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Harshbarger, David Bruce, Ed.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1988

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ASSESSING FACULTY COMMITMENT AT FOUR DOCTORAL-GRANTING UNIVERSITIES

by

David Bruce Harshbarger

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Greensboro
1988

Approved by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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This study applies to higher education a tool which has been used in business and industry as a measure of organizational commitment. The study evaluates the applicability of the tool for use with university faculty, and attempts to identify factors relating to faculty members' levels of institutional commitment. Finally, it tests the appropriateness of generalizing a model of employee commitment derived from studies in business settings, to the field of higher education.

A survey was devised, consisting of the 15-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), items for demographic comparison, and an open-ended question regarding sources of commitment to or alienation from the employing institution. The survey was sent to full-time, tenure-track, teaching faculty at four universities in the southeast United States, identified as "Doctoral-Granting II" universities by the Carnegie classification.

The OCQ and a model of organizational commitment were examined in the context of higher education faculty. Results suggested that they are applicable with this population.

Scores on the OCQ were analyzed to determine whether they were significantly related to eight personal demographic variables. A relationship was determined between commitment scores and the variable of faculty rank, with

associate professors' scores significantly lower than those of their other faculty colleagues.

Based upon their questionnaire scores, respondents were assigned to groups reflecting high, moderate, or low institutional commitment, and responses were compared across the three levels. Among cited sources of commitment, significant discrepancies in the proportions of citations by commitment level were found in the areas of institutional standing, personal investments, support and funding, leadership at the departmental or school level, leadership at the institutional level, colleagues, and shared governance. Among cited sources of alienation, significant discrepancies were found in the areas of psychological environment, support and funding, leadership at the institutional level, institutional policy, the work itself, and personal treatment.

Four broad issues affecting faculty commitment - autonomy, impersonality in the work environment, faculty-university value congruence, and faculty perceptions of equity - emerged from a synthesis of narrative survey responses. These were suggested as promising starting points for similar institutions seeking to strengthen and maintain faculty-university bonds.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Several recent reports have been critical of the state of undergraduate education in America, and a number of these have cited a lack of commitment by faculty members to their institutions as a problem. The Association of American Colleges (1985), in "Integrity in the College Curriculum," claimed that the old curriculum and the entire nature of higher education was overwhelmed in the transformation of faculty from:

> teachers concerned with the characters and minds of their students to professionals, scholars with Ph.D. degrees, with an allegiance to academic disciplines stronger than their commitment to teaching or to the life of the institutions where they are employed (p. 14).

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recently asserted:

> Tradition has it that a campus is a collegial place where people share ideas and work together. In reality, the formal decision-making mechanisms on most campuses are not working very well. Although faculty members feel a deep sense of loyalty to their professions, they are less committed to the institutions where they work (Boyer, p. 235).

In declaring faculties "a national resource imperiled," Schuster and Bowen (1985) cited fragmentation by specialization as one of the forces contributing to a segmented, dispirited faculty. Among their findings from

532 faculty interviews was:

> ...junior faculty at many campuses have become "privatized." They have been isolated to considerable degrees by standards requiring them to produce and publish at unprecedented levels. The research imperative certainly focuses the junior faculty's attention, but...that focus is so narrow that new recruits do not function as fully participating members of their campus communities, even within their own departments. The pressure of this unrelenting vise leads to both anxiety and resignation (p. 17).

In a work on individualism and commitment in America, Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) discussed the university's function as an agent of the American "culture of separation." Recalling the emergence of the research university in the late nineteenth century, they stated:

> Graduate education, research, and specialization, leading to largely autonomous departments, were the hallmarks of the new universities...(s)pecialization requires integration; they are not mutually exclusive...if we remember that "calling" or "vocation," with the implication of public responsibility, is the older meaning of "profession," then we would see that a really "professional social scientist" could never be only a specialist (pp. 299-300).

Statement of the Problem

The commitment of a faculty member, then, to the employing institution is an issue of concern in higher education. However, little research has focused on identifying factors relating to faculty commitment and alienation, so that commitment might be strengthened. This study applies the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ),

which has been used in business and industry, to higher education to determine its applicability for use with university faculty. Can specific factors which increase or decrease levels of institutional commitment by faculty be identified? Finally, can a model of employee commitment factors derived from studies in business settings (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982) apply equally to the field of higher education?

If accepted instruments can successfully be applied and factors increasing or decreasing commitment identified, then appropriate actions can be taken by university administrators, governing boards, and other officials to remove negative factors and enhance positive ones.

Research Questions

The following questions were investigated in this study:

Research Question #1: Is the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire applicable to faculty members in higher education to measure commitment to the employing institution?

Research Question #2: Do certain individual demographic characteristics relate to faculty members' levels of commitment to their current institution of employment?

Research Question #3: What other non-demographic factors contribute to feelings of personal commitment to and/or alienation from the current institution of employment?

Research Question #4: Which factors contributing to personal feelings of commitment differ in relation to the measured level of commitment?

Research Question #5: Which factors contributing to personal feelings of alienation differ in relation to the measured level of commitment?

Research Question #6: Is the Mowday (1982) model identifying factors affecting employee commitment relevant to faculty in higher education?

Definition of Organizational Commitment

This study used an instrument based upon Mowday et al.'s (1982) definition of organizational commitment, which was therefore, accepted for this study, as follows:

> ...we define organizational commitment for our purposes as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Conceptually, it can be characterized by at least three factors: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (p. 27).

Mowday et al. note that this definition does not preclude the possibility or probability that individuals will be committed to other aspects of their environment, but simply assert that, regardless of other commitments, the organizationally-committed individual will exhibit the three characteristics described in their definition.

The construct of commitment, then, is broader than, and significantly different from, the concept of job satisfaction. Commitment reflects a general affective response to the organization as a whole and emphasizes attachments to goals and values, while satisfaction reflects a response to one's job and emphasizes an employee's specific task environment (Mowday et al., 1982). Organizational commitment is hypothesized to be more stable over time than is job satisfaction (Zahra, 1984). Day-to-day events may affect an individual's degree of satisfaction, but are not as likely to affect attachment to the organization as a whole.

Limitations of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to the fulltime, tenure-track, teaching faculty in four specific peer doctoral-granting institutions. As such, the ability to generalize findings to dissimilar institutions is limited.

Parttime and non-tenure-track faculty members were not included in this study. Such individuals face unique barriers in their development of institutional commitment, due to their lessened levels of participation in the institution's culture and reward system (Boyer, 1987).

Finally, factors of commitment or alienation generated by this study were limited to those of which the respondents were aware, and could describe in writing. It might be assumed that respondents' initial responses to questions

about sources of commitment may reflect concrete, observable behaviors more often than the more subtle influences of their institution's or their own cultural assumptions.

While this study addresses factors that are known and evident to respondents, the development of commitment involves interweaving complex aspects of an individual's personality and the environment which are less readily discerned and described.

Significance of the Study

Organizational commitment by employees has been studied in the field of management (e.g., Steers, 1977; Angle & Perry, 1981; Morris & Sherman, 1981; Buchanan, 1974; Salancik, 1977; Sheldon, 1971), and linked as a positive influence to such variables as job performance, job satisfaction, retention, decreased absenteeism, and decreased tardiness. Commitment levels have been found to be linked to personal characteristics, role-related characteristics, organizational structure, and employees' work experiences (Mowday et al., 1982).

The study of institutional commitment in higher education has received less attention, but becoming the focus of significant concern. Higher education has much to gain from the enhancement of institutional commitment on the part of faculty members.

According to the definition employed in this study, organizational commitment is characterized by belief in the organization's goals and values, willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Mowday et al., 1982). Under any circumstance, the first two of these characteristics are desirable, and their enhancement by the organization is in the organization's best interests. The determination of an employee to remain in an organization may not always be desirable to the organization, and the organization's leadership may wish to investigate means of facilitating or encouraging employee turnover. Nevertheless, diminishing employees' levels of commitment to the organization would constitute a poor strategy to achieve this end.

At least one study has found that faculty members who identify primarily with the university, rather than with their department or discipline, tend to be the driving forces behind the institution's undergraduate teaching and public service roles, and highly involved in its internal governance structure (Dressel, Johnson, & Marcus, 1970). The issue of faculty commitment also speaks to another crucial factor - a willingness on the part of an individual to expend effort beyond the minimum amount required. Faculty who are committed, therefore, should be more likely to involve themselves in aspects of the university beyond their

own departmental boundaries. Longitudinal studies by Astin (1985) have shown that the willingness of faculty to interact with students outside the classroom can be a major contributing factor to the value of the student undergraduate experience. Furthermore, faculty willingness to span boundaries is critical to the vitality and success of shared institutional governance. The participation of faculty in institutional decision-making should be an issue of concern to college and university administrators. Literature regarding the dynamics of organizational processes, generated from a number of fields, has shown participatory management to be a key to enhanced governance (e.g., Ouchi, 1981).

There are, however, unique forces and conditions which suggest that the relationship of faculty members to their college or university has never resembled the traditional concept of the employee in the workplace. Mauksch (1985) cited the metamorphosis of faculty from "academic professionals" who, as individual entrepreneurs, enter into a contractual agreement with an institution to "employees" and members of "the staff" as an "alarming" current trend in higher education. Boyer (1987) illustrated this distinction with a statement from a disgruntled faculty member who resented efforts to involve him in institutional governance:

> "Faculty at state schools like this are considered employees. There's no distinction between us and clerks or what have you. We're all part of the family. We don't have an administration - faculty

relationship, we have an employer - employee distinction (p. 242)."

The Carnegie Foundation's survey of faculty members in 1984 produced data to support the perception of an emotional distancing of faculty members from their institutions. Asked to assess the importance of their college and their academic discipline to them, 76 percent of a nationwide sample of faculty cited their discipline as "very important." Only 26 percent maintained that their college was "very important" (Boyer, 1987).

Faculty members' commitment to their departments and specializations provide alternatives to a commitment to the institution as a whole. The intense pressure to publish and produce tangible evidence of scholarly progress as the primary criterion for promotion and/or tenure may promote attention to department and discipline and diminish personal identification with the institution. The faculty tradition of relative autonomy within the institutional structure may further tend to counteract the development of a high level of university commitment. The scope of faculty members' educational backgrounds might suggest the likelihood of their distancing from the institution, since level of education has been shown to be conversely related to a propensity to become committed to one's organization (Mowday et al., 1982).

Responding to the educational needs of America, as expressed at the start of this chapter, requires that higher

education officials seek means of integrating disciplines and encouraging holistic approaches. If factors influencing the enhancement of commitment can be identified and affected positively, then progress can be made toward this goal.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theories of organizational behavior have been advanced throughout the 20th century, but only in the past two decades has the concept of organizational commitment been widely addressed. Researchers have found the concept of "commitment" to be useful as a reliable predictor of certain behaviors in the workplace. It has also been cited as a means of better understanding the processes by which individuals choose to establish linkages and identify with objects in their environment in order to make sense of it (Mowday et al, 1982).

Studies addressing organizational commitment in work settings of the business world have been completed. A synthesis of this new information on the sources, outcomes, and process of commitment within the context of an organizational culture framework, creates an insightful view of organizational dynamics.

Less research however, has addressed the issue of organizational commitment among college and university faculty. This review will provide a basis for a study of faculty commitment by discussing employee commitment as a general concept; examining research findings regarding commitment in work settings other than higher education;

describing the relationship of employee commitment to organizational culture; examining the unique aspects of American academic culture which distinguish it from the culture of other work settings; and, summarizing research findings about faculty commitment.

Organizational Commitment

March and Simon (1958) described worker commitment to organizations as an "exchange relationship." Each party makes certain demands upon the other while providing something in return. They termed these exchange resources "organizational inducements" and "individual contributions."

Contributions on the part of employees were described as taking two general forms, production and participation. The more effective the organization is in providing opportunities for employees to meet their multiple needs, the higher the propensity for the employee to participate and be productive, thereby generating a self-perpetuating exchange that is beneficial for both parties.

In 1961, Etzioni created a typology of member involvement in organizations which described three forms of response to organizational directives for participation. According to his framework, involvement in organizations may be of the moral, calculative, or alienative form.

Moral involvement reflects an identification with and internalization of an organization's values and goals. Such

an involvement, fueled by the embracing of a group ideology, is usually of high intensity. The primary mechanism motivating morally involved members is based upon the allocation of symbolic rewards.

Calculative involvement, like moral involvement, reflects a positive orientation to the source of authority, but is less intense because it is based on a rational exchange of benefits and rewards between the parties. The organizational control mechanism employed is primarily remunerative power.

Alienative involvement is a negative orientation to authority, found in relationships characterized by exploitation, such as that between a prison and an inmate. The form of power utilized to secure compliance through this type of involvement is coercive. Etzioni suggests that organizations match their style of exerting influence (power) to the type of involvement displayed by the member.

Salancik (1977) described commitment in a different light. He saw it as a "result of the constraints on an individual's ability to leave the organization, and the extent to which the individual himself has made a definite and committing choice." This aspect of commitment comes about when individuals adjust their attitudes to fit situations to which they are bound or the "investments" they have made in their work lives. By identifying with one's own irrevocable behaviors, an individual formulates

attitudes which justify the behaviors. Future behaviors conform with those attitudes, creating a self-perpetuating cycle.

In this view, commitment may be moral and positive, but it may also be personally dysfunctional. Individuals who have invested considerable personal resources (such as time, effort, and education) in an endeavor (such as a job or career) may develop a form of commitment as a rationalization for their refusal to risk the loss of their investment.

Mowday et al. (1982) attempted to reconcile these differing concepts by differentiating "attitudinal" and "behavioral" forms of commitment. Attitudinal commitment focuses on the process by which people think about their relationship with an organization. It is a mind set which considers the congruence between the organization and members' own values and goals.

The behavioral form of commitment referred to by Salancik, relates to the process by which individuals become locked into an organization and the means through which they deal with the situation. While noting that the distinction between the two forms is a useful one, Mowday et al. suggest that the two are closely related and represent different points along the same continuum. They constructed a framework of commitment which describes a longitudinal process of exchange based on both attitudinal and behavioral factors.

Mowday et al. (1982) conceptualize three stages in the development of organizational commitment. The first stage, "anticipation," is a pre-entry stage which reflects propensities to become committed that new employees bring to their jobs. Major determinants of initial commitment levels include personal characteristics, characteristics of job choice, and expectations that new employees have about their jobs.

The "initiation" phase spans the first several months (up to one year) that a new employee spends in the organization. Commitment is again affected by personal characteristics, organizational characteristics and influences, and non-organizational factors such as the employee's comparison of his or her new organization against other alternative organizations with which he or she might be familiar.

The phase of "entrenchment" spans middle to late career periods, and is a complex phenomenon to interpret because many potential influences upon commitment (e.g., more challenging work assignments, personal investments, social involvements, decreased mobility) may covary with length of service.

Factors Affecting Commitment Development

Mowday et al. deduced four categories of variables antecedent to employee commitment by examining studies of correlation between certain factors and individual

commitment. These factors (antecedents) include personal characteristics, role- or job-related factors, and work-related experiences, and characteristics of organizational structure. The four categories will be used in this study to categorize those factors found to be related to faculty commitment.

Specific outcomes linked to commitment in the workplace by Mowday et al. include job performance and length of service (positive relationships), and turnover, absenteeism, and tardiness (negative relationships). Identifying and affecting factors relating to commitment should logically affect outcomes or job performance.

Others have studied aspects of the framework described by Mowday et al., (1982), which are antecedent to organizational commitment. Discussion of these studies will be grouped into categories of (1) personal, (2) role-related, (3) structural, and (4) work experience.

Personal variables: Steers (1977), in a study of scientists and engineers, and Angle and Perry (1981), who were studying transit workers, both found age and tenure in the organization to be positive correlates of commitment, but level of education to be negatively related to commitment. Since age and tenure each relect complex interactions of attitudinal and behavioral factors associated with the commitment process, they noted, it is especially risky to attempt to infer causation in this relationship.

Angle and Perry (1981) found significantly different propensities for commitment according to gender, with women more likely to develop strong identifications with their employing organizations. Steers (1977) and Morris and Sherman (1981), in an analysis of mental health workers, found personal need for achievement and fulfillment to be related to commitment.

Role-related variables: Buchanan (1974), in a study of public and private sector managers, found job scope and challenge to be antecedents of commitment. His findings were reconfirmed by Steers (1977). Salancik (1977) claimed that any characteristic of a person's job situation which reduces his or her feelings of responsibility will reduce his or her commitment. Sheldon (1971) found significant correlations between scientists' levels of commitment and their relative levels of professional position. An inverse relationship between role stress and commitment was determined by Morris and Sherman (1981) and by Fukami and Larson (1984) in a study of newspaper employees.

Structural variables: Morris and Steers (1980) found organizational size and span of control to be unrelated to commitment by public sector employees. However, formalization of rules, functional interdependence of employees, and centralization of authority had significant positive correlations to commitment. The finding regarding the last of these three variables contradicted an earlier finding by

Stevens, Beyer, and Trice (1978) who also sampled public sector supervisors.

Work experience variables: Buchanan (1974) and Steers (1977) found that individuals' perceptions of the organization's dependability, personal feelings of importance in the organization, belief that the organization had met their expectations, and coworkers' positive attitudes to be related to commitment. Other factors include the employees' social involvement within the organization (Sheldon, 1971; Fukami & Larson, 1984) and professional prestige (Lee, 1969), and the initiation of structure and leader consideration on the part of organizational superiors (Morris & Sherman, 1981).

Outcomes Measurement Related to Commitment

A somewhat smaller body of work has been compiled on the outcomes of organizational commitment, using the commitment construct as an independent rather than a dependent variable. Findings have been mixed regarding the relationship between level of commitment and job performance. Mowday et al. (1982) claimed that in most studies, few important correlations emerged, though correlations have consistently been in the predicted direction and often reach statistical significance. Nevertheless, Van Maanen (1975), in a study of police officers, showed highly significant correlations tended to develop between the two constructs

after the officers' first two months on the job. Mowday, Porter, and Dubin (1974), studying female clerical bank workers, Steers (1977), and Larson and Fukami (1984), each found significant relationships within their samples as well.

Somewhat stronger inverse relationships have consistently been found between commitment and turnover (Steers, 1977; Angle & Perry, 1981; Larson & Fukami, 1984), and between commitment and employee tardiness. Modest but inconsistent support has been generated for a relationship between commitment and absenteeism.

A small number of longitudinal studies have added to the interpretation of some of the correlational studies described above. Bartol (1979) and Welsch and LaVan (1981) studied antecedents of organizational commitment and cited job satisfaction among their findings. However, in a longitudinal study of antecedents to commitment among nursing department employees, Bateman and Strasser (1984) found commitment to be an antecedent to job satisfaction rather than its outcome, suggesting that it is not a consequence of satisfaction, but appears to be one of job satisfaction's many causes. Such a longitudinal analysis may give support to the notion that individuals enter an organization with differing propensities to become committed (Mowday et al., 1982).

Commitment and Organizational Culture

Changes in the larger society can affect individuals' attachment to organizations by altering the work environment. Demographic changes bring change in the characteristics of the work force; economic changes have impacts on the independence of employees; and, technological changes affect the relationship of worker to job and increase specialization within organizations. Among the types of societal change with the greatest potential to affect employee-organization linkages is socionormative change - the aspect of the societal environment which provides cues concerning priorities and acceptable forms of behavior (Mowday et al., 1982).

A society's "culture" may be viewed as the sum of its socionormative codes. In describing the effect of societal change upon the working environment, Katzell (1979) compiled a list of current cultural trends including revised definitions of success reflecting less emphasis on material achievement and more on personal fulfillment, shifting emphasis from bigness and growth to smallness and conservation, and greater social acceptance of ethnic minorities.

While cultural norms at the societal level can influence the environment of the workplace, the larger society reflects only one level of normative codes. Additional cultures and subcultures operate at the organizational and suborganizational levels as well. The value-

laden aspects of organizational structure and employee work experiences exert powerful influences upon the values systems of an organization's members (Schein, 1985). Reichers (1985) has pointed to organizations as composites of coalitions and argued that organizational commitment is a collection of multiple commitments to various groups that comprise the organization. Commitment is one possible outcome of behaviors and attitudes which are products or "artifacts" of the various cultures in which an individual functions.

Colleges and universities bring together a number of constituencies or subcultures. By their very nature, institutions of higher education incorporate a broad scope of disciplines, each with its own set of goals, priorities, and operating procedures. And yet, virtually every college or university has a missions and goals statement that outlines those values which are purported to be common to the entire enterprise. Organizational commitment may be seen as a measure of the extent to which members of the various institutional subcultures accept and identify with the ideology of the larger, institutional culture.

What is meant by the "culture" of a group or organization? Geertz (1973) supplied an anthropological definition of culture as:

> an historically transmitted pattern of meanings which embodies in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions ... by which men communicate,

> perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life (p. 89).

He described culture as a "web of significance" which facilitates "sense-making" for those who live and work within the organization. In translating this concept to the settings of organizations in the industrialized world, sociologists, social psychologists and organizational analysts have focused on the visible manifestations of culture. A synthesis of several such definitions proposes that the culture of an organization is to be found in a common understanding of values, symbols, beliefs, ideology, myths, ritual, language, norms, behaviors, customs and traditions which organize action, govern behavior, and provide meaning, commitment and order for the group (Kroeber & Parsons, 1958; Fine, 1979; Peterson, 1979; Pettigrew, 1979; Louis, 1983).

Schein (1985) has pointed out that while these "artifacts" may reflect an organization's culture, they are not themselves its culture. The essence of the culture, he contends, may be found in a "pattern of basic assumptions...that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore (is) to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel (p. 9)." These basic assumptions, says Schein, evolve unconsciously and provide for group members the fundamental notions of who they are, what they do, and for what purpose they do it.

They do nothing less for the members of the group, than define their picture of the world.

Schein's concept of organizational culture may be pictured as a three-story "iceberg" with the cultural essence, the basic underlying assumptions of the group, at the lowest level. The value orientations of the group rests upon the assumptions, and the cultural artifacts (symbols, norms, rituals, etc.) are at the top.

The metaphor of an iceberg is appropriate because the most critical part of this model is hidden from view. The cultural artifacts are generally observable by outsiders, though insiders in the culture are not necessarily aware of all their artifacts. The level of values is partially observable, though clouded by those values which are espoused but not incorporated into practice.

The deepest level, that of the basic, implicit assumptions by which the group orders its existence, form the core about which the group fashions its fundamental paradigms: its view of man's relation to nature, and its view of the natures of reality and truth, human nature, human activity, and human relationships. These assumptions are invisible, taken for granted, and non-debatable.

In recent years, attention has been paid in both popular and scholarly literature to the concept of organizational culture. The most widely-known of the recent works on the symbolic, value-laden aspects of organizations have

concentrated on corporate entities (Ouchi, 1981; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982). Each of these authors focused on the development of organizational commitment through implicit cultural norms. While the works of these authors were applied to the field of business management, the principles of group culture to which they alluded, operate in groups of all sizes (Ridgeway, 1983).

Academic Culture

Several authors have examined the role of organizational and group culture in higher education. Some have transposed the corporate "search for excellence" to the field of higher education (Settle, 1985) and proposed techniques for uncovering collegiate culture through a process of thematic analysis involving interview, observation, and document analysis (Masland, 1985).

Among the most useful of these applications however, have been those which attempted to specify the cultural factors and issues unique to colleges and universities that make their cultures especially complex. Several authors have noticed striking similarities between the Japanese style of culture-based management and the collegial model traditionally presumed to typify American colleges and universities (Dill, 1982; Martin, 1985). These writers note that members of organizations operating under both models have an absolute belief in the organization's values

for their own sake, values transmitted through an almost religious dogma. Corson (1979) suggested that a separate, common culture prevails among professional workers attracted to the university setting, based upon their shared characteristics of intellectual curiosity and willingness to trade greater rewards for a relatively free, unregimented work style.

A university ideally represents an integrated community where scholars, administrators and students representing different disciplines and departments come together in a single enterprise. In practice, however, the various units which comprise the enterprise do not often connect with and offer support to one another. Rice (1970) claimed that "there is in the majority of universities massive unconscious agreement to maintain organizational confusion in order to avoid recognition of the conflict of cultural values (p. 109)." Sanders (1973) asserted that:

> ...although the general public still tends to view the university in fairly traditional terms - as a community of scholars - those who face campus problems daily and intimately are impressed by erosion of the sense of community, especially with respect to the general goals of higher education, the purposes of any given institution, and the parts different members of the university community should play in carrying out these purposes (p. 60).

Clark (1980) said that "the basic trend in academic culture is fragmentation brought about by a proliferation of parts that operate under the centrifugal force of a growing

number of needs and interests" and claimed that "the cultural distance between disciplines increases steadily (p. 17)." He included the common disposition referred to by Corson in a four-level typology of academic culture, but noted that it was only a secondary cultural orientation for many university personnel.

The primary allegiance, said Clark, is to the culture of the discipline, then to the culture of the profession, next to the culture of the enterprise (the level of what he had earlier termed the organizational saga), and then remotely, to the culture of the national system of higher education. He cited the general trend toward fragmentation of academic culture, arguing that on today's campus, the three levels of profession, enterprise, and national system are less held together by an integrative ideology which might give a sense of commonness to their members.

He based this trend on an increasing specialization in roles and disciplines among academic professionals. Sanders (1973) echoed this assessment, saying "the specialization of the larger society reaches into the university and runs counter to the earlier academic ideal (of community)... (p. 62)."

Dill (1982) cited this extreme specialization as "the decline of academic culture" in the universities. He claimed that the rapid growth of systems of higher education since World War II and an increasing orientation toward the

individual, discipline-based career "have produced faculty members who are socially and psychologically independent of the enterprise and the profession (p. 311)." The proliferation of colleges and universities in the second half of this century, he said, eliminated the shared traditions and common calling of a professoriate previously inhabiting a small and intimate profession. In addition, societal forces have given status to the individual faculty member rather than to the profession as a whole, drawing the faculty member toward increasing specialization. This has led to a declining involvement in institutional teaching, counseling, and administrative roles, and a lessening of social ties with institutional colleagues.

While fragmentation may be the norm in higher education today, it is not necessarily the rule. Clark (1970) provided a study of cultural leadership in an examination of the means by which three distinctive, private liberal arts colleges developed institutional "sagas" which consolidated meaning and commitment for generations of students, faculty, and administrators. He found that:

> ...distinctiveness in a college involves and encourages those characteristics of group life commonly referred to as community. It offers an educationally relevant definition of the difference of the group from all others. And salient elements in the distinctiveness become foci of personal awareness and of a sense of things held in common with others currently on the scene, those who have been there before, and those yet to arrive. Distinctiveness captures loyalty, inducing men to enlist and stay against the lures of careerism (p. 256).

Using the histories of Antioch, Reed, and Swarthmore Colleges as case studies, Clark found that the personal commitment of administrators and faculty members was not only a product of institutional distinctiveness, but the key component in its process of formation as well:

> The innovator formulates a new idea, a mission ...and he starts to design appropriate means of embodying his idea in the organization and to enhance the conduciveness of the setting...
>
> When we look for the way distinctive emphasis is maintained in a college, we find it typically firmly expressed in interlocking stable structures. The key structure is usually a tenured faculty armed with power. The senior faculty members are personally committed to the emphasis, are collectively the center of power or are so powerful that they can veto attempts at change, and are replaced over time in such a way as to continue the embodiment of the historic purpose in faculty values (pp. 255-256).

Clark (1970) determined that the conditions most favorable to the development of distinctiveness were singularity of purpose and smallness of size, but noted that other conditions - long tradition, slow growth, high status, and units promoting intensive interaction - can sometimes compensate.

Implications for Faculty Commitment

Concern about college and university faculties has surfaced in a variety of sources in recent years. The reports and publications cited in the introductory chapter of this study, illustrate that some of this concern targets levels of commitment among faculty members. Indeed, there

are indications that commitment to both the institution and the field is weak. A 1984 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1985) national survey revealed that among faculty members sampled at four-year institutions, fifty-two percent indicated that they would consider another academic position if it came along, and forty-six percent said they would consider a non-academic position. Thirty-eight percent said they may leave their jobs in the next five years, and twenty-three percent are considering leaving academe altogether. Schuster and Bowen (1985) reported that faculty morale is rated "good" or "excellent" at only one-third of the nation's campuses.

While these figures might seem high, they may be balanced by the realization that in an effort to keep their options open, many people consider various courses of action that they are unlikely to actually follow. Zahra (1984) cited interviews with 47 "highly committed" employees in which 44 stated that they had entertained thoughts of quitting their jobs.

The state of faculty commitment has assumed a prominent place among issues in American higher education. In 1986, the American Association for Higher Education dedicated an issue of <u>Change</u> magazine to "Celebrating Faculty Commitment," and highlighted 322 outstanding faculty members who had been nominated by their institution's chief executive officer on the basis of their commitment to their

college or university. An analysis of the group concluded the following:

> For the most part, the institutions represent the broad middle ground of American higher education rather than what is increasingly being called 'the fast track.' The fast track may, in fact, be a track that leads away from the kind of institutional commitment so apparent in these dossiers. On the fast track, it may be harder to find faculty leadership that goes beyond personal ambition and disciplinary achievements. The very qualities - academic citizenship in the best sense - that the AAHE faculty salute honors, may be diminishing as an academic value. Under increased pressure both to teach and to publish well, service may be relegated to an even lesser position than it has occupied in the past (Eble, 1986, p. 21).

Gouldner (1957) may have been the first researcher to actively investigate commitment among faculty members in an analysis of what he termed "cosmopolitans" and "locals." He described two sources of identification for professionals as employees: their own work organization (in the case of the faculty upon which he based his study, this was the college or university) and the national network of colleagues within their specific disciplines. Those who identified more with the former he called "locals," and those who identified primarily with the latter he categorized as "cosmopolitans."

Gouldner held that three variables were important for analyzing latent identities in organizations: loyalty to the employing organization, commitment to specialized or professional skills, and reference group orientations. Cosmopolitans tend to have low degrees of loyalty to their employing organization, high degrees of commitment to

specialized roles or skills, and are likely to use an outer (external to the organization) reference group orientation. Locals tend to be high on organizational loyalty, low on commitment to specialized roles, and use an inner reference group orientation.

Testing these configurations with college faculty samples, he found that cosmopolitans were more likely to believe faculty teaching loads should be lightened to make more time for private research; more likely to feel there were very few people around the college with whom they could share professional interests; more likely to have or be working on their Ph.D.; likely to have published more; more ready to leave their college for another; likely to know fewer faculty members; and, more likely to get most of their intellectual stimulation from sources outside the college.

Extreme locals tended to participate more on campus than extreme cosmopolitans, though intermediates participated more than either, and tended to have a higher degree of influence than either cosmopolitans or locals. In a subsequent article, Gouldner (1958) described four subsets of locals which he dubbed "the dedicated," "the true bureaucrats,""the homeguard," and "the elders;" and two subsets of cosmopolitans called "the outsiders" and "the empire builders."

Gouldner (1958) claimed that both cosmopolitans and locals are important to an organization and said that the

model providing distinctions between the two seemed promising because it focused attention on the tensions between the modern organization's needs for both loyalty and expertise. The explicit assessment of many recent critiques is that today's faculties are especially short of the former. Boyer (1987) noted that:

> Our data show today, whereas 26 percent of faculty feel their college is "very important" to them, 76 percent rate their academic discipline as "very important." The chair of the faculty senate at a large research university said that "on this campus I think a faculty member's sense of his community is a national one and not a university one. I have more in common with people in my field at UCLA, Berkeley, and other places, than I do with the guy whose field is not that different from mine, who's next door to my office (p. 237-238)."

Dressel et al. (1970) compiled extensive data on faculty sources of reference and related attitudes, priorities, and behaviors. They asked 1335 university faculty members, "In general, do you usually think of yourself primarily as a member of your university, your department, or your discipline?" While only 15 percent of the respondents indicated a primary identification with the university, the study found that these individuals were, as a group, vital in implementing the teaching and service responsibilities of the institution and possibly the most influential link between their central administrations and departmental faculty.

Findings of this study showed that faculty members with a university orientation:

> tended to value undergraduate instruction, applied research, and service to business and industry much more than did faculty with disciplinary orientations. They were more likely to be involved in service roles and be influential in national organizations. They produced more B.A. and M.A. degrees than did their colleagues...The faculty member with university orientation tended to discuss problems with the dean and other university administrators at the vice-presidential or presidential level, and saw his opinions as sought by deans and other administrators (Dressel et al., 1970, p. 64).

In contrast:

> (t)he orientatation to the discipline was negatively correlated with the amount of emphasis ... (within the department) placed upon undergraduate instruction, undergraduate advising, instruction of undergraduate nonmajors, expressing departmental views to the university, and furthering the careers of younger staff. There was also a negative correlation between the discipline orientation and the feeling that undergraduate instruction should be emphasized, but both graduate instruction and basic research were positively related (Dressel et al., 1970, p. 79).

In view of concern over a perceived decline in the quality of undergraduate education on American campuses (Association of American Colleges, 1985), and assertions that changing reward systems triggering a shift in academic values toward research and publication have undermined faculty morale and commitment (Bowen & Schuster, 1986), these findings lend support to calls for attention to the enhancement of faculty commitment to the institution such as that enunciated by the Carnegie Foundation (Boyer, 1987).

The AAHE's salute to the 322 faculty members cited for outstanding commitment produced a profile that was informal

and non-scientific, but nevertheless, of interest in this review. Members of that group tended to have been at their institutions a long time; their publication records as a whole were modest; they were committed to undergraduate teaching; they were vital, energetic activists with a sense of vision; they tended to exhibit success at gaining commitment to their enterprises from other faculty; and worked successfully with colleagues, from both the administration and the faculty (Eble, 1986).

One study reported interesting differences in faculty perceptions of affiliation according to academic department. In their 1970 study, Dressel et al. classified the responses to their "forced-choice" question regarding personal identification with the university, department, or discipline by department. Using a sample of faculty from seven selected departments, they determined that history and management department faculty tended to identify primarily with the university; chemistry and electrical engineering faculty tended to identify with their departments; and, faculty in psychology professed extremely strong identification with their discipline. Faculty in English failed to express a strong affiliation with either the university or the department, but were definitely not oriented toward their discipline as a source of identification. Similarly, faculty from mathematics departments failed to show a

definite preference, but reported low identification with the university.

Several studies have used empirical means to assess the relationships between organizational commitment and factors which were hypothesized to compete with the organization as a focus for employee identification, thereby influencing commitment negatively. While not addressing faculy commitment per se, studies examining three of these factors - professionalism, departmentalization, and unionism - could have relevance to the faculty setting.

One might suppose that academicians' high level of professionalism, as reflected in their affiliations with disciplines or subspecialties, could be antithetical to the development of commitment to a university. Zey-Farrell (1982) studied 230 faculty members at a major midwest university and found selected measures of professionalism to be a major predictor of intent to exit the university.

Bartol (1979) however, using five specific attitudinal dimensions (desire for professional autonomy, commitment to the profession, identification with the profession, professional ethics, and belief in collegial maintenance of standards) to characterize professionalism among computer specialists, determined no evidence of any negative outcome associated with professionalism due to inherent conflict between their professional status and their employing organizations. Professional attitudes were found, in her

study, to be related to greater rather than lesser degrees of organizational commitment, and to be a negative predictor of turnover.

Welsch and LaVan (1981) studied professional personnel in a Veterans Administration hospital and found that increased professional behavior had no impact on their measures of organizational commitment. They concluded that "concern about conflicting commitments to the organization and the profession appear to be unwarranted."

The relative separation and insularity of departments and schools within the university may also be seen as a challenge to the relevance of faculty commitment to the larger institution. Mowday et al. (1974) examined a somewhat related issue in a study of spatially separated branches of a large bank, and found that the higher performing branches were characterized by more positive levels of attitudes toward both their own branch and their parent institution. They went on to conclude that:

> ...the performance of spatially separated work units is related to a total set of employee attitudes that includes attitudes toward aspects of the organization that transcend the physical boundaries of the immediate work environment. Thus, for high levels of performance...it is important that employees have positive orientations toward such characteristics of the overall organization as its values, goals, reputation, and policies, together with positive attitudes toward such aspects of work in the branch as the work itself, supervision, and co-workers (pp. 245-246).

While the findings of Mowday et al. (1974) are included here for depth in reviewing relevant literature, their

application to academic departments must be balanced with the understanding that branches of a bank and departments within a university exercise different degrees of autonomy within the frameworks of their larger organizations, and that the relative autonomy of the academic department might alter the level of influence that the university may exert upon its members.

The unionization of faculty on many campuses may be seen as an additional source of competition for the loyalties of faculty members, drawing their concerns away from other foci of their work. Yet Larson and Fukami (1984) found, within a sample of unionized newspaper employees, that commitment to the union did not diminish commitment to the organization, and tended to amplify the relationship between organizational commitment and behavioral outcomes. While the researchers found organizational commitment significantly related to job performance, retention, and employee attendance, they found higher levels of the three outcomes among workers with a strong commitment to both the organization and the union.

On the basis of previous research, the high levels of education by which faculty members are characterized may be expected to negatively influence their propensity to develop feelings of institutional commitment. High negative correlations have consistently been produced between levels of commitment and education (Steers, 1977; Morris & Steers,

1980; Angle & Perry, 1981). Mowday et al. (1982) claimed that this inverse relationship may be influenced by higher expectations on the part of highly educated employees and the wider range of job alternatives to which they might be expected to have access.

Demographic Variables and Commitment

Research from other settings has suggested that relationships exist between a number of employee demographic characteristics and organizational commitment. Several of these may be applicable to faculty members in higher education, and therefore, merit investigation.

Age: Age has consistently been found to have a strong positive relationship with organizational commitment in varied work settings (e.g., with lower-level employees in business settings, Angle & Perry, 1981; with newspaper transportation employees, Fukami & Larson, 1984; with medical teams providing psychiatric care, Hrebiniak, 1974; with nonfaculty staff members of a major university, Morris & Sherman, 1981; with scientists working in a private laboratory, Sheldon, 1971; with hospital employees and with scientists and engineers, Steers, 1977; with federal managers, Stevens, Beyer, & Trice, 1978; with medical center employees, Welsch & LaVan, 1981).

Gender: Angle and Perry (1981), Grusky's research with private sector managers (1966), and Hrebiniak and Alutto's

study of elementary and secondary teachers and registered nurses (1972), all found gender to be significantly related to commitment. Female employees in their samples were more likely to espouse higher levels of commitment to their employing organizations than male employees. Stevens, Beyer, and Trice (1978), however, found no significant difference in commitment between male and female respondents.

Rank and Tenure: Sheldon (1971) found the professional position held by private laboratory scientists with the Ph.D. degree to be moderately associated with organizational commitment. Rank and tenure status might reflect similar indices of professional position among faculty in higher education.

Length of Employment: The length of time employed at the institution has been found by Fukami and Larson (1984), Morris and Sherman (1981), Salancik (1977), Sheldon (1971), Stevens, Beyer, and Trice, (1978), and Welsch and LaVan (1981) to significantly correlate with commitment.

Academic Discipline: The faculty study by Dressel et al. (1970) suggested that differing norms of identification with one's discipline, department, and institution exist among faculty in selected academic departments.

Summary

As this review has shown, the faculty work setting is unique. It is characterized by its own set of values, high

levels of professionalism and specialization, and expectations of high levels of individual autonomy. Faculty members often take offense at being considered "employees." There are indications that forces within the profession work against the development of institutional commitment by faculty.

Cultural traditions within higher education also set faculty apart from other professionals. Keller (1983) claimed that the American academic culture is characterized by a persistent bias and naivete about organizational necessities:

> ...(M)any professors, like Chinese mandarins, have a bias against business and commercial activities. They abhor organizational needs, and they detest bureaucracies. Like blacksmiths, cowboys, and bookstore proprietors, university scholars tend to be in modern society but not really part of it (p. 34).

Given this cultural milieu, it would seem unlikely that the sources of faculty commitment to the institution would mirror those of employees in other walks of life. However, in light of the scarcity of research into faculty commitment, it is reasonable to hypothesize that an instrument measuring commitment in non-educational settings could be used for the mesurement of faculty commitment and the assessment of its sources. If successful, the resultant data could be useful in creating an environment conducive to enhancing commitment.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study evaluated the application of an instrument used in non-educational settings to measure employee organizational commitment, to faculty members in higher education. In addition, it investigated the relationship of selected demographic characteristics to measured levels of faculty commitment, sought to identify specific factors as sources of feelings of commitment or alienation among faculty, and determined how these factors related to measured levels of commitment. Finally, it used these findings to assess the applicability of a model of commitment sources which was based on findings in other occupational fields.

Research Design

A survey, consisting of three sections, was used. The sections were: (1) the fifteen-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), (2) an open-ended question regarding specific factots contributing to feelings of commitment or alienation, and (3) demographic comparison items. A score on the fifteen items was calculated as an index of commitment level, and statistical procedures were employed to compare demographic items with OCQ scores. Content analysis was performed to relate responses to the

open-ended question to subcategories within four general categories of commitment sources proposed by Mowday et al. (1982).

Sample

The potential sample was limited to institutions identified by the Carnegie Classification as "doctoral-granting" universities (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1987). The question of commitment should be of particular interest to these institutions because they combine the undergraduate teaching emphasis of liberal arts and comprehensive colleges and the graduate emphasis of research universitites. In so doing, they accept a broad set of responsibilities as their mission. The selection of institutions with similar characteristics serves to minimize discrepancies in institutional backgrounds and demographics which could cause differing responses.

The 1984 Carnegie Foundation national surveys indicated that faculty in the "doctoral-granting" institutions might reasonably represent all higher education faculty in relation to the educational values of teaching and research. The percentage of respondents by institutional type in the Carnegie survey agreeing with the statement "my interests lie toward teaching as opposed to research" ranged from thirty-nine percent at research universities to eighty-five

percent at liberal arts colleges. The percentage of agreement by faculty at doctoral-granting universities was the same as the combined responses from all institutions - sixty-three percent (Boyer, 1987).

Institutions to be considered for the sample were limited to publicly-supported institutions in the southeastern United States, classified by the Carnegie Foundation as "Doctoral-Granting II." This group is defined:

> In addition to offering a full range of baccalaureate programs, the mission of these institutions includes a commitment to graduate education through the doctorate degree. They award annually 20 or more Ph.D. degrees in at least one discipline or 10 or more Ph.D. degrees in three or more disciplines (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1987, p. 22).

Nine universities, in six states (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia), met these criteria. All but one have reasonably comparable operating budgets and faculty sizes. That institution, with considerably greater resources and twice as many faculty members as any other institution in the group, was not considered. Another institution declined to participate due to an internal faculty survey planned for the same time period. The remaining seven universities represented four states. One institution from each state was randomly selected for inclusion.

A random selection of fifty percent of the fulltime, tenure-track, teaching faculty members at each of the four

institutions comprised the sample. This relatively large proportion insured a representative mix of faculty ranks and disciplines. Faculty lists and/or mailing labels for each institution were obtained from each campus' office for institutional research. Parttime and non-tenure track faculty were not included.

<u>The Instrument</u>

The survey instrument consisted of three sections. Each of these sections are described below.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ): According to Morris and Sherman (1981), the OCQ is the only measure of organizational commitment "to have substantial documentation relating it to behavioral outcomes in organizations, and it also has a substantial body of reliability and validity information available."

Mowday et al. (1982) provided norms and validity and reliability findings for the OCQ. The instrument was administered to 2563 employees working, in a wide variety of jobs, in nine different categories of public and private work organizations, a sample thought by the authors to be sufficently broad to tap a reasonably representative sample of the working population. Among the data generated were findings regarding the following.

OCQ Means and Standard Deviations:

..the mean level of commitment ranges from a low of 4.0 to a high of 6.1 across the nine samples. Mean scores are typically slightly above the mid-point on the 7-point Likert scale. Moreover, standard deviations [ranging from 0.64 to 1.30] indicate an acceptable distribution of responses within samples (pp. 221-222);

OCQ Internal Consistency Reliability:

...coefficient alpha is consistently high, ranging from .82 to .93, with a median of .90. These results compare favorably with most attitude measures (cf. P.C. Smith et al., 1969).

In addition, item analyses...indicated that each item had a positive correlation with the total score for the OCQ, with the range of average correlations being from .36 to .72, and a median correlation of .64...These results suggest that the 15 items of the OCQ are relatively homogeneous with respect to the underlying attitude construct they measure (pp. 222-223);

OCQ Test-retest Reliability:

...test-retest reliabilities demonstrated acceptable levels (from r=.53 to r=.75) over periods ranging from 2 months to 4 months. These data compare favorably to other attitude measures (e.g., job satisfaction) (p. 224);

OCQ Convergent and Discriminant Validity:

Convergent validity for the OCQ was suggested by positive correlations found between organizational commitment and other measures of both similar attitude constructs (e.g., sources of organizational attachment) and one of the component parts of the definition of organizational commitment (e.g., motivational force to perform). Discriminant validity was assessed by examining the relationships between commitment and satisfaction with one's career and specific aspects of the job and work environment...The OCQ was generally found to be more highly related to measures of similar as opposed to different attitudes and the relationships found between commitment and satisfaction were not so high as to lead one to conclude that they were measuring exactly the same attitude (p. 228).

The OCQ, as worded for use with university faculty, appears in Table 1. Commitment scores are determined by averaging responses to the fifteen items. For the purposes of this survey, the term "faculty" was used where "employees" appears on the original OCQ. The term "organization" was likewise replaced by "university" when the reference was solely to the respondent's present employer, and "institution" when the reference included other possible places of employment.

Demographic Variables: Several demographic variables were added, based on research findings on employees in non-educational settings. These included age, gender, tenure status, faculty rank, years on the faculty at one's present university, and academic discipline. A broader definition of academic discipline groupings (physical sciences and mathematics; biological, agricultural, and health sciences; applied sciences and engineering; social sciences and education; arts and letters; the professions) was used.

Items regarding the possession of a terminal degree in one's field, and number of years since receiving the most recent degree, were also included. Possession of the terminal degree appropriate to the discipline was included due to its importance in advancement in the academic profession. Similarly, time since attainment of one's most recent degree was selected as a variable because the rapid change in American higher education since World War II has

Table 1

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

For each statement, circle the number at the right which best describes the extent to which you agree or disagree:

1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this university be successful.
2. I talk up this university to my friends as a great institution to work for.
3. I feel very little loyalty to this university. (R)
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this university.
5. I find that my values and this university's values are very similar.
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this university.
7. I could just as well be working for a different institution as long as the type of work were similar. (R)
8. This university really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this university. (R)
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this institution to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this university indefinitely. (R)
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this university's policies on important matters relating to its faculty. (R)
13. I really care about the fate of this university.
14. For me this is the best of all possible institutions for which to work.
15. Deciding to work for this university was a definite mistake on my part. (R)

Source: Mowday et al. (1982)

Responses to each item are measured on a 7-point scale with scale point anchors labeled (1) strongly disagree; (2) moderately disagree; (3) slightly disagree; (4) neither disagree nor agree; (5) slightly agree; (6) moderately agree; (7) strongly agree. An "R" denotes a negatively-phrased and reverse-scored item.

been seen as a factor which has caused perceptions to differ among faculty who entered the field at differing points in time (e.g., Bonner, 1986).

Open-ended Question: An open-ended question allowed respondents to identify specific factors affecting feelings of commitment or alienation as follows:

> What specific factors, experiences, institutional policies or practices, or aspects of the university have affected your feelings of personal commitment to or alienation from your university?
>
> Source(s) of commitment (if any):
> Source(s) of alienation (if any):

Field Test of the Instrument

Because the OCQ portion of the instrument had not previously been used with faculty members in higher education, and because the open-ended questions were added, a field test of the instrument was conducted. One hundred and ten faculty members who had not been selected through the random sampling procedure, were sent the survey along with a cover letter and return envelope. Sixty-two faculty members (56%) responded.

The field test generated both an acceptable return rate, and the quantity and quality of response necessary to pursue the larger study. The only change resulting from the field test was minor rewording of the survey cover letter.

Data Collection

An administrator at each institution agreed to distribute survey materials to individuals in the sample. Return envelopes were marked with a mailing code so that nonrespondents could be identified for second mailings.

To ensure respondent anonymity, a third party opened returned envelopes and separated them from their contents. The mailing codes were marked on a master list to indicate the receipt of a response from that member of the sample.

Approximately six weeks after the initial mailing, a follow-up survey was sent to nonrespondents. Return envelopes in the follow-up mailing were not marked with a mailing code or any other identifier.

Data Preparation

A commitment score was derived for each respondent by calculating the mean score on the fifteen questions comprising the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire. A content analysis of the narrative responses was conducted as described by Holsti (1969). Responses were placed in distinct subcategories under Mowday's four general categories of personal characteristics, job factors, work experiences, and institutional structure.

Three independent coders (graduate students of education) placed the responses into the subcategories. Training, practice, and discussion were provided for the

coders to increase their rate of agreement in coding. After each coder analyzed responses from a single sample of surveys and an acceptable coefficient of inter-coder reliability was determined, each coder was given a randomly chosen one-third of the surveys.

Coders were instructed to notify the researcher if they were unable to code any responses within the four major categories suggested. None of the coders experienced this problem.

Using Scott's "pi" (Scott, 1955), an index of reliability which corrects for chance agreement between coders, inter-coder reliability was determined to be .802.

Categories and Subcategories Used for Content Analysis

Twenty-one subcategories of response were produced under Mowday et al.'s (1982) four categories of "personal characteristics," "job factors," "work experiences," and "institutional structure." These subcategories were defined by the researcher as follows:

Personal Characteristics

Investments - The expenditure of personal resources in a job, an institution, or a geographic area. Investments may be assets (such as the establishment of a reputation which permits special opportunities), or may be symptomatic of "stuckness" (being "stuck" at an institution because other alternatives are unavailable or unfeasible).

<u>Personal Values</u> - Predetermined value orientations that a respondent brings to a job due to their own personality, tendencies, or point of view.

<u>Other Personal Characteristics</u> - Personal characteristics other than "investments," or "personal values" affecting a respondent's commitment.

Job Factors

<u>Financial Rewards</u> - Tangible, quantifiable returns from the work performed.

<u>Personal Rewards</u> - Affective returns or satisfaction from the work experience.

<u>The Work Itself</u> - Specific features or aspects of a job description and day-to-day duties on the job.

<u>Physical Environment</u> - The perceived impact of the location or physical surroundings in which respondents experience their jobs.

<u>Psychological Environment</u> - The perceived impact of the affective "climate" of the work environment in which respondents experience their jobs.

<u>Support and Funding</u> - The provision of tools, resources, and personnel which are useful for performing one's job, or for improving the quality of one's performance.

<u>Other Job Factors</u> - Job factors, other than "financial rewards," "personal rewards," "the work itself," "physical environment," "psychological environment," or "support and funding," affecting a respondent's commitment.

Work Experiences

Colleagues - The impact of faculty or staff peers on a respndent's commitment - includes faculty members of differing rank, but not department heads or administrators at or above the rank of Dean.

Students - The impact of students or interaction with students on a respondent's commitment.

Leadership (Dept. / School) - The impact on a respondent's commitment of Deans and department heads under whom they work.

Leadership (Institutional) - The impact on a respondent's commitment of administrators beyond the department or school who make decisions affecting the institution as a whole.

Institutional Policy - The impact on a respondent's commitment of decisions made and courses of action taken by the institution according to predetermined policy or plans.

Personal Treatment - The impact on a respondent's commitment of their perception of the fairness and appropriateness of the manner in which they are treated as individuals.

Other Work Experiences - Work experiences, other than "colleagues," "students," "leadership (dept./school)," "leadership (institutional)," "institutional policy," or "personal treatment," affecting a respondent's commitment.

Institutional Structure

Shared Governance - The participation by respondents in decision-making and planning processes within their institutions.

Hierarchy - The various levels of administrative offices and divisions which administer the institution's day-to-day functions.

Institutional Standing - The rank, reputation, prestige, or priority of the institution relative to other colleges and universities.

Other Institutional Structure - Aspects of institutional structure other than "shared governance," "hierarchy," or "institutional standing" affecting a respondent's commitment.

Treatment of the Data

For analysis with these subcategories of response, OCQ scores were sorted into descending order. Three levels of commitment groupings were then identified by labelling the top third of the scores "high commitment," the middle third "moderate commitment," and the bottom third "low commitment."

The six research questions were addressed as follows. Results at the $p=.05$ level were accepted as statistically significant.

Research Question #1: Is the OCQ applicable to faculty members in higher education to measure commitment to the employing institution?

The number of citations of factors affecting commitment found in the open-ended question responses were tallied, and the proportions contributed by members of the high, moderate, and low commitment groups were determined. The same distribution of responses was determined for citations of alienation.

"The chi-square goodness-of-fit test," said Glass & Hopkins (1984), "can be used to determine whether observed proportions differ significantly from a priori or theoretically expected proportions (p. 282)." This test was used to determine whether the proportions of statements of commitment and alienation from each of the three commitment levels differed significantly, and whether the difference was in the direction logically suggested by the commitment score groupings.

If higher OCQ scores actually reflect higher levels of faculty commitment, then respondents scoring in the "high commitment" range should cite a significantly greater proportion of factors of commitment than respondents in the "low commitment" range. If lower OCQ scores actually reflect lower levels of commitment, then respondents in the "low commitment" range should cite a significantly greater

proportion of factors of alienation than respondents in the "high commitment" range.

Research Question #2: Do certain individual demographic characteristics relate to faculty members' levels of commitment to their current institution of employment?

Pearson "r" correlations between commitment score paired with age, with time since attainment of most recent degree, and with time served at institution (measured in years) were determined. A t-test was performed on each pairing to determine the magnitude of correlation required to achieve statistical significance.

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were used to test for significant systematic relationships between commitment scores and faculty rank, and between commitment scores and each of the six categories of academic discipline.

Rank-biserial correlations were computed between commitment scores and the dichotomous variables of gender, tenure status, and possession of terminal degree, and t-tests were employed to test for statistical significance.

Research Question #3: What other non-demographic factors contribute to feelings of personal commitment to and/or alienation from the current institution of employment? The number of times each factor was cited in the responses to the open-ended questions was tabulated. The overall percentages of respondents citing the factor

were used to identify major sources of commitment and/or alienation.

Research Question #4: Which factors contributing to personal feelings of commitment differ in relation to the measured level of commitment?, and

Research Question #5: Which factors contributing to personal feelings of alienation differ in relation to the measured level of commitment?

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was used to determine whether the frequency of each factor cited for commitment and alienation was significantly different across the three mean score groupings.

Research Question #6: Is the Mowday (1982) model identifying factors affecting employee commitment relevant to faculty in higher education?

Mowday et al. (1982) suggested four categories of factors affecting commitment in the workplace: personal characteristics, job-related factors, work experiences, and structural characteristics.

To determine if these categories were relevant with this faculty sample, subcategories of factors cited in narrative responses were grouped within each of these categories. The analysis for research questions #4 and #5 described above, was then repeated on the proportions of citations in each of the four categories by commitment level.

CHAPTER IV

SURVEY RESULTS

Response Rate

A total of 496 responses were received from the 886 faculty members to whom the survey was mailed, resulting in an overall response rate of 56 percent. Because it was not possible to identify faculty members on leave or sabbatical during the study, it is likely that the overall response represents slightly more than fifty-six percent of those actually receiving the survey. Of the 496 responses, 485 (55%) yielded usable data (eleven respondents declined to participate). Of those yielding data, 390 included responses to the open-ended question.

Determining an adequate response rate is subjective. One author stated "...a response rate of at least fifty percent is adequate for analysis and reporting. A response rate of at least sixty percent is good. And a response rate of seventy percent or more is very good (Babbie, 1973, p. 165)."

The rate of response for this study compares favorably with those reported in other studies about faculty members in higher education. Hill (1986) reported rates of forty-five percent in a study of faculty job satisfaction in New York, and forty-two percent in a similar study in

Pennsylvania (Hill, 1983). Locke, Fitzpatrick, and White (1983), studying job satisfaction and role clarity among faculty, reported a rate of thirty-five percent. Morrison and Friedlander (1978), studying faculty socialization experiences, reported a rate of fifty-four percent. Alden (1981), in an unpublished doctoral dissertation on faculty attitudes toward collective bargaining, reported a rate of twenty percent.

Demographics of Faculty Respondents

The 485 completed surveys provided the following demographic profile of the respondents:

Table 2

Demographics of Faculty Respondents

Age (N=455)	Mean = 45.28	StDev = 9.30
Gender (N=462)	Male = 66%	Female = 34%
Tenured (N=458)	Yes = 69%	No = 31%
Terminal degree (N=477)	Yes = 86%	No = 14%
Years since last degree (N=475)	Mean = 13.41	StDev = 8.37
Years at present univ. (N=476)	Mean = 11.31	StDev = 8.07
Academic discipline (N=476)	Phys Scis & Mathematics	(11.8%)
	Bio, Agr, & Health Scis	(9.9%)
	Appl Scis & Engineering	(7.4%)
	Social Scis & Education	(32.6%)
	Arts and Letters	(19.1%)
	The Professions	(19.3%)
Faculty rank (N=460)	Full Professor	(35.4%)
	Associate Professor	(29.3%)
	Assistant Professor	(30.0%)
	Instructor / Lecturer	(5.2%)
OCQ score (N=485)	Mean = 4.44	StDev = 1.17

Comparison of Commitment Scores of Faculty Respondents to those of Respondents from Other Occupations

Mowday, Porter, and Steers, (1982) reported Organizational Commitment Questionnaire norms generated from samples of 978 males and 1530 females in a wide variety of work settings. They showed median OCQ scores of about 4.8 for men and just over 5.0 for women. In addition, the authors cited means and standard deviations, by occupation, of scores on the OCQ generated from previous studies. Those scores for occupational groupings which were based on samples of over one hundred respondents may be seen in Table 3:

Table 3

OCQ Means and Standard Deviations by Occupation

Sample	N	Mean	StDev
Public employees	569	4.5	0.90
Classified univ. employees	243	4.6	1.30
Hospital employees	382	5.1	1.18
Bank employees	411	5.2	1.07
Telephone co. employees	605	4.7	1.20
Scientists & engineers	119	4.4	0.98
Auto company managers	115	5.3	1.05

Source: Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982, p. 222).

The mean faculty score of 4.44, though at the low end of these occupational grouping means, is not inconsistent. To illustrate, the highest mean score for an occupational grouping, 5.3, is 0.74 standard deviations above the mean for this faculty sample. With normally distributed scores,

23 percent of faculty scores would be expected to fall at or above the 5.3 level.

Margin of Error

To determine the sample size required to estimate a population mean, specifying an allowable margin of error (e), the following formula may be used:

$$n = \frac{(tS/e)^2}{1 + (1/N)(tS/e)^2},$$

where: n = required sample size;
t = the value on the ordinate of a standard normal distribution that corresponds to the desired level of confidence;
S = the estimated standard deviation of scores on the measure employed; and
N = the population size (Jaeger, 1984).

This formula may also be used to determine the margin of error inherent in the estimation of a population mean of size N, using a sample size of n, at a given level of confidence.

Using $p<.05$ as the minimum desired level of confidence, t becomes 1.96. The standard deviation of commitment scores from faculty respondents in this study, 1.17, will be used as the best estimator of the population standard deviation. The number of fulltime, tenure-track, teaching faculty at the four selected institutions (N) is 1771.

Using $t = 1.96$, $S = 1.17$, and an N of 1771, and given a usable response from 485 randomly-selected subjects within population, the resultant margin of error becomes 0.09.

That is, one can assume that the mean commitment score on the 7-point OCQ Likert scale, of all fulltime, tenure-track, teaching faculty at the four universities sampled, can be accurately estimated to within a margin of error of 0.09, ninety-five times out of one hundred with a sample of the size used in this study.

Using $p<.01$ as the level of confidence, $t=2.58$, and e becomes 0.12. To expect accurate estimation 999 times out of 1000 within a certain range of error ($p<.001$), $t=3.29$, and e becomes 0.15.

Findings Regarding Research Questions

Research Question #1: Is the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire applicable to faculty members in higher education to measure commitment to the employing institution?

The number of factors of commitment and alienation cited by each of the three groupings (high, moderate, and low commitment) is shown in Table 4. The overall number of responses citing sources of commitment or alienation was equally distributed among the three groupings (the X^2 statistic serves as a measure of the extent to which the three proportions differ from a theoretically even distribution). However, when these responses were divided into citations of commitment and alienation, the proportions contributed by the three groupings revealed a significant

relationship between commitment level and proportion of commitment sources cited.

The applicability of the OCQ as an index of faculty commitment was examined by cross-checking commitment levels against the frequency of commitment and alienation citations. This check was performed with the expectation that higher OCQ scores should reflect higher proportions of commitment sources cited, and lower OCQ scores should reflect higher proportions of alienation sources cited.

Table 4

Commitment and Alienation Sources Cited by Commitment Level

	# Responses by Commitment Level			Significance:	
	HI	MOD	LO	X^2	p<
Total number of commitment and alienation sources cited	533	584	535	0.00	NS
Sources of commitment	371	286	205	50.86	.001
Sources of alienation	162	298	330	57.67	.001

NS = not significant

Since the expected relationship did occur, it may be concluded that the OCQ does measure attitudes which are reflected in faculty members' narrative responses.

Research Question #2: Do certain individual demographic characteristics relate to faculty members' levels of commitment to their current institution of employment?

Correlation coefficients between institutional commitment scores and the variables of age, gender, tenure, possession of terminal degree, years since last degree, and years at present university were computed. A t-test for the null hypothesis that the correlation within the population is equal to zero (Glass & Hopkins, 1984, p. 301), was used to determine the minimum correlation coefficient necessary for statistical significance at the $p<.05$ level.

None of the six variables for which correlation coefficients were computed were found to be significantly related to OCQ scores, as shown:

Table 5

Correlation Coefficients of Survey Variables with Institutional Commitment Score

Variable	r (w/ commitment)	Significance
Age	.077	NS
Gender	.047	NS
Tenure status	.009	NS
Terminal degree	.017	NS
Years since degree	-.002	NS
Years at university	.023	NS

Magnitude of r necessary for statistical significance at p=.05 is +/- .092.

NS = not significant

For the variables of academic discipline and faculty rank, one-way ANOVAs were conducted in order to examine relationships with commitment scores. As seen in Table 6, faculty rank was found to be related to OCQ score. No

significant relationship was found between academic discipline and OCQ score.

A one-way ANOVA is an omnibus test of the hypothesis that the means of each population (in this case, each faculty rank) are equal. While a significant value of F suggests an inequality of mean commitment score somewhere among the four ranks, further analysis is required to determine where the inequality lies. Computer-generated 95 percent confidence intervals for the mean scores within each faculty rank (reproduced in Figure 1) clearly show that it is the mean commitment scores of respondents at the rank of associate professor that are significantly lower than the mean commitment scores of their colleagues at other ranks. A discussion of these findings appears in the following chapter.

Figure 1

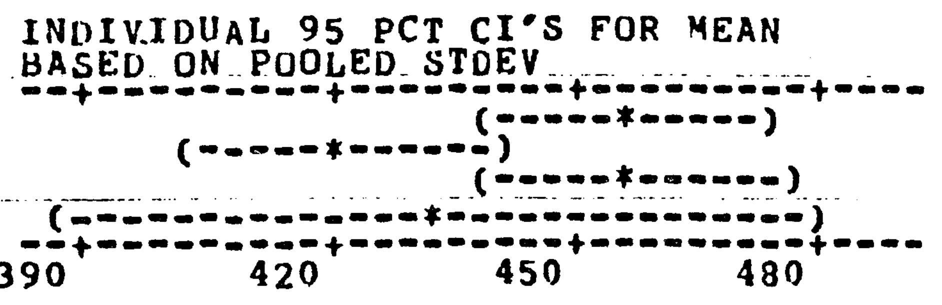
Analysis of Variance: Institutional Commitment vs. Faculty Rank

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ON Inst Cmt

SOURCE	DF	SS	MS	F
Fac Rank	3	130254	43418	3.25
ERROR	456	6098091	13373	
TOTAL	459	6228345		

LEVEL	N	MEAN	STDEV
1	163	457.3	114.8
2	135	420.6	115.7
3	138	457.3	114.8
4	24	432.1	125.8

POOLED STDEV = 115.6



Note: Level 1 = Full Professors
Level 2 = Associate Professors
Level 3 = Assistant Professors
Level 4 = Lecturers / Instructors

Table 6

Analyses of Variance between Institutional Commitment Scores vs. Six Groupings of Academic Discipline and vs. Four Levels of Faculty Rank

Source	DF	SS	MS	F
Acad. Discipline	5	118935	23787	1.74 (NS)
Error	470	6425433	13671	
Total	475	6544368		
Faculty Rank	3	130254	47418	3.25 *
Error	456	6098091	13373	
Total	459	6228345		

* $p < .025$
NS = not significant

Research Question #3: What other non-demographic factors contribute to feelings of personal commitment to and/or alienation from the current institution of employment?

Independent coders tallied the number of citations respondents provided for sources of commitment and alienation within each available subcategory of response. Over twenty percent of respondents cited their colleagues, their students, and the physical environment in which they perform their jobs as major sources of commitment. Over twenty percent cited their institution's policies, the administrative eadership of the university (beyond their own department or school), support and funding, and the financial rewards of their jobs as major sources of alienation from

their institutions. These figures appear in Tables 7 and 8, along with percentages of the total pool of respondents citing each subcategory.

Table 7

Commitment: Number of Citations and Percentage of Respondents per Subcategory

	Number of Citations	Percentage of Respondents
Personal Characteristics		
Investments	47	(12.1%)
Personal Values	37	(9.5)
Other Pers. Char'cs	5	(1.3)
Job Factors		
Phys. Environment	79	(20.3)
The Work Itself	68	(17.4)
Support / Funding	65	(16.7)
Psych'l Environment	58	(14.9)
Personal Rewards	41	(10.5)
Financial Rewards	15	(3.8)
Other Job Factors	4	(1.0)
Work Experiences		
Colleagues	131	(33.6)
Students	93	(23.8)
Leader'p (Dept/Sch)	66	(16.9)
Inst'l Policy	52	(13.3)
Leader'p (Inst'l)	35	(9.0)
Personal Treatment	13	(3.3)
Other Work Exps.	1	(0.3)
Institutional Structure		
Shared Governance	28	(7.2)
Inst'l Standing	20	(5.1)
Hierarchy	0	(0)
Other Inst'l Struc.	4	(1.0)

Table 8

Alienation: Number of Citations and Percentage of Respondents by Subcategory

	Number of Citations	Percentage of Respondents
Personal Characteristics		
Personal Values	5	(1.3%)
Investments	3	(0.8)
Other Pers. Char'cs	1	(0.3)
Job Factors		
Support / Funding	97	(24.9)
Financial Rewards	88	(22.6)
The Work Itself	45	(11.5)
Psych'l Environment	35	(9.0)
Personal Rewards	26	(6.7)
Phys. Environment	19	(4.9)
Other Job Factors	10	(2.6)
Work Experiences		
Inst'l Policy	129	(33.1)
Leader'p (Inst'l)	106	(27.2)
Personal Treatment	39	(10.0)
Colleagues	31	(7.9)
Leader'p (Dept/Sch)	31	(7.9)
Students	18	(4.6)
Other Work Exps.	5	(1.3)
Institutional Structure		
Hierarchy	39	(10.0)
Shared Governance	26	(6.7)
Inst'l Standing	26	(6.7)
Other Inst'l Struc.	11	(2.8)

Research Question #4: Which factors contributing to personal feelings of commitment differ in relation to the measured level of commitment?

Citations of commitment sources were compared across the groupings of "high (HI)," "moderate (MOD)," and "low (LO)" commitment levels. The chi-square goodness-of-fit

test was used for each subcategory to determine the likelihood that an inequality in the number of citations across the three commitment levels might be attributable to chance.

Highly committed faculty were significantly more likely to cite personal investments, support and funding, colleagues, leadership at the departmental or school level, leadership at the institutional level, shared governance, and institutional standing as sources of commitment than were less committed faculty. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Cited Sources of Commitment

	# Responses by Commitment Level			Significance:	
	HI	MOD	LO	X^2	p<
Personal Characteristics					
Investments	25	15	7	10.81	.01
Personal Values	12	15	10	0.74	NS
Other	3	1	1		
Job Factors					
Financial Rewards	7	6	2	2.78*	NS*
Personal Rewards	19	12	10	3.61	NS
The Work Itself	20	28	20	1.36	NS
Phys. Environment	30	25	24	1.11	NS
Psych'l Environment	22	21	15	1.45	NS
Support / Funding	33	18	14	10.01	.01
Other	2	2	0		
Work Experiences					
Colleagues	58	42	31	9.04	.02
Students	25	38	30	1.95	NS
Leader'p (Dept/Sch)	35	18	13	12.87	.01
Leader'p (Inst'l)	20	6	9	10.08	.01
Inst'l Policy	23	16	13	3.33	NS
Personal Treatment	8	3	2	5.02*	NS*
Other	0	1	0		
Institutional Structure					
Shared Governance	14	12	2	8.79	.02
Hierarchy	0	0	0	-	-
Inst'l Standing	14	5	1	13.84	.001
Other	1	2	1		

NS = not significant
* fewer than 20 (5% of sample) citations; results not reported in text of this study

Research Question #5: Which factors contributing to personal feelings of alienation differ in relation to the measured level of commitment?

To address research question #5, the procedures described for research question #4 were repeated using respondents' citations of sources of alienation from their universities. Citations were compared across the commitment levels and the chi-square goodness-of-fit test was used for each subcategory to determine the likelihood that an inequality in the number of citations across the three commitment levels might be attributable to chance.

Less committed faculty were significantly more likely to cite the work itself, the psychological environment, leadership at the institutional level, institutional policy, and personal treatment as sources of alienation than were more committed faculty. Citations of support and funding were also related to commitment level, but the majority of these citations were from respondents in the "moderate commitment" category. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Cited Sources of Alienation

	# Responses by Commitment Level			Significance:	
	HI	MOD	LO	X^2	p<
Personal Characteristics					
Investments	1	2	0	1.88*	NS*
Personal Values	4	1	0	5.40*	NS*
Other	1	0	0		
Job Factors					
Financial Rewards	22	36	30	2.64	NS
Personal Rewards	10	9	7	0.57	NS
The Work Itself	7	22	16	6.75	.05
Phys. Environment	2	11	6	5.83*	NS*
Psych'l Environment	5	7	23	17.33	.001
Support / Funding	14	53	30	21.24	.001
Other	0	5	5		
Work Experiences					
Colleagues	8	7	16	5.08	NS
Students	2	8	8	3.80	NS
Leader'p (Dept/Sch)	7	8	16	4.99	NS
Leader'p (Inst'l)	19	36	51	14.52	.001
Inst'l Policy	23	43	63	18.71	.001
Personal Treatment	9	10	20	6.05	.05
Other	1	3	1		
Institutional Structure					
Shared Governance	5	11	10	2.13	NS
Hierarchy	11	13	15	0.62	NS
Inst'l Standing	11	8	7	1.14	NS
Other	0	5	6		

NS = not significant
* fewer than 20 (5% of sample) citations; results not reported in text of this study

Research Question #6: Is the Mowday (1982) model identifying factors affecting employee commitment relevant to faculty in higher education?

The numbers of responses for all the subcategories within each category were added together to provide totals for each of Mowday's four proposed classes of commitment sources as displayed in Table 11, and alienation sources, as displayed in Table 12. The chi-square test was then applied to these four categories as sources of commitment, and again as sources of alienation, in the same way that it had been applied to the subcategories.

Each of the four categories reveal significantly different proportions of citations by respondents of differing commitment levels. This finding supports the use of these four categories as sources of faculty commitment, and suggests that these categories are applicable in this setting as they are among employees in business and industry. Only personal characteristics (due to scarcity of data) and institutional structure, with relatively similar frequencies of citation across all commitment levels, contradict this trend.

Table 11

<u>Categories of Cited Sources of Commitment</u>

	# Responses by commitment level			Significance:	
	HI	MOD	LO	X^2	p<
Personal Characteristics	40	31	18	8.37	.02
Job Factors	133	112	85	10.89	.01
Work Experiences	169	124	98	21.11	.001
Intitutional Structure	29	19	4	18.62	.001

Table 12

<u>Categories of Cited Sources of Alienation</u>

	# Responses by commitment level			Significance:	
	HI	MOD	LO	X^2	p<
Personal Characteristics	6	3	0	6.17*	.05*
Job Factors	60	143	117	29.12	.001
Work Experiences	69	115	175	48.11	.001
Intitutional Structure	27	37	38	1.84	NS

NS = not significant
* fewer than 20 (5% of sample) citations; results not reported in text of this study

Summary of Findings

Scores on the fifteen-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire were strongly consistent with the frequency of commitment citations in the narrative responses. It may be concluded, then, that the OCQ is applicable to faculty samples.

Scores on the OCQ were analyzed to determine whether they were significantly related to eight personal demographic variables. A relationship existed between commitment scores and the variable of faculty rank, with associate professors' scores significantly lower than those of their other faculty colleagues.

Within four categories of employee commitment sources proposed by Mowday et al. (1982), over twenty percent of respondents cited their colleagues, their students, and the physical environment in which they perform their jobs as major sources of commitment to their institutions. Over twenty percent of respondents cited their institution's policies, the administrative leadership of the university (beyond their own department or school), support and funding, and the financial rewards of their jobs as major sources of alienation from their institutions.

Based upon their OCQ scores, respondents were assigned to groups reflecting high, moderate, or low levels of institutional commitment. The number of citations of each

subcategory of response were compared across the three levels.

Among cited sources of commitment, significant discrepancies in the proportions of citations by commitment level were found for the subcategories of institutional standing ($p<.001$); investments, support and funding, leadership at the departmental or school level, leadership at the institutional level ($p<.01$); colleagues and shared governance ($p<.02$). Among cited sources of alienation, significant discrepancies were found for the subcategories of psychological environment, support and funding, leadership at the institutional level, and institutional policy ($p<.001$); and the work itself and personal treatment ($p<.05$).

When the same analysis was applied to the four larger categories proposed by Mowday et al., significant discrepancies in the proportions of citations by commitment level were found for all four - personal characteristics, job factors, work experiences, and institutional structure - as sources of commitment. Only job factors and work experiences revealed significant discrepancies in the numbers of citations by respondents in the high, moderate, and low commitment groups, when viewed as sources of alienation.

All the factors cited as sources of commitment which were significantly associated with respondents' commitment

levels revealed the greatest frequency of citation among highly committed respondents. Most of the factors cited as sources of alienation which were significantly associated with respondents' commitment levels were most frequently cited by respondents in the low commitment group. Only within the subcategories of support / funding and institutional standing as sources of alienation, were the greatest number of citations made by those respondents in the moderately committed group.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This discussion will first address the six research questions which were investigated. The status of faculty commitment to the institution at the universities sampled will be discussed, and prominent broad areas of concern will be drawn from the findings. Based upon the findings, the relevance of organizational commitment theory to the sample of this study will be evaluated, and possible areas for further inquiry will be suggested.

Discussion: Research Questions

Research Question #1: Is the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire applicable to faculty members in higher education to measure commitment to the employing institution?

A comparison of faculty OCQ scores and responses to the open-ended question seeking specific factors contributing to feelings of commitment or alienation revealed that the former are logically related to the latter. Since OCQ scores are valid indices of tendencies to view the university work environment as promoting commitment or provoking alienation, the OCQ may be useful in assessing faculty commitment. This finding also lays a foundation for the use of the OCQ in addressing research questions #2 through #6.

Evidence that the questionnaire is valid for use with faculty supports the following findings, since they result from such an application.

Research Question #2: Do certain individual demographic characteristics relate to faculty members' levels of commitment to their current institution of employment?

The relationship found in this study between commitment and faculty rank is of particular interest. The analysis of survey responses revealed not only that respondents at the rank of associate professor professed significantly lower levels of institutional commitment than did their colleagues, but that the means and standard deviations of commitment scores for full and assistant professors were identical. While the mean commitment scores for lecturers / instructors were also lower than those of assistant and full professors, the small number of respondents in this category makes generalizations inappropriate.

Determining causes for the U-shaped distribution of commitment scores among the faculty ranks of assistant, associate, and full professor, is beyond the scope of this study. However, one might surmise that faculty at the assistant level could find sources of commitment in the promise of advancement and opportunity, and full professors could find commitment in its realization. Faculty at the

associate level may be caught in a particularly stressful situation in attempting to realize their goals.

From an examination of narrative responses, it appears that value congruence may be a key to the lower scores of associate professors. Among every group of new faculty members, some degree of attrition might be expected due to an incongruence of values between the members and the institution at large. Newer faculty members may not have faced such conflict, and it is likely that only those who successfully resolve such conflicts survive to full professorship. A sample of associate professors will include some who accept the political realities of their university as well as some who never will, and who may be experiencing value conflict that will ultimately cause them to leave the institution.

An assistant professor who had been at her institution for just over one year cited "the promise of tenure and merit pay" as sources of commitment, adding:

> The level of support received from our chair, staff, colleagues, and students has affected my feelings of commitment. In addition, the President's opening convocation remarks were very inspiring in that he commented that "the faculty members are our most important asset." The day-to-day expressions of appreciation by our outstanding chairperson and the faculty and students in our department make me excited about (the institution)! I haven't experienced any (sources of alienation) - I really like my new job! It's great!

However, a tenured associate professor reported the following feelings of alienation (names of specific

universities in this and following quotes are replaced by the words "this institution"):

> When I came to (this institution) I perceived great potential here for a top-notch program in undergraduate education. I also hoped to do a moderate amount of research work, but not to the detriment of doing a good job in the classroom. Initially I was very committed to (this institution) because we had an administration with high integrity who channelled our efforts into programs we could do successfully with our limited resources. Unfortunately, with the resources of the university being spent on more and more layers of administration, I have found my loyalty declining every year ... About half the department members carry extra-heavy responsibilities so that our "prima-donnas" can have free time for their research projects. Needless to say, they receive the financial rewards while the rest of us settle for minimal salary increases. I have enjoyed teaching (at this institution), but I am in the process of evaluating employment alternatives.

Regardless of the causes behind the disparity in commitment levels between associate-level faculty and their colleagues, it appears that at the institutions surveyed, they represent a sector of the faculty population that is at risk and merit special attention and encouragement. Clear criteria for and objectivity in promotion and tenure decisions appears to be especially crucial here. Giving consideration for teaching and service excellence in such decisions would provide a source of motivation and commitment for many of the respondents in this study.

Research Question #3: What other non-demographic factors contribute to feelings of personal commitment to

and/or alienation from the current institution of employment?

Three sources of commitment - colleagues, students, and physical environment - and four sources of alienation - institutional policy, institutional leadership, support and funding, and financial rewards - were each cited by more than twenty percent of the respondents.

Among those respondents citing "colleagues" as a source of commitment, thirty-six percent cited, more specifically, interpersonal relations with their colleagues, and twenty-six percent cited the professional quality of their colleagues. Among those respondents citing "students" as a source of commitment, twenty-three percent cited the quality of their students, and fifteen percent cited the personal characteristics or demographics of the student population. Among those respondents citing "physical environment" as a source of commitment, sixty-one percent cited the geographic location of the institution, fourteen percent cited institutional demographics (such as class size or size of enrollment), and thirteen percent cited working conditions.

Among those respondents citing "institutional policies" as a source of alienation, twenty-eight percent cited criteria for promotion and tenure, twenty-two percent cited relative emphasis between teaching and research, nineteen percent cited academic standards, and sixteen percent cited institutional mission. It is important to note that the

distinction between respondents' concern over teaching and research emphases as a matter of educational principle or as a criterion for advancement was often unclear. One might assume that many who cited teaching / research emphases as a source of alienation would also qualify for inclusion under the "criteria for promotion and tenure" theme.

Among those respondents citing "institutional leadership" as a source of alienation, thirty-nine percent cited administrators' priorities and values, and twenty-three percent cited the professional quality of administrators. Among those respondents citing insufficient "support and funding" as a source of alienation, eighteen percent cited facilities and equipment, eighteen percent cited research support, fourteen percent cited staffing, and fourteen percent cited funding from the state.

The most frequently cited sources of commitment, therefore, tended to reflect an appreciation of the quality of individuals on the campus - both students and colleagues - and interpersonal relationships with those individuals. The most frequently cited sources of alienation focused mainly on priorities and values in institutional management and administration. These issues and their implications will be addressed in the "Conclusions" section of this chapter.

Research Questions #4 and #5: Which factors contributing to personal feelings of commitment (RQ #4) and alienation (RQ #5) differ in relation to the measured level of commitment?

Research question #4 might be paraphrased "what makes the highly committed so committed?" In the previous chapter, several categories of response were identified to answer this question. These included personal investments, leadership at both the departmental or school and the institutional levels, colleagues, shared governance, and institutional standing. To answer the question "what makes the less committed so alienated? (RQ #5)," the factors identified were the work itself, psychological environment, institutional policy, colleagues, leadership at both levels, and personal treatment. Support and funding was identified as a factor which was most often cited by respondents in the "moderate commitment" group.

An examination of themes within these subcategories provides a more specific view of how the frequency of citation varied across commitment levels. Fourteen respondents noted that being alumni of the institution at which they are employed (coded under "investments") was, for them, a source of commitment. Twelve of the fourteen had scores in the "high commitment" range.

Under "institutional standing," fourteen respondents cited the prestige of their institution as a source of

personal commitment. Of these, eleven were in the "high commitment" group.

Among sources of alienation, the perceived lack of a sense of campus community (coded under "psychological environment") was more prevalent among the less committed respondents. Under "institutional policies," criteria for promotion and tenure were cited four times by the "high commitment" group, ten times by the "moderate commitment" group, and twenty-two times by the "low commitment" group. Under "leadership (institutional)," administrators' priorities and values were frequently cited, but seldom by highly committed respondents. Citations of this theme were equally distributed among the "moderate" and "low" commitment groups.

Of particular interest in these findings are the "colleagues" and the "leadership" categories, since they appear to be sources of both commitment for the highly committed and alienation for the less committed. Excerpts from respondents who cited these as positive factors and from those who saw them negatively, help to provide further insight.

One highly committed faculty member cited, "respect for the senior faculty members who reflect a great love for this institution and their work," adding:

> I've been lucky. I came here twenty years ago as a new chairman of the department. There were several faculty members in the department who were

> former students here and came back to teach after receiving their graduate degrees elsewhere. They were all outstanding faculty members with a strong commitment and love for this school and the people of the service area ... I have great respect and admiration for these senior faculty members.

Conversely, a newer and less committed faculty member at the same institution claimed:

> Both within my department and the university as a whole, there is an unstated assumption that junior faculty must "serve time" before being given any share in the decision-making processes. I came here with administrative experience at a different institution, but as far as my colleagues can see, I am straight out of graduate school.

One tenured, veteran, but less committed faculty member stated:

> ...my university is still dominated by its founding faculty and administrators. These individuals have made an institution in their own arrogant and anti-intellectual image and have made it difficult for newcomers to feel welcome. Newcomers in this case includes those who have been at the university for 20 years as well as (those who have been here) two years - all those who are not founders.

Another reported alienation from the opposite point of view:

> Much of my present alienation is due to my colleagues. Especially the recent hires - a bunch of individualistic me-firsters with no sense of community. I stopped being their union steward because, a) no one would help, and b) I just couldn't respect them anymore.

However, a newer assistant professor reported that she finds allies among her colleagues who make her highly committed:

> The energy, quality, and values of my department influence my feelings of commitment to the university. We act as a unit to influence university policies and practices that are not in accord with our values.

This same importance of a sense of partnership and cooperation is cited throughout the survey references to leadership. The following excerpts are typical of many who find the style of leadership exercised at their institution to be a source of commitment:

> The dean of our school has made a big difference in my feeling of commitment to (this institution). By example he is such a positive and committed person who takes time to walk through our halls, talk with faculty, have lunch with them, and express his appreciation.

> My dean backs his people to the hilt when they can substantiate their position, even in the face of the President, Vice President, and board.

> I can schedule a meeting with the President any time he has an opening on his schedule just to chat or bring something to him. He listens.

The following are illustrative of many who cite the leadership at their institution as a source of alienation:

> (My) Sources of alienation include feeling as though I am occasionally considered as a "warm body" used to fill in a gap in course assignments, etc. The individual responsible for these assignments seems to pay little attention to the particular strengths of faculty in assigning courses.

> There has been a change in the university in the last few years with a proliferation of administrators, each of whom must demand something more from the faculty to justify his own position. For a time there was a widely expressed sense of alienation as the faculty began to perceive themselves as "serfs" to the administrators' "lord of the manor" with huge salaries and fewer academic qualifications.

In addition to citing colleagues and leadership, survey respondents furnished considerable detail on many of the

other factors which were found to be significantly related to commitment levels. Excerpts which are particularly illustrative regarding these factors, appear below.

Regarding students:

> I think the commuter aspect of the school, the lower admission standards, and the state/area from which the students come here are all factors that motivate the teachers to strive to work harder with the students - to get the students to an acceptable level in their education. It can be an alienating factor to some, but to me it is quite a motivating factor. Many of the students work hard and pay for their own education - I feel that many are dedicated. I admire the caliber of student here.

> (My students) are generally polite and eager to work - with an occasional hard push. High school does not always prepare these people for our kind of study, so it is interesting to watch them develop over the two to four years we have them. Knowing that every semester there will be two or three whose "lights" will come on is a tremendous source of inspiration to me.

Regarding personal investments:

> My sources of commitment include the need to provide stability for my family. I do not wish to change positions for another decade in order to allow my children to develop a sense of home.

> As half of an academic couple, the university provided me with an essential teaching opportunity and I have stayed with it ever since.

Regarding institutional standing:

> (T)he place of this university within the state system is a problem in that our colleagues in the "major" institutions seem to be at an advantage ... they have been granted funding for planning new facilities while we put up with leaky roofs!

Regarding shared governance:

This university is so young that I have felt that I have had a significant opportunity, through committee work, to help mold and shape it. I have been a part of its growth toward a national reputation ... I have been given much flexibility at this institution and this in turn has allowed me to achieve in my own field. Now I want to see the university achieve recognition as I have.

Regarding financial rewards:

I can <u>not</u> support my family on my salary. I have three children in college and this school offers no help with tuition for faculty. I will leave as soon as I find a position that pays a single parent enough to support her family.

Regarding the psychological environment:

(T)he main source of alienation I perceive is the presence of an adversarial relationship between administration and faculty. Faculty are, by and large, treated (and, I think, treat themselves) as a commodity - to be traded, bought, and sold.

No college environment - like working in a 9-to-5 job - low student interest beyond class - too much of the "community college" environment.

Regarding institutional policies:

This is an institution in transition between being a teachers college and being a professional and research university. I am a researcher. As things change, I find myself increasingly happy.

The promotion and tenure process is certainly alienating. Granted, research needs to be a priority, but it has become the only criteria. By trying to be a big-time research university, we risk losing what we have been doing very well - providing good programs for a certain portion of students wanting college degrees.

> The heavy emphasis on research, production, and publication rather than on teaching, even though we are still predominantly a teaching institution, is a major source of alienation. This is reflected in the lack of support for instruction and for faculty development in the area of teaching. It seems that everything is dumped in the laps of those faculty members who care and who strive to meet the needs of their students - even as it costs them in promotion, tenure, and salary increases.

While support and funding was a subject of frequent citation, most were from respondents whose commitment scores placed them in the "moderate commitment" group. One possible reason for this might be that financial support and funding may be less emotionally "loaded" than some other factors, and therefore, less likely to affect expressed commitment in extreme ways. Nevertheless, negative citations regarding funding were no less fervent than any others:

> The financial resources of the university and in turn, the school are totally inadequate. The expectations of the university are great and the aspirations of the faculty are generally admirable, but ... (i)n our school two secreatries type for <u>40</u> faculty, supplies are short to non-existent and every expense (including phone and postage) is examined and often questioned.

> The administration provides very little support for research. We have no secretary. No travel money to speak of. No support for grant applications. Working conditions are poor. Air conditioning is turned off at night and on weekends.

In summary, the most critical issue differentiating more and less committed faculty appears to be autonomy. Simply stated, factors related to commitment are those which

support and facilitate faculty members' own objectives, and factors related to alienation are those through which the institution imposes limitations on them. This issue and its implications will be addressed in the "Conclusions" section of this chapter.

Research Question #6: Is the Mowday (1982) model identifying factors affecting employee commitment relevant to faculty in higher education?

In Chapter II of this study, Mowday et al.'s (1982) model of employee commitment was described. In short, the model proposed that four classifications of factors provide antecedents to employee commitment: personal characteristics, role-related characteristics, work experiences, and characteristics of institutional structure.

The methodology employed in this study may have ensured that the largest proportion of the cited sources of commitment or non-commitment (alienation) would fall under the classification of work experiences. It seems likely that tangible incidents may be more readily recalled and more easily described by survey recipients.

Indeed, six of twelve factors cited by respondents which were found to be significantly related to commitment or alienation, may be considered as "work experiences" (colleagues, leadership in department or school, leadership of institution, institutional policy, support and funding, and peronal treatment). However, each of the other three

classifications were represented as well by significant factors: "personal characteristics" by the factors of age and personal investments, job-related characteristics" by the factors of faculty rank and psychological envionment, and "institutional structure" by the factors of shared governance and institutional standing. In addition, when responses were grouped by classification, each of the four groups were revealed to relate significantly to commitment and/or alienation. It would appear that despite the academic profession's unique set of norms, values, and practices, faculty respondents at the four institutions sampled in this study develop feelings of commitment to their employing institutions as a result of factors similar to those which influence commitment for workers in other work settings. The impact of institutional policy (particularly in regard to emphases on teaching and research) may have a special influence on the development of institutional commitment in academe, because of its wide-reaching effect on institutional values, culture, and opportunities for advancement.

Conclusions: The State of Faculty Commitment

It is clear that for faculty, commitment to the employing institution must compete with commitment to a number of other entities. The results of this study, not surprisingly, yielded a variety of statements by faculty

members testifying to multiple foci of their professional commitment. Most prominent among these were citations of commitment to one's department:

> I don't feel much commitment to this university at all. I don't perceive the university very much as an entity. I feel a <u>great</u> deal of commitment to my department. It feels much more real to me than the university. I know the people in my department care about me and we share many similar values;

> My strongest commitment is to the department for which I work and to the leader of the department ... They have had the strongest effect on my feelings about the university. To a greater extent than I think reasonable, the university as a whole has not supported us, and in some instances has made our job much tougher than it should be;

> My loyalty and commitment are to the department and the school to a significantly greater extent than the university. I see opportunities within my institution as limited; therefore, to get a significant salary increase, I'd have to go elsewhere;

and to one's profession, specialization, or career:

> I believe the major source of motivation and commitment are to one's profession and career as related to research and teaching. The university is "good" insofar as it facilitates professional and career development. The university benefits in return by heightened excellence in faculty performance.

Several respondents indicated that the norms of the academic profession either discourage or preclude commitment to the institution:

> Professional training instills a commitment to the field rather than to any one organization; at least my training did. Academics usually move several times in their career, as I have already.

> The lack of strong commitment to (this institution) is in part a personal choice to not latch my identity on a particular work environment ... as a currently untenured faculty member, I may find myself elsewhere after tenure review. In the interest of minimizing emotional danger, I have avoided complete commitment.

> I view myself as a professional engaged in a professional capacity. I am indifferent to what goes on here except as it impacts upon me as I perceive my environment. It really is a very good place to work in the sense that they leave me alone ... I have no contact with the larger university.

Yet, despite assertions to the contrary, there was much evidence within this population to confirm Mowday et al.'s (1982) statement that commitment to the employing organization as a whole is a viable and powerful entity, regardless of other commitments that an individual may profess. At the institutions sampled, many faculty appear to view their own professional roles in the context of a larger and broader institutional endeavor. Indeed, the mean Organizational Commitment Questionnaire score for the 886 respondents in this study, though at the lower end, was not inconsistent with mean commitment scores of workers in other fields. In light of recent concern over the state of faculty commitment, these findings may be somewhat surprising. Even among many faculty members who expressed considerable discontent with aspects of their institution, there appears to be a basic degree of commitment to the enterprise as a whole.

The following excerpts are representative of several from faculty members who see no conflict in their multiple commitments to their own careers, their own fields, and their institution:

> I have attempted to integrate myself with the university. That is to say, I have made intentional moves to serve in a variety of capacities -- as chair of a department, faculty senator, president of faculty senate, and service on university committees. All this to become a _part_ of the institution. It (the university) has offered a supportive atmosphere and treats faculty, students, and staff fairly and consistently.

> ...I'm very pleased to be of service to the university as a faculty member. I've always given 100 percent in what I believe, so I give all I can back to a school that has provided me so much. I believe that what one gets out of something is proportional to what one puts into it (that's what I tell my students), therefore, I give my university all I've got.

Conclusions: Four Critical Issues

One's perception of autonomy appears to be the key factor differentiating more and less committed faculty. When faculty members perceive that they are free to pursue their own academic priorities, higher levels of commitment are found. When that freedom is perceived to be constrained by institutionally-imposed limitations, alienation is likely to be expressed. This perception of freedom involves both the "practical" freedom of an unregimented work style, few tasks which compete with one's own priorities, and provision of tools with which to advance one's own work; and the

"psychological" or academic freedom in which faculty are not only permitted but encouraged to follow their own scholarly agenda without institutional constraints or political pressure. The following excerpt clearly points to the impact of these perceptions:

> When I came to this university, I was permitted to work in my own way. I have found this to be a tremendous advantage. By the time the overall university policy changed, I had received tenure and the new policies did not apply to me. I enjoy continuing to work as I have in the past, escaping the increased bureaucracy and the proliferation of "make work" activities.

Perhaps no other issue is as critical to faculty commitment as that of autonomy, because no other issue is as basic to the cultural assumptions which define the profession. The academic profession incorporates a unique set of expectations among which faculty autonomy is paramount. It is this expectation which provides the basis for the exchange relationship which attracts faculty members to the profession. The findings of this study strongly suggest that the compromise of autonomy has a negative influence on faculty commitment.

Throughout the responses, there is a clear sense that impersonality in the university environment is a second key to reduced commitment on the campuses surveyed. Respondents often expressed feelings of not "belonging," of not experiencing a sense of campus unity, or of being unappreciated. The following examples illustrate this point.

> In the past, the administrators seemed to care about the faculty in many facets - knew you by your name, encouraged and promoted professional development, and emphasized good effective teaching. Research was most important but teaching came first. Frequent memos were received from administrators when you wrote an article or a book or received an honor. This personal relationship built good rapport for me with this university.

> Management at the top level seems uninterested in educational values which give me satisfaction, purpose, and reward. There are so many little ways in which the President and Vice Presidents could show concern and interest. Their lack of imagination and/or resourcefulness indicate to me all those things education is dedicated to overcome.

> In recent years, some directions the university and my department have taken have not been directions that I would choose ... the "bigness," the "business model," the separation of the university into three "camps" - students, faculty, and administration - the emphasis on money, the aloofness of administrators, have all brought about changes that make the university very different from the place I chose years ago.

Peters and Waterman (1982) examined the most productive corporate entities in America and deduced general principles which were common among them. One of the most prominent principles they cited again and again was a "people-oriented" approach within the entire organization which creates an "extended family" environment. They described a hands-on style of management within many corporations (such as Hewlett-Packard's policy of "management by wandering around") and the apparent absence of a rigidly followed chain of command. Despite the many obvious differences which distinguish the university setting from the corporate

setting, there appears to be a need expressed by many faculty members for the same style of leadership and sense of belonging provided in these outstanding corporations. While increased attention has been paid over the past several years to people-oriented leadership in the corporate world, many of the faculty members in this study's survey have found their university moving in the opposite direction.

A great deal of the alienation cited as the result of an impersonal work environment may have at its root the stress and strain of a time of institutional transition. Many doctoral granting-level universities are undergrowing rapid growth and change, some from a previous teacher's college status to a growing emphasis on research and graduate education. The organizational "saga" which Clark (1970) described as encapsulating deeply rooted institutional missions and mythologies, is being redefined at many institutions, with the result that some faculty members find long-cherished values systems being challenged. Claimed one respondent, "no one has the guts to stop the process of vain emulation of major research universities."

This congruence or incongruence of personal values and perceived institutional values is the third broad area of concern that emerges from the study. The following excerpts are examples of differing agreement in values.

> I find a great division between the values of most of the faculty and the values of the administration ... Many (faculty) now feel that they are simply pawns on a chessboard - or worse.

> I feel very loyal to the university as it was ten to twenty years ago and to those qualities that have survived from that time. I realize that changes needed to be made, but in some ways it seems as if we cannot decide whether we are Harvard or a technical institute. We have lost our old identity without finding a satisfactory new one.

> I strongly believe that this institution meets an educational need in this community of making quality education available to urban students of all ages at a reasonable cost ... I appreciate, too, the conscious goal of the university to keep academic standards high.

> The potential here is thrilling. I prefer working in a public university. This is a culturally rich city; we could be a major university ... We are essential to this city and its possibilities for growth.

The differing sets of values at work within the faculties of these institutions frequently surface in regard to criteria for promotion and tenure. This dispute among the viewpoints of the "old guard" and the "new blood," not surprisingly, often translates into interpersonal clashes among junior and senior faculty. One respondent, relatively new to his university, said "I tangle frequently with the older 'teacher's college' faculty."

A final basic issue generated by this study has to do with equity - equity in pay, resources, opportunity, and overall treatment. While "equity" itself was too broad a concept to be used as a separate category in the analysis of survey responses, a great number of citations of more

specific factors revolved around the basic theme of fairness and justice. The following excerpts are illustrative.

> My former department head informed me that "good teaching is expected but will not be rewarded at (this institution)." I cannot respect this policy.

> (Sources of alienation include) the gross discrepancy between the university's <u>preaching</u> about the importance and centrality of basic liberal arts and its <u>practice</u> of rewarding the so-called professional schools to a much greater degree than persons in the fundamental disciplines.

> In my department alone, one faculty member was named the <u>campus'</u> "outstanding teacher" award recipient and was fired at the end of that year for not publishing ... another faculty member in this department was to be given the "outstanding teacher" award, but as soon as the campus committee responsible for that task found out that she was not receiving tenure (due to a lack of grant proposals), they decided to give the award to someone else in order not to embarrass the university again. Ten years ago, my answers (to the survey) would have been almost exactly opposite. Now, however, I am merely waiting to gain one more year under my belt so that I may take early retirement from this "den of inequity."

The source of these perceived inequities, as with the growing sense of impersonality and the conflict in values, can be traced to the fundamental changes being effected by these institutions in order to keep pace with the demands of a changing higher education "market."

A recent national study found faculty morale to be surprisingly high at small liberal arts colleges (Mangan, 1987). Among the contributing factors cited for this were faculty members' clear sense of what their college stands for and where it is going, and strong faculty feelings of

"belonging" within their colleges. Annual rituals, collegiality, faculty development, shared governance, definitions of scholarship which recognize the primacy of teaching, and policies encouraging faculty to work together, were cited as typical strong points on campuses where morale was highest. Many of these are the same factors which appear to be at the focus of institutional commitment in the doctoral granting universities surveyed in this study. They may also, however, be factors that are likely to be fundamentally affected in a time of institutional transition and change.

Implications of this Study

The theme of commitment at risk in times of transition is a thread which connects these findings. Perhaps the most obvious example is the decline in commitment which appears to be prevalent among associate professors in this sample. The transitional period in individual faculty advancement within the institution appears to be a critical time when attention must be paid to maintaining the bonds between the faculty member and the institution.

But, on a larger scale, many universities in the Carnegie "Doctoral-Granting" classification are themselves undergoing transition. Narrative responses generated by this study cited institutional growth, change, or evolution as key factors affecting faculty commmitment at these four institutions. Here again, citations of lessened commitment

referred to a loosening of faculty-university bonds during a transitional period.

The four critical issues - autonomy, impersonality, value congruence, and equity - which emerged from a synthesis of these responses, suggest promising starting points for maintaining these bonds.

Clearly, an adherence to the latter two issues - values and fairness - is in order for all institutions, particularly in times of change. But the first two issues present especially useful means of addressing commitment.

A crucial point in the strengthening of faculty commitment lies in faculty members seeing their institution as an entity which furthers rather than obstructs their own personal objectives. The exchange in which faculty engage with their university involves far more than the receipt of a paycheck for the rendering of services. It includes expectations of a symbiotic relationship in which the faculty member directs the growth of his or her own expertise, and in so doing, benefits the institution which provides the setting and the means for that growth.

Autonomy needs not only to be provided to faculty members, but must be safeguarded against the encroachment of an unreasonable load of administrative or bureaucratic duties in times of institutional growth and development. The first step in a program aimed at the enhancement of faculty

commitment would be an assessment of faculty attitudes about their relationship with the university.

If the university is seen as an obstacle rather than a facilitator, then a review of services and resources made available to faculty by the university, and duties and services expected of faculty members by the university should be conducted. The purpose of such a study would be to find a balance between the two which preserves the individual autonomy of the faculty so that institutional maintenance duties become return favors among peers, rather than tasks for subordinates.

A second area in which faculty commitment-building efforts might center is the quality of interpersonal relationships on the campus. Though faculty members can often work in an environment of high independence, collegiality is one of the cultural expectations upon which many faculty choose to enter the academic profession. The concept of the university and the faculty member as partners in a professional endeavor is seriously undermined when the partners aren't speaking with one another. Personal attention and acknowledgement of faculty members' achievements by administrators was an unfulfilled need for several respondents in this study. Opening networks of communication between disciplines and softening bureaucratic boundaries through the establishment of personal contact may result in a more involved and committed faculty.

Suggestions for Further Inquiry

Each of the variables related to faculty commitment merit further consideration and study. Similar projects utilizing broader samples and differing types of colleges and universities could provide more specific information which might be used to encourage closer linkages between faculty members and their institutions.

Approaching in depth the subject of faculty commitment, may require a different research methodology. Focused, intensive interviews of individual faculty members might be used to explore sources of commitment at a deeper level. The results of this study might be used to define topics and issues upon which such interviews might focus.

If such a methodology is to be employed, the topics of "belongingness," community, and collegiality or impersonality in the faculty work environment may be especially fruitful concepts upon which to focus. This would be especially true within the context of institutions undergoing periods of change or transition. If the faculty is truly at the heart of the university, these issues will be crucial considerations for any institution reevaluating its mission or methods.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

FACULTY SURVEY

Personal Background Data:

What is your age (as of Sept. 15, 1987) ? ________ What is your gender ? M F Are you tenured ? Y N

Please check the category which best describes your academic discipline:

____ Physical sciences & Mathematics
____ Biological, Agricultural, & Health sciences
____ Applied sciences & Engineering
____ Social Sciences & Education
____ Arts and letters
____ The professions
____ other: ______________________

What is your faculty rank ?

____ Full professor
____ Associate professor
____ Assistant professor
____ Lecturer or Instructor

Do you possess the terminal degree in your field ? Y N

How many years (to the nearest whole number) has it been since you completed your most recent academic degree ? ______

How many years (to the nearest whole number) have you served on the faculty at your present university ? ______

Questionnaire:

For each statement, circle the number at the right which best describes the extent to which you agree or disagree:

Statement	strongly disagree	moderately disagree	slightly disagree	neither disagree nor agree	slightly agree	moderately agree	strongly agree
1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this university be successful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I talk up this university to my friends as a great institution to work for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I feel very little loyalty to this university.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this university.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I find that my values and this university's values are very similar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this university.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I could just as well be working for a different institution as long as the type of work were similar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. This university really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this university.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this institution to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this university indefinitely.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this university's policies on important matters relating to its faculty.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(Questionnaire continues on the reverse side)

	(disagree ←						→ agree)
13. I really care about the fate of this university.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. For me this is the best of all possible institutions for which to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Deciding to work for this university was a definite mistake on my part.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Factors Affecting Commitment:

What specific personal factors, work experiences, institutional policies or practices, or other aspects of the university have affected your feelings of personal commitment to or alienation from your university (if necessary, you may continue on an additional sheet) ?

Source(s) of commitment (if any):

Source(s) of alienation (if any):

Thank you very much for your assistance with this research! Please return this completed survey in the enclosed self-addressed envelope, or mail to:
Bruce Harshbarger, Elliott Center, UNC-Greensboro, Greensboro, N.C. 27412-5001

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTERS

TO: ____Faculty Members
FROM: Bruce Harshbarger, Ed.D. candidate - Higher Ed. Admin.
RE: Dissertation Research

Though the start of a new academic year brings many duties and responsibilities, I'd like to ask you to take five minutes to assist me in pursuing important research toward the completion of a dissertation. Your response (by Thu., Oct. 15) to the brief enclosed survey will be crucial to the success of this study. A pre-addressed return envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

My research addresses faculty members' feelings of commitment to their employing institution. While most faculty members are likely to be committed to their students, specializations, and/or colleagues, the relationship between them and their universities is a unique one which may or may not reflect the typical employee-employer model. "Commitment," as used in this study, refers to a deeper and more stable concept than mere "satisfaction." As an example, parents' "satisfaction" with the behavior of their children may fluctuate widely from day to day, though a parent's level of "commitment" to his or her child should remain relatively constant - even when the parent is dissatisfied.

Because commitment to an employing institution is a subject about which one might hesitate to be candid, I want to assure you that ALL RESPONSES WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY. I will guarantee your anonymity as a respondent. The only identifying mark used is a mailing code on the return envelope, allowing non-respondents to be identified for follow-ups. A third party will open all return envelopes for me, separating the completed surveys from the envelopes, and discarding the envelopes as soon as this code number is checked off.

You will notice that the survey ends with a single, open-ended question. Please take a moment to respond to this question. Your response may be as brief or as lengthy as you wish, but it is a critical component of this research.

Thank you for your assistance!

REMINDER: Deadline for responses is Thu., Oct. 15

Dissertation research - Faculty survey reminder

Greetings:

Last month, I sent out a brief (5-10 minute) survey regarding faculty commitment to the university, in order to gather data for my doctoral dissertation in the field of higher education. If you have recently responded or are currently in the process of doing so, please accept my sincere thanks and disregard this follow-up mailing. At this time however, I do not have a record of a response from you, and I would greatly appreciate your help in furthering this research and enabling me to complete my study.

To facilitate your response I have enclosed a postage-paid return envelope and included an additional copy of the survey in case the original was misplaced or discarded. There are no identifying marks whatsoever on the survey or return envelope, so I can guarantee your personal anonymity. I'd like to request that you reply within one week of your receipt of this mailing.

My research specifically addresses faculty members' feelings of commitment to their employing institution. While most faculty members are likely to be committed to their students, specializations, and/or colleagues, the relationship between them and their universities is a unique one which may or may not reflect the typical employee-employer model. "Commitment," as used in this study, refers to a deeper and more stable concept than mere "satisfaction." As an example, parents' "satisfaction" with the behavior of their children may fluctuate widely from day to day, though a parent's level of "commitment" to his or her child should remain relatively constant - even when the parent is dissatisfied.

You will notice that the survey ends with a single, open-ended question. Please take a moment to respond to this question. Your response may be as brief or as lengthy as you wish, but it is a critical component of this research.

Thank you again for your assistance!

Cordially,

Bruce Harshbarger
Greensboro, NC

REMINDER: Please return this survey within one week of receiving it