediating role in explaining variance in the perception of job performance. In doing so, the study may contribute to the body of knowledge on the interrelationship among work commitment constructs, their relationships with work attitude (job satisfaction) and work outcome (job performance).

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model that underlines this approach. The model investigates the relationships between five forms of work commitment, job satisfaction and job performance. Protestant work ethic (PWE) is defined as the extent to which one believes that hard work is important and that leisure and excess money are detrimental (Morrow, 1993). Job involvement is defined as “a belief descriptive of the present job and tends to be a function of how much the job can satisfy one’s present needs” Kanungo (1982, p. 342). Continuance commitment is

FIGURE 1
A Research Model
defined as “the extent to which employees feel committed to their organizations by virtue of the costs that they feel are associated with leaving” (Meyer & Allen, 1984, p. 375). Affective commitment is defined as “positive feelings of identification with, attachment to, and involvement in, the work organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1984, p. 375). Thus, employees with strong affective commitment remain because they want to, and those with strong continuance commitment remain because they need to (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Career commitment is defined as “one’s attitude toward one’s profession or vocation” (Blau, 1985, p. 20). Locke (1969, p. 314) defined job satisfaction and dissatisfaction as “complex emotional reactions to the job.”

The study ascribes mediating roles to job involvement and job satisfaction. It suggests that the relationships between Protestant Work Ethic and continuance organizational commitment, affective organizational commitment, and career commitment are mediated by job involvement. It also suggests that the relationships between the joint commitments and job performance are mediated by job satisfaction.

The Research Model
Morrow (1993) suggested that work commitments should be examined as reciprocal constructs, since an investigation of joint work commitments might appear as a better predictor of work outcomes (Wiener & Vardi, 1980) than does an examination of the influence of each form of work commitment on work outcomes. Morrow (1993) argued that four basic universal forms of work commitment had been identified: work ethic endorsement, career commitment, job involvement, and organizational commitment. The evaluation of these four commitment forms, hence, called for a new articulation of the work commitment map. She proposed a new map of work commitment consisting of five components: work ethic endorsement (PWE) (Mirels & Garret, 1971), career commitment (Greenhaus, 1971), job involvement (Blau & Boal, 1989), continuance organizational commitment, and affective organizational commitment (see Allen & Meyer, 1996). The fundamental change in Morrow’s proposal was based on a well-established argument, according to which organizational commitment can no longer be viewed as a unitary concept. Although studies continue to view organizational commitment as a unitary concept (e.g., Leung, 1997), it is more appropriate to view two independent forms of organizational commitment: affective (attitudinal) organizational
commitment and continuance (calculative) organizational commitment. The quest for universal forms of work commitment mainly aims to “identify forms of work commitment relevant to as many employees as possible” (Morrow, 1993, p. 160).

In comparison to Morrow’s commitment model (1993), the model of Randall and Cote (1991) examined somewhat different forms of work commitment. These forms are PWE, work group attachment, organizational commitment (affective commitment), career salience (commitment), and job involvement. Four of these forms of work commitment correspond to four of the universal forms of work commitment proposed by Morrow (1993). These are PWE, career commitment, affective organizational commitment, and job involvement. Since Randall and Cote (1991) used only one component of organizational commitment, namely affective organizational commitment, and since it was explained above that it is more appropriate to view organizational commitment as consisting of two dimensions (affective organizational commitment and continuance organizational commitment), the revised Randall and Cote’s model, as Cohen (1999) claimed, can be seen to comprise the five universal forms of work commitment proposed by Morrow (1993).

Figure 1 portrays the commitment model of Randall and Cote (1991). As Morrow (1993), as well as Randall and Cote (1991), pointed out, it is essential to understand how the forms of work commitment are interrelated, but also to view them as distinct constructs. Randall and Cote (1991) attribute a key role in the model to the form of job involvement. Job involvement is a key mediator variable, which is influenced by PWE; this, in turn, influences organizational commitment and career commitment. PWE is the most fundamental and hard to change work commitment construct (Blood, 1969; Furnham, 1990). Contrary to what was suggested by Morrow (1993), according to which PWE affects both continuance organizational commitment and career commitment, Randall and Cote (1991) suggest that PWE is related to job involvement. In fact, they attribute a key role in the model to the form of job involvement. Job involvement is influenced by PWE, since this construct is so basic and rooted within the employee that it will make her/him invest in her/his occupation and therefore will generate high job involvement (Lodhal & Kejner, 1965). In their model, Randall and Cote (1991) also suggest that job involvement will have an influence on organizational commitment and career commitment.
As noted above, affective commitment and continuance commitment are two major components of organizational commitment, and it is more appropriate to view it as such. PWE is a permanent and relatively durable characteristic, whereas affective commitment, continuance commitment, and career commitment are all constructs that can be changed relatively quickly. Job involvement is a construct, which is influenced by the PWE in such a way that high commitment to the work world will enhance an individual’s commitment to his job. These two constructs are involved in continuing processes of socialization toward the work world and its importance in people’s lives.

Figure 1 also presents an extension of the original commitment model, according to which work outcomes are influenced by continuance organizational commitment, affective organizational commitment and career commitment (see Cohen, 2000). In this study, we suggest that the relationship between work outcome (i.e., job performance) and the three forms of work commitment (continuance organizational commitment, affective organizational commitment and career commitment) is mediated by job satisfaction. Why should we underline the mediating role of job satisfaction? Locke (1969, p. 314) defined job satisfaction and dissatisfaction as “complex emotional reactions to the job.” Conceptualizing job satisfaction as “feeling or affective responses to facets of the situation” (Smith, Kandall & Hulin, 1969, p. 6), suggests that job satisfaction is very much a fragile variable. As such, job satisfaction is associated with organizational commitment (Carson et al., 1999), which is considered a much more durable variable. Furthermore, job satisfaction is expected to influence job performance. The literature reports on the relationship between job satisfaction and work outcomes (Porter & Steers, 1973). It has been argued that work outcomes, such as turnover intentions, are influenced mostly by job satisfaction rather than by work commitment (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Perhaps one of the earlier and most significant assessments of this argument was made by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982, p. 35) arguing that “clearly, the least encouraging finding that has emerged from studies of commitment is a rather weak relationship between commitment and job performance.” This claim is explained by the view that performance is affected by motivation level, role clarity, and ability (Porter & Lawler, 1968), and that work attitude, like work commitment, would be expected to affect only one aspect of actual job performance. Thus, this study expects that job satisfaction would have a mediating role between continuance
commitment, affective commitment and career commitment, and job performance.

METHOD

Participants

The study population consisted of 1,100 lawyers working in private law offices in Israel. The participants were randomly chosen from the members’ guidebook of The Israel Bar. Following Cook and Campbell’s (1979) guidelines, we used a sample from a single industry (law) yet collected data from many different organizations to obtain better external validity and increased generality of the results.

The survey was mailed from and returned to a university address, using a self-addressed reply envelope. A total of 195 surveys were returned, yielding a 17.8% rate. This was slightly above what we expected, considering several aspects: (a) according to The Israel Bar, their members’ guidebook is updated for only about 90% of the certified lawyers; (b) the research population is considered to be less cooperative in comparison to other professionals. Of the 195 surveys returned, only 183 were usable, due to missing data. Of the final 183 lawyers included in the sample, 54.6% were women. The average age of respondents was 34.4 years, and the mean tenure in the organization and occupation was 5.9 and 7.4 years respectively. As for occupational status, 71.7% of the respondents were hired workers and the others were partners. More than 73% of the respondents were married, and their mean income was 17,646 NIS (median 11,750; s.d. 19,515). The mean size of the law offices was 16.1 lawyers (median 10; s.d. 16.4).

Measures

Protestant Work Ethic. This measure was assessed by 19 items of a measure developed by Mirels and Garrett (1971). Sample items are: “Most people who do not succeed in life are just plain lazy,” and “I feel uneasy when there is little work for me to do.” The measure was assessed on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.77.

Job Involvement. This measure is based on the 10-item scale developed by Kanungo (1982). Sample items are: “The most important things that happen to me involve my present job,” and “Most of my personal life
goals are job-oriented.” The measure was assessed on a seven-point scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.89.

**Affective Organizational Commitment.** This measure is based on the scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). Sample items are: “I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own,” and “I do not feel like ‘part of the family’ at my organization” (reverse item). The measure was assessed on a seven-point scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree, to 7 = strongly agree). The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.86.

**Continuance Organizational Commitment.** This measure is based on the scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). Sample items are: “Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire,” and “Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.” The measure was assessed on a seven-point scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.81.

**Career Commitment.** This measure was assessed by a scale developed by Blau (1985). Sample items are: “I like the advocatory profession too much to give it up,” and “I am disappointed with being a lawyer” (reverse scored). The measure was assessed on a five-point scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.90.

**Job Satisfaction.** This measure was estimated by a 6-items scale employed by Tsui, Egan and O’Reilly III (1992). Sample items are: “How satisfied are you with the nature of the work you perform?,” and “Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your current job situation?”. The measure was assessed on a five-point scale (ranging from 1 = very dissatisfied to 5 = very satisfied). The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.79.

**Job performance.** This measure was evaluated by a scale developed by Pearce and Porter (1986) and used by Black & Porter (1991). This measure is a respondent self-evaluation with five items measured on a seven-point scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree, to 7 = strongly agree). It contains five dimensions as follows: overall performance, ability to get along with others, completing tasks on time, quality of performance, and achievement of work goals. Although such difficulties as self-enhancement and objectivity and reliability may be encountered, Mabe III and West (1982) showed that self-evaluation measures were
more valid than pointed out in prior research (see Hochwarter et al., 1999). The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.76.

Data Analysis

To test the research model presented in Figure 1, path analysis was performed using LISREL VIII (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993). In order to assess the fit of the research model in Figure 1, we used several goodness-of-fit indices as suggested in the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (see: Bentler & Bonnet, 1980; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993; Kline, 1998) such as Chi-Square statistics divided by the degree of freedom ($\chi^2$/df); Relative Fit Index (RFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). Also assessed were the Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI), 90 Percent Confidence Interval for ECVI, and ECVI for Saturated Model.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, reliabilities and the intercorrelations among the research variables. The findings show good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CC</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>JI</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>.505***</td>
<td>(.89)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>AF</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>.428***</td>
<td>.407***</td>
<td>(.86)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>COC</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>.264**</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>-.094</td>
<td>(.81)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PWE</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.237**</td>
<td>.279**</td>
<td>.221**</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>(.77)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>JS</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.534***</td>
<td>.384***</td>
<td>.632***</td>
<td>.203*</td>
<td>.279**</td>
<td>(.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>JP</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.215**</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.269**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
1 Reliabilities in parentheses.
2 CC = Career commitment; JI = Job involvement; AC = Affective commitment; COC = Continuance commitment; PWE = Protestant work ethic; JS = Job satisfaction; JP = Job performance

*P < 0.05; **P < 0.01; ***P < 0.001
reliabilities of all the research measures; each one of the measures exceeds the value of 0.75. Almost all of the correlations outlined in the research model were significant. PWE was related to job involvement \((r = .279, p < .01)\); job involvement was related to affective commitment \((r = .407, p < .001)\) and career commitment \((r = .505, p < .001)\), but not to continuance commitment. Continuance commitment \((r = .203, p < .05)\), affective commitment \((r = .632, p < .001)\), and career commitment \((r = .534, p < .001)\) were related to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was related to employee job performance \((r = .269, p < .01)\). Thus, the commitment model of Randall and Cote (1991) and the research model were only partly supported. The size of the coefficients did not exceed the value of 0.70, and therefore suggested no severe problem of multicollinearity (Nunnaly, 1978).

The results of path analysis for the research model, presented in Figure 1, indicate that the path from job involvement to continuance commitment was not significant. Although the research model has a very good fit with the data, some consideration should be accorded to the number of correlations used in constructing the model. Therefore, it is essential to explore the best model in the sense of fitting with the data. The best fitting model is the one which consists of the fewest correlations, since science aims to explore a given phenomenon with the minimum number of variables. Since the path from job involvement to continuance commitment was not found to be significant in the research model, a revision of the model was conducted. The path from job involvement to continuance commitment was removed, and the path from career commitment to continuance commitment was added. The path from career commitment to affective commitment remained as bi-correlated.

As suggested by the structural equations model (SEM) literature (Bollen & Long, 1993; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993; Kline, 1998), the following goodness-of-fit indices were used to assess the model-fitting: \(\chi^2/df\) ratio is recommended to be less than 3; the values of RFI, NFI, and CFI are recommended to be greater than .90; RMSEA is recommended to be up to .05, and acceptable up to .08. The indices indicate that the research model has a very good fit with the data: \(\chi^2 = 7.771, p = 0.651\); \(\chi^2/df = 0.777\); RFI = 0.941; NFI = 0.972; CFI = 1.00; RMSEA = 0.01; ECVI model = 0.338; ECVI for saturated model = 0.327; and ECVI for independence model = 1.706. The indices also suggest that the revised model fits very well with the data: \(\chi^2 = 13.40, p = 0.341\); \(\chi^2/df = 1.117\);
RFI = 0.916; NFI = 0.952; CFI = 0.995; RMSEA = 0.026; ECVI model = 0.347; ECVI for saturated model = 0.327; and ECVI for independence model = 1.706. In comparing the two models, an argument could be made that the findings in the research model fit slightly better with the data. However, in the revised model (presented in Figure 2), all of the paths are significant and have more meaning due to their smaller number. As such, the power of explanation increased accordingly.

One of the significant findings of both models is the role of job satisfaction as a mediator for the relationship between joint commitment model and perceived job performance. In the research model, all of the three forms (affective commitment, continuance commitment, and career commitment) were found to be significantly related to job satisfaction. A strong path was demonstrated between affective commitment and job satisfaction (0.545). Further, as expected, a mediation model was supported by the finding that the path between the commitment model and perceived job performance was a path through job satisfaction. The pivotal role of job involvement was only partially supported, as no

**FIGURE 2**
The Revised Research Model
significant relation was found between job involvement and continuance commitment. Otherwise, the model as presented above was very acceptable in terms of fitting with the data. As for the revised model, replacing the path between job involvement and continuance commitment with a path between career commitment and continuance commitment was shown to be significant. As expected, the results show that job satisfaction was a key mediator for the relationship between the commitment model and perceived job performance.

**DISCUSSION**

The goal of this study was to explore the relationships between joint work commitments, job satisfaction, and work outcome. It was suggested that instead of treating commitment forms separately, as recommended by the traditional perspective, the use of a joint work commitment model should be adopted as a better predictor of work outcomes (Cohen, 1993b; Randall & Cote, 1991). Furthermore, although it has been argued that work commitments are more sustainable predictors of work outcomes, this study also addresses the importance of job satisfaction in this regard. However, it should be noted here that the study is limited in its consideration to only one outcome - job performance. The rationale beyond this perspective was the more fragile and changeable of the construct of job satisfaction than the five forms of commitment tested. As job performance is more changeable and situational, so is job satisfaction. Although it may be argued that one who holds a high level of career commitment is expected to achieve better job outcomes, this study adopts an approach in which both job satisfaction and job performance are situationally dependent, and do not stand alone, but are affected by psychological, sociological, economic and other aspects. In other words, both of these constructs are related to other individual attitudes. Thus, more fragile components should be more correlated than stable to fragile variables.

The Randall and Cote (1991) model was almost fully supported. The one non-significant finding was the correlation between job involvement and continuance commitment. This finding may call for ruling out the pivotal role that Randall and Cote (1991) assign to job involvement in their work commitment model. Nevertheless, job involvement, as expected, was a mediator between the Protestant Work Ethic and affective commitment and career commitment. In the work commitment literature, various approaches to the concept of job involvement can be
found. Morrow (1983) argued that job involvement is a function of personality differences. Lodhala and Kejner (1965) perceived job involvement as fundamental to the life and self-image of the employee, providing the motivation to accept and perform the best job possible. Therefore, job involvement is less fragile and changeable, but more stable. Moreover, Kanungo (1979, 1982) argued that job involvement is a characteristic rooted in human nature, which some have and others do not. Kanungo also claimed that the relationship between job involvement and organizational commitment is not guaranteed, since organizational commitment is a more work-related situation. Other scholars went even further by claiming that job involvement is not related to other work commitment forms (e.g., Blau, 1987, Blau & Boal, 1989; Megginis & Morrow, 1990; Paullay, Alliger & Stone-Romero, 1994).

Although job involvement was not found to be significantly related to continuance commitment, and this is supported by other research findings, job involvement was still pivotal to the relationship between Protestant Work Ethic and affective commitment and career commitment. Yet, to establish a stronger power of explanation, we revised the research model.

To some extent, the revised model suggests the same correlations proposed in the commitment model of Randall and Cote (1991), but there is one major difference. Instead of attributing a relationship to job involvement and continuance commitment, we proposed that the path between job involvement and continuance commitment passes through career commitment. This argument should be discussed from both the theoretical and empirical levels. Greenhaus (1971) contributed to a clarification of this issue. He argued that career salience is a significant factor in one’s total life, which motivates the employee to seek fulfillment in a career, and to choose a career appropriate to his own competencies. Thus, career commitment is not necessarily related, for example, to organizational commitment. It is very possible that one may develop a high level of career commitment, which is not associated with one’s commitment to the organization. Blau (1985) supported the concept of perceiving commitment to career and commitment to organization as independent constructs. The study of Steffy and Jones (1988) did so as well by showing that career commitment was influenced by extra-work variables and that organizational commitment had only moderate influence.
Other researchers, however, hold different perspectives in relation to this issue. In their examination of salience of career in relation to commitment to the organization, Morrow and McElroy (1986) found a relationship between career commitment and organizational commitment. Cohen (1999) showed that career commitment moderates the relationship between job involvement and organizational commitment, both the forms of affective and continuance commitment. Other support, perhaps the most significant for the proposed moderated relationship, lies in the research population of this study. It is suggested that lawyers with a high level of career commitment should develop a high level of continuance commitment, since many lawyers look to fulfill themselves by becoming partners. A complementary aspect contributing to the argument is the fact that many of the young lawyers do not perceive the practice of law as their main career, but more as a helpful platform for a managerial position. The reasons for this are beyond the scope of this study. Yet it is important to note that Israel is a small country with about one lawyer for every three hundred people, with the number of lawyers consistently rising. In conclusion, it is proposed that occupational characteristics are important for the understanding of the relationship between job involvement, career commitment, and continuance commitment.

In both the conceptual model, based on Randall and Cote (1991) and the revised models, it was expected that affective, continuance and career commitments would be positively associated with job performance through job satisfaction. The results indicate that both models supported this hypothesis.

One step forward made in this study is with regard to the role of job satisfaction as a mediator between the commitment model and job performance. This is not to say that there is no affect of commitment forms, but the best variable for predicting perceived job performance is job satisfaction, as both are more changeable and fragile variables than all five forms of commitment tested. The findings support the results of Shore & Martin (1989) and Cohen (1993b), according to which work commitment and job satisfaction are distinguishable variables regarding their power of explanation for work outcomes. While work commitment forms are suggested as being a better predictor of work outcomes outside the immediate work situation, job satisfaction appears to be a better predictor of work outcomes inside the immediate work climate.
Limitations and Future Directions

The reader is cautioned to recognize the limitations of this study. First, the relatively small response rate of the research population along with its somewhat unique features make it difficult to generalize the findings. However, it is known that certain occupations have not been granted with proper attention due to the objective obstacle of a usually small response rate. Despite this difficulty, the study was undertaken to deal with the problem and attempt to bridge the gap of a somewhat neglected occupation. Second, the study is based on self-reported data and thus may carry a bias of general method variance. According to Crampton and Wagner (1994, p. 73), “some areas of microorganizational research appear more susceptible to percept-percept inflation than others.” They classify the areas of microorganizational research into three groups: (a) areas which appear to be relatively free of effect-size inflation; (b) areas where percept-percept inflation is neither dominant or absent; and (c) areas which appear to be especially susceptible to inflationary effects. In terms of the present research variables, job involvement belongs to the first group, and the other four commitment forms belong to the second group. It should, however, be mentioned that job satisfaction falls in the third area. Nevertheless, we believe that using validated and usable measures reduces the possibility of bias in general method variance. Finally, using a sample from a single industry (law) and collected data from many different organizations allows us to obtain better external validity and increased generality of the results (Cook & Campbell, 1979).

Several suggestions for future research should be mentioned. It is essential to validate the relationship between joint work commitment and work outcomes, and a further effort should be invested in establishing a validated commitment model. Currently new findings (Cohen, 1999, 2000) suggest that a concentrated effort should be given to validating Randall & Cote’s commitment model. Additional research should explore the somewhat problematic link in their model regarding the relation between job involvement and continuance commitment, as well as further investigation of the argument made here for a mediator role of career commitment. Finally, more should be done to examine the effect of joint work commitment and job satisfaction on outcomes within and outside the work environment.
REFERENCES


