

WORK RELATED ATTITUDES AS PREDICTORS OF EMPLOYEE  
ABSENTEEISM

by

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## Statement

I declare that **Work Related Attitudes as Predictors of Employee Absenteeism** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been identified and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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## **SUMMARY**

Employee absenteeism remains a thorny issue within organisations worldwide. Numerous research initiatives have been undertaken over the past decade with the aim of understanding the phenomenon. This research has as its aim to investigate the predictability of work-related attitudes on employee absenteeism.

The complex nature of absenteeism was discussed, specifically the measurement and the definition of employee absenteeism. In the empirical investigation, a random sample (N=72) was selected to participate in the research. Three questionnaires, namely a biographical questionnaire, Kanungo's (1982) 10-item job involvement questionnaire and the 9-item organisational commitment questionnaire of Porter and Smith's (1970) were selected for use.

The empirical findings suggested that marital status and number of dependents were related to the frequency (degree) of absenteeism. A weak to insignificant relationship was established between frequency (degree) of absenteeism and the two work-related attitudes. The research established that the two work-related attitudes, job involvement and organisational commitment, did not relate to employee absenteeism.

## **KEY TERMS:**

Absence; Absenteeism; Attitudes; Behaviour; Employee; Job Involvement; Organisational Commitment; Sick Leave; Unscheduled leave; Work-Related Attitudes.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **SCIENTIFIC OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH**

This research will investigate the relationship between job involvement and organisational commitment as work-related attitudes in predicting absenteeism.

The first chapter will provide a general background and motivation for the research, including the initial problem formulation. The aims, in a practical perspective, of the research will be discussed under the subcategories of general, specific and theoretic. Paradigm perspectives will be discussed to demarcate the boundaries of this research. The design and methodology are outlined with a schematic flow diagram indicating the procedure for execution.

The outline of the chapters of this research and the chapter summary conclude the first chapter.

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH**

Absenteeism is considered to be one of the most complex employee problems associated with a range of variables as well as an array of classifications. Years of isolation and lack of global competition have led to extremely complacent attitudes towards high and costly levels of absences in South African organisations (Hamilton-Atwell, 2003). Such figures compare very unfavourably with some of South Africa's major international trading partners. South African organisations are now faced with increased foreign competition and can only elevate themselves to international standards by achieving a competitive cost/productivity balance.

Employees are often considered to be a company's most valuable assets and one of the best ways to increase profitably is by increasing the returns on this



asset. Reducing absenteeism is one of the most overlooked methods of reducing company costs (Hamilton-Atwell, 2003). The cost of absenteeism and the impact thereof on productivity alone is enough to shock any human resources manager out of complacency. For every 1% of the work force that is absent, production levels will drop by 2,5%. But the toll of absent employees is significantly more than only a 2,5% drop in production, such as friction in employee relationships; impact on service delivery and poor employee attitudes (Hamilton-Atwell, 2003).

Absenteeism is a phenomenon that affects businesses and countries worldwide. According to an Unscheduled Absence Survey conducted by the CCH Incorporated (Anonymous, 2000), unscheduled absenteeism by American workers reached a seven-year high in 1998, resulting in the business and non-profit sector suffering millions of dollars in losses. The survey revealed that the rate of absenteeism increased by 25%, and the dollars lost due to absenteeism rose 32 % compared to the previous year's numbers.

For the first time personal illness was not the foremost reasons employees used when calling in sick. Family issues headed the list at 26% of all unscheduled absence, followed by personal illness with 22% and personal needs at 20%. The report noted; that while personal illness absences reported a four-year low, stress and "entitlement mentality" – taking sick days not because one is sick, but because employers provided them – reached a four year high. For stress, the numbers have almost doubled. (Anonymous, 2000)

A survey conducted in Canada during 2000 (Watson Wyatt, 2000) indicated that the cost of employee absenteeism has risen and is having a greater impact on the bottom line of companies than ever before. The results of the survey revealed that a) short-term absences costs, as a percentage of total payroll costs, have more than doubled from 2,0 % in 1997 to 4,2 %; b) the average direct cost of employee absenteeism in Canada is now \$ 3 550 per employee per year; c)

direct and indirect costs combined – including costs for replacement workers and lost productivity – account for a staggering 17 % of the payroll.

In another survey conducted by CCH Incorporated during 2000 (Anonymous, 2001), unscheduled employee absenteeism declined, reaching the lowest levels in 10 years, but the high cost of worker 'no shows' continued to be a major issue for employers. While the average rate of absenteeism per employee dropped to 2,1 percent from 2,9 percent in 1999, the average cost per employee absenteeism stayed at more than \$ 600 per year, costing employers anywhere from \$ 10 000 for small companies to over \$ 3 million annually for some large organisations.

In South Africa the picture is no different and is fast joining the international culture of escalating absenteeism. It was reported by Du Toit (Beeld, 2004) that the direct cost of absenteeism due to illness for the South African economy is in the region of R 12 million per annum. According to Du Toit (Beeld, 2004) the total cost could be more than 200% if indirect costs were to be added. It was also reported in the Cape Argus (2003) that teacher absenteeism is costing the Education Department in the Eastern Cape R 5,3 million a day. According to the Education MEC, Nomsa Jajula, absenteeism amongst teachers is running at 23% (Anonymous, 2003). The Sunday Times (2005) reported that a recent study conducted by Occupational Care South Africa in conjunction with the University of South Africa's department of quantitative studies found that on average 6,3 days per employee per annum are lost to unapproved absences from work (Vaida, 2005).

Airports Company South Africa (ACSA), is one of South Africa's leading parastatals which owns and manages the international and domestic airports in South Africa. This research will be conducted within this company. Employee absenteeism has been costing ACSA huge amounts of money in terms of work hours lost. Almost all departments within the company are affected; however,

the security department have consistently shown the highest absenteeism percentage (3%) over the last two years. The impact of this level of absenteeism affects not only the company's bottom line but due to strict legislative prescriptions requiring that a specific number of personnel are present on the airport at any given time, can cause serious penalties to the organisation, safety of passengers and to the tourist industry in South Africa. As a result of this it is imperative to investigate the causes of employee absenteeism within the security department.

Based on the aforementioned it is clear that employee absenteeism is a costly yet poorly understood organisational phenomenon (Johns & Nicholson, 1982; Martocchio & Harrison, 1993; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Rhodes & Steers, 1990). Few studies have examined the effects of personal (e.g. age), job content and organisational factors on absence (Porter & Steers, 1973; Steers & Rhodes, 1978). However a vast majority of absence research has focused on the effects of work attitudes like job satisfaction (Fitzgibbons, 1992; Rhodes & Steers, 1990). In recent independent reviews of the past 20 or so years of absence research, both Harrison and Martocchio (1998) and Johns (1997) have concluded that excellent progress has been made in understanding the behaviour.

From the literature review the researcher is especially interested to test Blau and Boal's (1987) conceptual model using job involvement and organisational commitment to understand and predict employee absenteeism within ACSA's security department. It is in the above context, that this research will aim to determine whether job involvement and organisational commitment predict employee absenteeism of the security officers within ACSA.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The motivation for this research will be discussed by highlighting problems related to employee absenteeism as experienced within ACSA.

Given the aforementioned discussion, it is clear that companies need to determine the reasons for absenteeism and then implement processes to address the absenteeism problem. In 2000 and 2001 the absenteeism rate within the security department in ACSA have consistently exceeded 3% resulting in a total of R1, 5 million lost in man-hours. This figure excludes the cost of overtime and temporary staff. Several attempts have been made to address the absenteeism problem, ranging from creating awareness, counselling, and strict application of the disciplinary code to awards. None of the strategies has had any significant affect in bringing the absenteeism percentage down. On reflection, the interventions were aimed at managing the problem and not investigating the causes of the absence behaviour.

Harrison and Martocchio (1998) point out that there are definitional, methodological and statistical problems that imbue absenteeism research and Rhodes and Steers (1990) agree that absenteeism in itself is quite complex. According to Rhodes and Steers (1990), there are at least two reasons why the study of attendance behaviour requires careful attention before reaching any definite conclusions in a particular organisational situation. Firstly, there is often a lack of clarity concerning the meaning or meanings attached to absence behaviour. Absence frequently means different things to different people. The meaning of absence to the manager is frequently seen as a problem to be solved. Absence is a dysfunctional category of behaviour, and negative motives are frequently imputed to the "violator". "Good" employees come to work on a consistent basis, "bad" ones stay away for the slightest reason (Rhodes & Steers, 1990). Hence, absenteeism becomes a management problem, and good managers solve the problems that confront them. To the employee, absence can

take on a very different meaning. Absenteeism can be symbolic of deeper feelings of hostility or perceptions of inequitable treatment in the job situation (Rhodes & Steers, 1990). Viewing absence as a social phenomenon, the focus may need to be on improving work attractiveness and developing a culture that facilitates attendance instead of absenteeism.

Secondly, it is necessary to recognise that there are multiple and often conflicting ways to measure absenteeism and in order to understand the nature of employee absenteeism, it must first be understood how (or whether) it is measured in empirical studies. Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) found that very few organisations keep records of absenteeism. Assuming one wishes to measure absenteeism, there are several methods that have been used to collect such data. Unfortunately, there is no uniformly accepted classification scheme for assessing this form of behaviour. Huse and Taylor (1962) examined four indices, including the following:

- 1 absences frequency – total number of *times* absent;
- 2 absence severity – total number of *days* absent;
- 3 attitudinal absence – frequency of *1 day* absence; and
- 4 medical absences – frequency of absences of *three days* or longer.

Chadwick-Jones, Brown, Nicholson, and Sheppard (1971) have taken a different approach to measuring in which seven indices of absenteeism were used namely:

- 1 absence frequency;
- 2 attitudinal absence;
- 3 other reasons – number of days lost in a week for any reason other than holidays, rest days, and certified sickness;
- 4 worst day – difference score between number of individuals absent on any week's 'best' and 'worst' days;
- 5 time lost – number of days lost in a week for any reason other than leave;
- 6 lateness – number of instances of tardiness in any week; and

- 7 Blue Monday – number of individuals absent on a Monday minus number of individuals absent on Friday of any week.

Further compounding the problem of measuring absenteeism is the fact that the various measures used in empirical studies are not typically related to one another. In addition to this, absence can be distinguished in various types. Defining absenteeism has not changed much in the recent years and one simple definition that is being used is that of organisationally excused versus organisationally unexcused absences (Blau, 1985; Cheloha & Farr, 1980; Fritzgibbons & Moch, 1980). Based upon these studies, it would seem that organisations' definitions of excused absence include (within defined limits) categories such as personal sickness, jury duty, religious holidays, and funeral leave and transportation problems.

By examining the different levels of job involvement and organisational commitment and how these two variables jointly interact on absence behaviour, the researcher, through this research, hopes to gain some insight understanding the causes of absence behaviour within ACSA.

The motivation for this research will be discussed in terms of the research questions, which are listed below.

- How can the construct of absenteeism be conceptualised through a literature review?
- How can the construct of job involvement be conceptualised through a literature review?
- How can the construct of organisational commitment be conceptualised through a literature review?
- Do job involvement and organisational commitment serve as predictors of absenteeism?

- Can recommendations be made regarding the predictive validity of job involvement and organisational commitment on high levels of absenteeism?

In an effort to answer the research questions, the following objectives for the research are set out.

### **1.3 RESEARCH AIMS**

The aims for this research are discussed in terms of general and specific objectives.

#### **1.3.1 General Aim**

The general aim of this research is to determine whether work-related attitudes, namely, job involvement and organisational commitment, predict employee absenteeism.

The general objective consists of the specific objectives, which are presented below.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

##### *1.3.2.1 Literature Objectives*

The specific literature objectives of this research entail the following:

- (a) to conceptualise the construct employee absenteeism, the origins and consequences in the workplace;
- (b) to conceptualise the work-related attitudes of job involvement and organisational commitment;

- (c) to integrate the literature on job involvement and organisational commitment and how job involvement and organisational commitment impact on employee absenteeism.

#### 1.3.2.2 *Empirical Objectives*

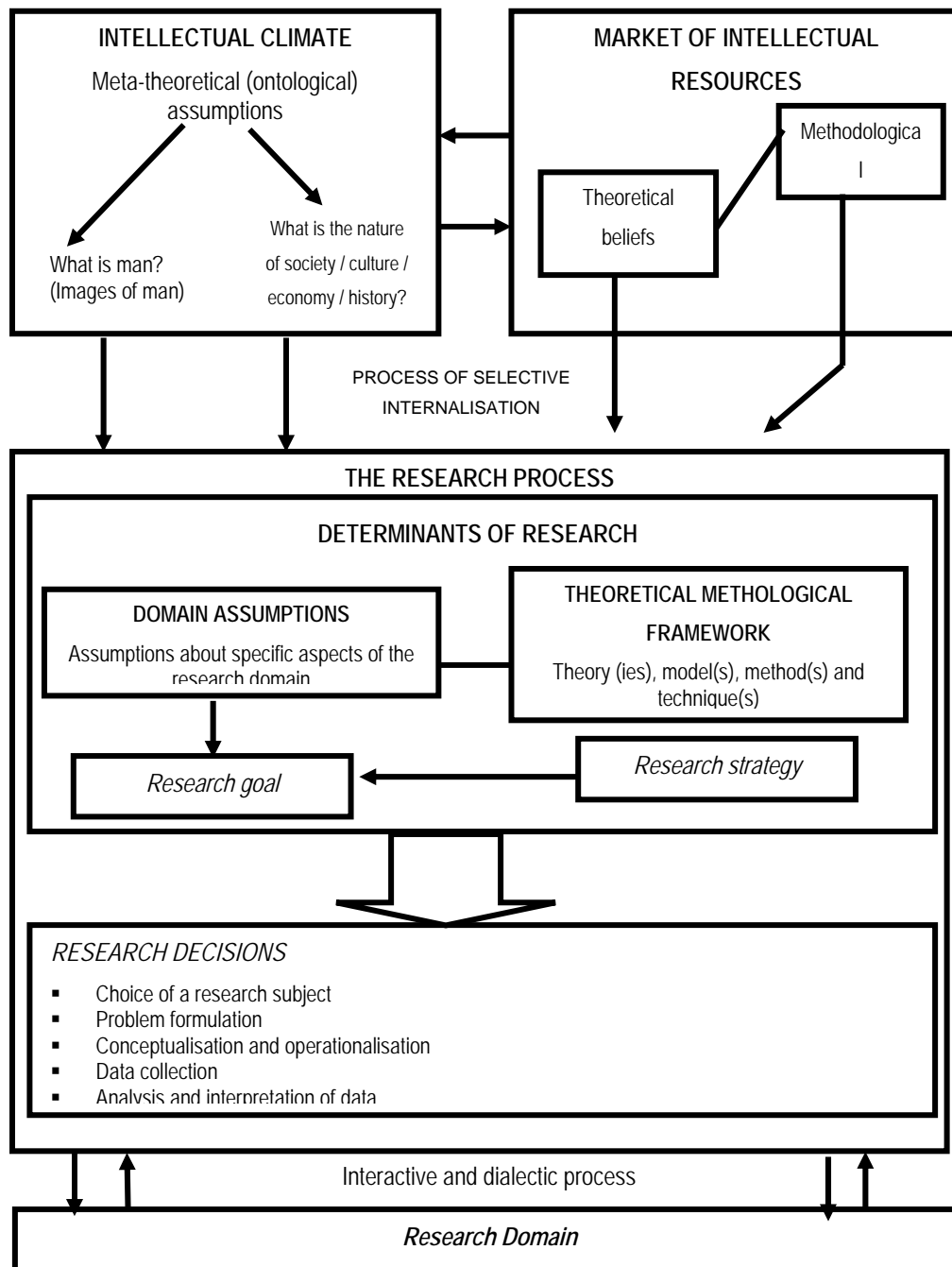
The specific empirical objectives of this research entail the following:

- (a) to investigate whether biographical variables influence absenteeism;
- (b) to investigate and analyse whether job involvement and organisational commitment predict absenteeism in the organisation;
- (c) to determine whether there is a correlation between employee absent levels and job involvement and organisational commitment;
- (d) to make recommendations related to the predictability of work-related attitudes on absenteeism for Industrial Psychology and for future research.

### **1.4 RESEARCH MODEL**

Mouton and Marais (1996) provides a framework for social sciences, which embodies a particular approach to the interpretation of the process of research in the social sciences. The model can be used in distinguishing between good and poor research in the social sciences. The research model of Mouton and Marais (1996) serves as a framework for this particular research. It aims to incorporate the five dimensions of social sciences, namely the sociological, ontological, teleological, epistemological and methodological dimensions and to systematise them in the framework of the research process. These are set out in figure 1.1 and also see 1.5.3.2.





**Figure 1.1.**  
*An Integrated Model of Social Sciences research (Mouton & Marais, 1996).*

According to Mouton and Marais (1996), the **intellectual climate** consists of a variety of metatheoretical values or beliefs that are held by those participating within a discipline. These, in turn can be tracked back to a non-scientific context. Hence the origins of many of these values are conceptualised in the traditions in philosophy and are frequently untestable, in fact, they were never meant to be tested.

The term **markets of intellectual resources** refers to the collection of beliefs that have direct bearing upon the epistemic status of scientific statements, that is, to their status as knowledge claims. The two major types are theoretical beliefs about the nature and structure of phenomena, and methodological beliefs concerning the nature and structure of the research process (Mouton & Marais, 1996).

In this research, the researcher selectively internalises specific outputs from the paradigms which she describes, in an effort to produce scientifically valid research (Mouton & Marais 1996). A distinction is made between the determinants of research decisions and decision-making. Moreover, the determinants of the research decisions are presented in a descriptive manner. The research aims were formulated in two phases, namely the literature review and the empirical research. In terms of theoretical and methodological framework, phase 1 refers to employee absenteeism and work-related attitudes (job involvement and organisational commitment), and phase 2 aims to determine the predictability of work-related attitudes on employee absenteeism. With regards to the decision-making steps in the **research process**, the research method is described in two phases, each with specific distinguishable and consecutive steps, namely the literature and the empirical study.

## 1.5 THE PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH

The paradigmatic perspective of the research, the relevant paradigms, metatheoretical statements and the market of intellectual resources are examined next.

As mentioned in the previous section, Mouton and Marais (1996) describe social science research as a collaborative human activity in which social reality is studied objectively with the aim of gaining a valid understanding of it. This research meets the said dimensions and will be approached from the discipline of Psychology.

Plug, Meyer, Louw and Gouws (1986) define Psychology as a science that studies human behaviour with the focus on the individual with the help of methods like experiments, measurements and observation. This disciplinary relationship focuses on Industrial Psychology, with Organisational Psychology as a field of application. "Industrial Psychology is a branch of psychology that applies the principles of psychology to the workplace" (Aamodt, 1991). In other words, "anything that can be done to help workers realise their potential and increase their satisfaction on the job will increase their productivity and their value to the organisation" (Dawis, Fruehling & Oldham, 1989).

The field of Organisational Psychology is concerned with the organisation as a system involving individuals and groups, and the structure and dynamics of the organisation (Bergh & Theron, 1999). The basic aim is to foster worker adjustment, satisfaction and productivity as well as organisational efficiency. As absenteeism leads to lower productivity and lower efficiency, and job involvement and organisational commitment deals with satisfaction this research will be conducted within the field of Organisational Psychology.

### 1.5.1 Relevant Paradigms

Two paradigms are relevant to the literature review of this research. The literature on absenteeism will be presented from the behaviouristic paradigm. The literature on job involvement and organisational commitment will be presented from the humanistic paradigm.

The applicable assumptions of the behaviouristic paradigm (Bergh & Theron, 1999) are presented below.

- Behaviourism is an entirely objective psychology, which aims at developing general principles of behaviour based on the control and prediction of overt behaviour.
- The subject matter of psychology is observable behaviour, since only what is observable can be studied objectively.
- The environment determines behaviour.
- Humans are merely reactive beings and what they are and become is determined by causes outside themselves.

Through the work of Tolman, Guthrie, Hull and Skinner (as cited in Berg & Theron, 1999) Neo-behaviourism has introduced unobservable behaviour, the stimulus – organism – response (S-O-R) approach. Tolman (as cited in Berg & Theron, 1999) inferred that factors within the organism, such as memory, thinking, emotion and needs are interfering variables i.e. factors that come between the stimulus and the response and therefore influences the response. For this research the factors within the organism, which influences absence taking within the work context will be studied.

The applicable assumptions of the humanistic paradigm (Meyer, Moore & Viljoen, 1995) are listed below.

- The individual as an integrated whole: each individual should be studied as an integrated, unique, organised whole or gestalt.
- The individual as a dignified human being: man is a unique being with qualities, which distinguish him from lifeless objects like stones and trees, and also from primitive animalistic beings.
- The positive nature of man: human nature is basically good, or at least neutral.
- The conscious processes of the individual: humanists recognise the role of conscious processes, especially conscious decision-making processes.
- The person is an active being: a person does not simply react to external environmental stimuli, or merely submit to inherent drives over which he/she has no control.
- Emphasis on psychic health: The humanists asserted that the psychologically healthy person should be the criterion in examining human functioning, and not the neurotic or psychotic person.

Based on this assumption, one can link Kanungo's (1982) example that the job itself can help an individual meet his/her intrinsic growth needs. Within this context, job involvement and organisational commitment implies that a person consciously and actively engages with his / her job and organisation.

The empirical study will be presented from the functionalistic paradigm. Listed below are the assumptions of the functionalistic paradigm (Morgan, 1980).

- Society has a concrete, real existence and a systematic character orientated towards producing an ordered and regulated state of affairs.
- Behaviour is always seen as being contextually bound in a real world of concrete and tangible social relationships.
- Its basic foundation is primarily regulative and pragmatic.

- The focus is on understanding society in a way that generates useful empirical knowledge.
- The focus is on understanding the role of human beings in society, which encourages an approach to social theory.

### 1.5.2 Models

Kaplan (1964) indicates that a model is a particular mode of representation, so that not all its features correspond to some characteristic of its subject matter. Models do not pretend to be more than a partial representation of a given phenomenon. A model merely agrees in broad outline with the phenomenon of which it is a model (Mouton & Marais, 1996).

The literature component consists of three variables each having different referents to orientations. According to Morrow (1983), job involvement and organisational commitment are related, but distinct, types of work attitudes because of their different referents. The first construct, namely absenteeism, has through research, subsequently led to findings and theories that can be categorised into various types of explanatory models.

Rhodes and Steers (1990) categorised absenteeism into three types of explanatory models, the first model being the *pain-avoidance*, in which absence behaviour is viewed as a flight from negative work experiences. Secondly in an *adjustment-to-work model*, absence is seen as resulting largely from employee responses to changes in job conditions leading to a re-negotiation of the psychological contract. Thirdly in the *decision models*, absence behaviour is viewed primarily as a rational (or at least quasi-rational) decision to attain valued outcomes.

Rosse and Miller (1984) identified at least five implicit conceptual models relating to absenteeism and turnover. These models are (a) *independent forms model* –

where absenteeism and turnover are viewed as unrelated to each other either because of differences in causes or consequences; (b) *spillover model* – where an adverse work environment is assumed to cause a generalised non-specific avoidance response; (c) *progression-of-withdrawal model* – where individuals engage in a hierarchically ordered sequence of withdrawal including absenteeism and ending in quitting; (d1) *behavioural alternate forms* – where the likelihood of one form of withdrawal, for example, absence, is a function of the constraints on the alternative behaviour, for example, quitting; (d2) *attitudinal alternate forms* – where a negative attitude may fail to translate into voluntary turnover if the employee sees this response as inappropriate (e.g., if the employee does not want to lose accumulated benefits); and (e) *compensatory model* – where absence and turnover both represent means of avoiding an unpleasant work environment. The researcher will be working within the pain-avoidance and decision models provided by Rhodes and Steers (1990) and the spillover model, behavioural alternate forms and compensatory model provided by Rosse and Miller (1984).

This research will test the relationship between job involvement and organisational commitment as related to absenteeism based on a model offered by Blau and Boal (1987). Their conceptual model uses high and low combinations of job involvement and organisational commitment to predict turnover and absenteeism. Job involvement and organisational commitment are partitioned into high and low categories, and then combined into four cells: (1) high job involvement – high organisational commitment; (2) high job involvement – low organisational commitment; (3) low job involvement – high organisational commitment; (4) low job involvement – low organisational commitment. Each cell is predicted to have a different impact on turnover and absenteeism.

### **1.5.3 Theoretical statements and methodological convictions**

Theoretical statements and methodological convictions form part of the market of intellectual resources. The market of intellectual resources, according to Mouton and Marais (1996), refers to the collection of beliefs, which has a direct bearing upon the epistemic status of scientific statements.

#### *1.5.3.1 Theoretical Statements*

The first statement is the theoretical beliefs about the nature and structure of phenomena, i.e. those testable statements about social phenomena (Mouton & Marais, 1996). Theoretical statements may be regarded as assertions about the *what* (descriptive) and *why* (interpretive) aspects of human behaviour.

The central hypothesis for this research can be formulated as follows.

An interaction between job involvement and organisational commitment exists on unexcused absence, such that individuals with higher levels of job involvement and organisational commitment would exhibit less unexcused absence than individuals with lower levels of job involvement and organisational commitment.

#### *1.5.3.2 Methodological convictions*

The next main epistemological conviction is that of methodological beliefs concerning the nature of social science and scientific research, in other words the preferences, assumptions and presuppositions about what ought to constitute good research (Mouton & Marais, 1996). The aim of this research is to make use of optimal research design and suitable methods to test the theoretical hypothesis (Mouton & Marais, 1996).



In this research, the central hypothesis, namely that individuals with higher levels of job involvement and organisational commitment would exhibit less unexcused absences than individuals with lower levels of job involvement and organisational commitment, is being tested.

*(a) The Sociological Dimension*

The sociological dimension conforms to the requirements of the sociological research ethic. Within the bounds of the sociological dimensions the research is experimental, analytical and exact. Since the problems that are being studied are subject to quantitative research and analysis (Mouton & Marais 1996), the focus of the research will be on the quantitative analysis of the variables and concepts as described in chapters 4 and 5.

*(b) The Ontological Dimension*

The ontological dimension refers to the study of being or reality. The content of this dimension may be regarded as humankind in all its diversity, which includes human activities, characteristics and behaviour (Mouton & Marais, 1996). The focus of this research is the predictability of work-related attitudes on employee absenteeism. The specific aim of the research is to use work-related attitudes jointly (in an interaction) to predict specific types of employee absence behaviour.

*(c) The Teleological Dimension*

The teleological dimension refers to human activity, its main aim being the understanding of phenomena (Mouton & Marais, 1996). The goals of this research are clear in that attempts are made to determine how work-related attitudes interact in predicting absence behaviour.

*(d) The Epistemological Dimension*

The epistemological dimension refers to providing a valid and reliable understanding of reality (Mouton & Marais, 1996). In this research, an attempt is made to formulate an appropriate research design and achieve valid and reliable

results to determine whether work-related attitudes predict employee absenteeism.

*(e) The Methodological Dimension*

The methodological dimension refers to the objectivity of the research – it should be critical, balanced, unbiased, systematic and controllable (Mouton & Marais 1996). The research is therefore planned and structured, and executed to comply with the criteria of science. It also relates to data collection through questionnaires, the research and data analysis by means of the correlation of quantitative data. The research design and research methods are structured to ensure rational decision-making.

These five dimensions are core aspects of the same process – research. In terms of the model, social science research is a collaborative human activity in which social reality is studied with the aim of gaining valid understanding (Mouton & Marais, 1996). In Figure 1.1 this model is described as a systems theoretical model, with three subsystems that are interrelated and also relate to the research domain of the specific domain – in this case, Industrial Psychology. The subsystems represent the intellectual climate, the market of intellectual resources and the research process itself (Mouton & Marais, 1996).

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Mouton and Marais (1996), the aim of research design is to plan and structure a given research project in such a manner that the eventual validity of the research findings is maximised. They continue to describe it as synonymous with rational decision-making during the research process and points to three aspects that codetermine research design, namely the unit of analysis, the type of objective and the research strategy. The research design is discussed with reference to the aforementioned.

### **1.6.1 Unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis, as it is referred to in the problem statement and the research aims is the human being, namely security officers based at Johannesburg International Airport.

### **1.6.2 Typology of the research**

A distinction can be made between three types of research objectives, namely, exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Mouton & Marais, 1996). This research is of an explanatory nature and the aim is to show that a relationship exists between the variables, absenteeism and work-related attitudes namely, organisational commitment and job involvement.

This research will be descriptive, in the presentation of the three constructs under discussion, namely absenteeism, job involvement and organisational commitment. The important consideration in descriptive research is to collect accurate information on the domain phenomena that are under investigation.

### **1.6.3 Validity**

According to Mouton and Marais (1996) the aim of the research design is to plan and structure the research project to ensure that the internal and external validity of the research findings are maximised. Internal validity is the logical predecessor of external validity and for this reason, the research findings can not be based on external validity before the internal validity is established. Research with a contextual aim places a high priority on internal validity (Mouton & Marais, 1996)

### 1.6.3.1 *Validity in terms of the literature review*

Internal validity for the literature review is ensured through:

- the definition of a central hypothesis which describes the aim of the research (formulated in point 1.5.3.1);
- the provision of descriptions of all relevant concepts used in the research, as it seen from a theoretical perspective and how it is measured empirically (explained in point 1.3.2.1);
- choosing models which will support the literature review (explained in point 1.5.2);
- using theories as a basic departure point which will explicitly explain assumptions with regards to the human (explained in point 1.5.1);
- ensuring a comprehensive literature review by making use of a computer search (discussed in point 1.7);
- selecting representative concepts with their respective measuring instruments that touches on the theoretical field and to integrate it with the literature review; and
- standardising the literature analysis and presentation according to a systematic process. In the literature discussion on the various constructs, the theoretical framework, definitions, causes, effects, consequences and models will be provided. The discussion on the measuring instruments will refer to the development and rationale, description, interpretation, reliability and validity, and motivation for selection.

The validity of the literature review can further be motivated by assuming that the literature that is collected and used will be the most recent developments on the field of study and will comply with the standards established for international and local publication in journals and books.

### 1.6.3.2 *Validity in terms of the empirical study*

For the empirical study, validity is ensured through:

- the coding of responses and control thereof;
- the processing of statistics done by an expert with the help of the most recent and sophisticated computer packages available;
- the reporting and interpreting of results according to standardised procedures; and
- conclusions and recommendations will be made on the results.

Making use of questionnaires, which has already been tested in scientific research and accepted as the most suitable, further ensures validity.

## 1.6.4 **Reliability**

The reliability within the research is assured by structuring the research model in such a way that the disturbance variation is kept to a minimum and that the research context of the research (Mouton & Marais 1996) is respected.

### 1.6.4.1 *Reliability in terms of the literature review*

Reliability of the literature review is ensured by the assumption that other subject experts have access to the same literature and will therefore provide the same theoretical information as well as the assumption that the research aims to put forward the facts in as scientific a manner as possible.

### 1.6.4.2 *Reliability in terms of the empirical research*

The reliability in terms of the empirical research is ensured by making use of a representative sample, to ensure that the results are not a reflection of a minority

group. The sample includes individuals from all ethnic origins and both sexes within the organisation being used.

### **1.6.5 Variables**

The aim of the research design is to determine if the specific chosen variable, known as the independent variable, influences another variable, known as the dependent variable (Huysamen, 1993). In this research the dependent variable is unexcused absenteeism and the independent variable is work-related attitudes, and more specifically, job involvement and organisational commitment.

### **1.6.6 Research strategy**

Mouton and Marais (1996) distinguish between research with contextual and general interest. Contextual research strategy refers to a study of phenomena or events because of their intrinsic interest and is studied in terms of its immediate context. This research is contextual of nature and focuses on the nature of absence behaviour of security officers within a specific company.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The aspects listed below represent the selected research methodology, which will correspond with the specific literature and empirical aim of this research. Two phases will apply.

### **PHASE 1 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Phase 1 contains the literature review of the research and includes all the steps associated with the initial planning and execution of the research.

Step 1: Identification of key concepts of the independent and dependant variables.

Step 2: Selection of relevant models, theories and measuring instruments.

Step 3: The gathering of relevant literature.

Step 4: Analysis of literature according to standardised procedures for constructs, concepts and measuring instruments.

Step 5: Integration of job involvement and organisational commitment as work-related attitudes and their relationship to absenteeism.

## **PHASE 2 EMPIRICAL STUDY**

Phase 2 consists of the empirical study and focuses on the steps associated with the practical execution of the research.

Step 1: Describing the population and the sample.

Step 2: Describing the measuring instruments.

Step 3: Distribution of questionnaires to sample population.

Step 4: Data gathering.

Step 5: Data Processing.

Step 6: Reporting and interpreting the results from the empirical study.

Step 7: Presentation of the combination of conclusions, limitations and recommendations based on the research.

## **1.8 CHAPTER ALLOCATION**

The chapters for this research will be presented as follows:

Chapter 2: Absenteeism

Chapter 3: Work-Related Attitudes

Chapter 4: Empirical Study

Chapter 5: Results

Chapter 6: Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

## **1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter, the scientific overview of the research, the background to, and motivation for, this research were provided. The central problems to be addressed, the aims, the research model, paradigm perspective, research design and the research methodology were also discussed. Lastly the outline of the chapters was presented.

In the next chapter, absenteeism will be examined from a theoretical perspective. The concept and determinants of absenteeism will be defined and the complexity of the construct will also be discussed.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **ABSENTEEISM**

In this chapter, absenteeism will be discussed from a theoretical perspective within the relevant literature. The nature of absenteeism, relevant theory, definitions, origins, and consequences of absenteeism will be examined. Lastly various models of absenteeism will be presented. This chapter will conclude with a summary and chapter conclusion.

#### **2.1 NATURE OF ABSENTEEISM**

Over the years a vast volume of information has been collected about absenteeism and numerous books have been written about the topic (e.g. Goodman & Atkin, 1984; Rhodes & Steers, 1990). Research into absence behaviour has proven problematic due to the complex nature of absenteeism because of the wide range of variables, as well as an array of classifications associated with the construct (Hamilton-Atwell, 2003). Johns (1994) points out that there are some thorny definitional, methodological and statistical problems that imbue absenteeism research. Steers and Rhodes (1984) have identified four clearly defined areas in which absence behaviour is seen as complex, the first being the pervasive nature of absenteeism across organisations and international boundaries; the high cost involved; the many variables (several hundred) researched in relation to it; and its potentially serious consequences for the individual, co-workers and organisations alike. Johns and Nicholson (1982) describe absence, as meaning "... different things to different people at different times in different situations" (p.134), and this serves to illustrate the complexity of absence behaviour. According to Johns and Nicholson (1982), an essential problem is that absenteeism is actually a variety of behaviours with different causes masquerading as a unitary phenomenon.

Landy, Vasey, & Smith (1984) commented that due to the complex nature of absenteeism and the measurement around absenteeism, careful consideration must be exercised in drawing comparisons between studies, since many studies used differing definitions of absenteeism (Muchinsky, 1977). Muchinsky (1977) pointed out that the single most vexing problem associated with absenteeism as a meaningful concept involves the metric or measure of absenteeism. In chapter 1, section 1.2, the metric or measures of absenteeism as proposed by Huse and Taylor (1962) and Chadwick-Jones, et al., (1971) were discussed. For the purposes of this research attitudinal absence of Huse and Taylor (1962) (frequency of 1 day absences) will be used.

Further compounding the problem of measuring absenteeism is the fact that the various measures used in empirical studies are not typically related to one another. Harrison and Martocchio (1998) indicated that researchers should clearly describe their rationale for the timing of their measurements of other variables, and the length of absence aggregation periods.

Chadwick-Jones et al., (1982) have through their study drawn a qualitative distinction between longer and extremely short absences. The former tend to be a result of serious illness and unavoidable incapacity. The latter, specifically absences of one or two days' duration, often seem to express employees' decisions not to go to work. In practice, it is impossible to check whether 'a slight cold' or a 'muscular pain' is simply a convenient excuse. It can thus be argued that short absences are more likely to be under the employee's own control, resulting from his/her own decisions to take a day off (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982). Again, it is by no means certain that longer-term absences are involuntary, but they are somewhat less likely to be voluntary. While some longer sickness absences will no doubt be the result of malingering and some very short absences will be unavoidable, it nevertheless seems justifiable to make this important, if rather fallible, distinction between the two (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982).

In their research Harrison and Martocchio (1998) outlined the idea that the levels of individual absenteeism accumulated over any time period are most likely to reflect variables that are defined and relatively stable over that period. They focused on three time periods as sources of variances in absenteeism, namely long-term sources of variances, mid-term sources of variance and the short-term source of variance. Long-term is defined as having a time span of more than one year and, according to Harrison and Martocchio (1998), this aggregation period for absenteeism has a degree of ecological validity. Variables likely to correlate with a distribution of absence aggregated over a long-term period are themselves stable in the long term. The few long-term studies that have appeared (e.g. Thomas & Thomas, 1994) have mainly focused on demographic characteristics such as gender and education.

The mid-term variance in absenteeism can be thought of as having a time span of between three months and one year. Particularly the shorter end of the interval, the notion of a mid-term level of time also corresponds to periods over which global job attitudes remain fairly stable (Rosse & Hulin, 1985). Similar patterns might be expected for absence cultures (Nicholson & Johns, 1985), organisational commitment (Cohen, 1991), task characteristics (Fried & Ferris, 1987), and other constructs that are likely to show meaningful year-to-year, but not day-to-day or week-to-week changes. The short-term variance in absenteeism can be defined as having a time span of a few days to three months. Variances can be attributed to attendance decision parameters (Martocchio, 1992), acute work and life stressors (Theorell, Leymann, Jodko & Konarski, 1992) or relative dissatisfaction (Rosse & Miller, 1984).

**Remark**

For the purpose of this research absenteeism will be measured in the frequency of absence spanning over a one-year period (mid-term source of variance).

In addition to the above, the issue of accurate record keeping of absenteeism adds to the problem of effectively studying absenteeism. Fine-grained data can provide a systematic variation in absenteeism over very short periods (Harrison & Hulin, 1989). Very few organisations keep accurate records of employee absenteeism, however in the organisation within which the research is being conducted (ACSA), a record keeping system exists. Information from this system was used to determine absence trends. The reliability of the information captured in this system (especially referring to the reasons for sickness or absence), as within any other system reliant on the human interface, will always be questionable.

To meet the research aim namely, to conceptualise absenteeism from a theoretical perspective, in the next section of this chapter theories on absenteeism will be discussed in order to provide some depth of understanding. It is noted that although there is generally a lack of theoretical support for absenteeism, reviewing the literature has presented some theoretical views on absenteeism. The theoretical viewpoints discussed are those most referred to in recent research and have not changed over the past decade.

## **2.2 THEORIES OF ABSENTEEISM**

Absence behaviour is discussed in terms of theories on absences such as the notion of the informal contract, perceived inequity, and withdrawal from stressful work situations, dynamic conflict, social exchange, withdrawal, non-attendance, organisationally excused vs. organisationally unexcused, involuntary vs. voluntary and lastly a four-category taxonomy. The relevance of each of these perspectives to this specific research will also be discussed.

### **2.2.1 Informal Contract**

Gibsson (1966) attempted to explain some of the main features of absence behaviour by means of the notion of an informal contract. The contract is viewed as being made between the individual and the organisation. Gibsson (1966) was especially interested in absences that were not long enough to activate formal legitimising (certification) procedures. He used the concept of valence, referring to a person's positive or negative relationships to a work situation and pointed out that if the combined valences of a work situation are weak, it will be easier for people to legitimise their absences to themselves.

Gibsson (1966) remarks that a plausible idea relating to the size of the organisation influences absence rates; in larger organisations, since there is greater division of labour, there is also more concealment of the contributions of individuals, thus permitting latitude for absence from work. He also mentions the importance of the employee's identification with the organisation, as in the case of longer-service employees, and argues for the importance of the "authenticity" of the work contract (Gibsson, 1966). In other words, the organisation should be seen to offer a fair deal to the individual, whose feelings of obligation would thus be strengthened.

In this research Gibsson's (1966) concept of valence, referring to an individual's positive and negative relationship toward a work situation has relevance, as the aim of this research is to determine whether work-related attitudes (Job Involvement and Organisational Commitment) predict employee absenteeism. It is hypothesised that employees with low job involvement and organisational commitment (negative relationship to the work situations) will have higher levels of absenteeism.

### **2.1.2 Resolving Perceived Inequity**

Adams (1965), Hill and Trist (1953) and Patchen (1960) have made notable theoretical contributions towards the study of absenteeism. Although their research is dated, it is included to add to the broader understanding of the concept of absenteeism. No recent literature has been identified which has built on this perspective. Adams (1965) suggested that absences may be a means of resolving perceived inequity; the probability of absence behaviour will increase with the magnitude of inequity and if other means of reducing inequity are not available. Patchen (1960) had tested this kind of hypothesis; producing evidence of a relationship between absences and perceived fairness of pay, that is, employees' feelings about how fairly they had been treated in regard to their pay levels and promotions.

This research will not consider this perspective, as the security officers working for ACSA are paid, on average, 30% higher than the norm in industry. The author does not disregard the fact that in some employees' mind this could be an issue, as well as other procedures and process that could lead to a perception of unfairness.

### **2.1.3 Withdrawal from the Stress of Work Situations**

In their study on absence, Hill and Trist (1953; 1962) contributed a theory of absence as being the withdrawal from the stress of work situations, claiming as evidence for this proposition certain patterns of absence and accident rates recorded over a four-year period in a large steel company. Withdrawal is the central explanatory concept; thus, individuals experiencing conflicts of satisfaction and obligations tend to express them through labour turnover, accidents, and unsanctioned absences (this is, absences without formal permission). Exactly how the conflict will be expressed depends on a sequence of three phases in the employee-organisation relationship (Hill & Trist, 1962).

During the early stages of employment, the desire to withdraw is expressed primarily in labour turnover (Hill & Trist, 1962). One important thing, as Hill and Trist (1962) pointed out, in this period, is that newcomers are ignorant of the prevalent norms of absences – they do not yet know how far they have this means of withdrawal at their disposal.

After the initial 'induction' crisis, the 'stayers' have had time to learn the prevailing absence culture to the point where they can operate it more freely (Hill & Trist 1962, p.340). Hill and Trist (1962) refer to this second phase as 'differential transit'. Subsequently the relationship stabilises, as the initial crisis recedes further and the individual reaches a third phase of 'settled connection' that has reduced levels of absence. Thus, the changes in withdrawal behaviour are explained by the internalisation of norms as individuals become aware of, and party to, the kinds of absence tolerated in the organisation.

However, if 'available, sanctioned outlets for stress' (absence that the employing authority retrospectively excuses) are insufficient, then hostilities toward the job environment are expressed in accidents and 'ailments'. According to Hill and Trist (1962), individuals accept that only so much absence without permission is allowed, and therefore may have recourse to minor illness (which, by the psychoanalytic interpretation, is characteristic of a depressive disorder). This is in contrast with the other kind of absence without permission, which reflects a more overt, paranoid expression of hostility.

Hill and Trist (1962) noted that the decline in accident rates with length of service conceals a rise in the numbers of accidents that are under the control of the individual. These represent a depressive mode of feeling and parallel the increase in uncertified sickness absence as another means of 'coping with stress'. The main fault, however, with this research is that there is a large gap between the level of explanation and the level of the empirical data, in other

words, the data consists of collective trends of accidents and absences, while the explanation treats of individual reactions (Hill & Trist, 1962).

In addition to the views of Hill and Trist (1962), Hanisch and Hulin (1991) theorised that absenteeism and other withdrawal behaviours (e.g., lateness and turnover) reflect invisible attitudes such as job dissatisfaction, low level of organisational commitment, or an intention to quit. According to this view, an employee who is absent from work is consciously or unconsciously expressing negative attachment to the organisation.

For this research, the perspective of Hanisch and Hulin (1991) on absence behaviour is relevant, as the aim is to test the hypothesis that employees with low job involvement and organisational commitment have higher levels of absenteeism.

#### **2.1.4 “Dynamic Conflict”**

The ‘withdrawal’ explanation offered by Hill and Trist (1962) had some subsequent influence on theoretical discussions by Ås (1962) and Knox (1961). Gadourek (1965) described the latter as ‘dynamic conflict’ theories. The conflict is located within the individual, and whether a person stays or withdraws is the result of a complex in incentives and stresses. Within the scope of this research the ‘dynamic conflict’ theory will not be addressed.

#### **2.1.5 Social Exchange**

Chadwick-Jones et al., (1982) presented a case for the theory of absenteeism that is social, not individual in emphasis. As a first step Chadwick-Jones et al., (1982) assumed the interdependency of members of work organisations. It seems obvious that individuals do have some mutual obligations to peers, subordinates, and superiors (as well as other relationships outside the work situation). In this context the rights and duties of individuals are both subject to,



and representative of, a set of rules about activities in the work situation. What individuals do is therefore likely to be in answer to, on behalf of, in defence of, as well as achieving a compromise with the rules of the group.

The second assumption made by Chadwick-Jones et al., (1982), is that under the employment contract, some form of social exchange is taking place between employers and employees. Whatever they exchange in this situation – whether it be their time, effort, or skill or money, security, congenial friends, or anything else - it will be only what is possible for employees in the organisation. Exchanges may be conceived as between individuals and work groups, or between work groups and management, but it would not be realistic to conceive of the exchange between ‘the individual’ and ‘the organisation’ while disregarding the social conditions and rules. In summary, then, the group is in the equation – on one or both sides – and the explanation use must recognise it.

Chadwick-Jones et al., (1982) think of social exchange between employees and employers as developing in, or as revealed by, a pattern of behaviour in the work situation that includes absences with all the other factors that constitute the contract, formal and informal, between employers and employees. Formal factors include pay, hours, disciplinary rules, job duties, and promotion lines. Informal ones include supervisory styles, peer group relations, and – salient to their analysis – absence from work. Chadwick-Jones et al., (1982) however, do point out that absences may not enter into the exchange at all, insofar as some employees or employee groups, especially those with higher status – supervisors in factories, managers in banks – are absent very little or hardly at all. It is quite possible, however, that managers possess greater control over the allocation of their working time and may take periods of ‘time out’ that are not recorded.

Absenteeism levels reflect the social exchange within an organisation and that it is ‘agreed’ behaviour. This implies that employees understand that their absences should fall within certain limits and, therefore, those employees’

decisions to be absent or to attend conform to a normative frequency level (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982). Employees can be expected to have a definite notion of the appropriate frequency and duration of their absences. The question for them is not only whether to be absent today, but how often they have already been absent in this month or year.

Within the scope of this research the social exchange theory will not be addressed.

### **2.1.6 Withdrawal**

According to Chadwick-Jones et al., (1982), absence from work, where work is defined by the employee's presence at a particular location (office or workshop) for a fixed period each day, can be interpreted as an individual act of choice between alternative activities; as withdrawal or escape from surveillance; as individual or group resistance to an inflexible system. Thus, absence may also be viewed as a stratagem in inter-group relations, as a defensive or aggressive act in inter-group conflict (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982). For the purpose of this research this theory has relevance, as the reasons for absence behaviour could be related to a choice of alternative activities instead of attending work.

### **2.1.7 Non-attendance**

Another definition of absenteeism refers to the non-attendance of employees for scheduled work (Gibons, 1966; Johns, 1978; Jones, 1971). The definition distinguishes absenteeism from other forms of non-attendance that are arranged in advanced (e.g. vacations) and specifically avoids judgements of legitimacy associated with absent events that are implied by as sick leave. This definitional emphasis seeks to focus on the key organisational consequences of unscheduled non-attendance – instability in the supply of labour to the organisation resulting in the disruption of scheduled work processes and the loss

of under utilisation of productive capacity (Allen, 1981; Jones, 1971, Nicholson, 1977). For this research this definition will be applicable, as the researcher will not take into account absences due to vacation leave and sick leave taken over more than three days.

### **2.1.8 Organisationally excused vs. organisationally unexcused**

In terms of distinguishing among types of absence, one simple distinction that previous studies (Blau, 1985; Cheloha & Farr, 1980; Firzgibbons & Moch, 1980) made is between organisationally excused versus organisationally unexcused absences. Based on these studies, it seems that organisations operationalise excused absence to include (within defined limits) categories such as personal sickness, jury duty, religious holidays, funeral leave, and transportation problems. However, as Johns and Nicholson (1982) noted, absence behaviour can have a variety of meanings for individuals. This research will focus on the organisationally unexcused type of absenteeism.

### **2.1.9 Involuntary vs. voluntary**

March and Simon (1958) on the other hand, distinguished between two basic types of absences: involuntary (e.g. certified sickness, funeral attendance) and voluntary (e.g. vocation, uncertified sickness). *Voluntary* absences are under the direct control of the employee and are frequently utilised for personal aims. Conversely, *involuntary* absences are beyond the employee's immediate control. Hence, voluntary rather than involuntary absences from work may reflect job dissatisfaction and lack of commitment to the organisation.

The theory of social exchange in this study will have relevance as, from the analysis of the attendance records and the lack of action taken against the employees, it would seem that within the security group at an 'unwritten' level a

certain amount of absence is tolerated (by the supervisors and not by the rest of the organisation).

It can be seen from these definitions that an absent employee is one who should be at work but has failed to attend. However, they do not specify whether that absence is voluntary (under the control and motivation of the employee to attend), or involuntary (beyond the control and ability of the employee to come to work), both types being forms of unscheduled non-attendance which disrupt the labour supply and consequently, the production process of the organisation (Hammer and Landau, 1981). For this research, the focus will be on voluntary absences.

#### **2.1.10 A four-category taxonomy**

Blau and Boal (1987) presented a four-category taxonomy describing the *meanings* of absence. These categories are medical, career enhancing, normative and calculative. In the *medical category*, absence is viewed as a response to various infrequent and uncontrollable events (illness, injury, fatigue, and family demands). If such an absence (medical) occurred, it probably would be operationalised as a sporadically occurring excused absence (Blau & Boal, 1987). In the *career-enhancing category*, absence is depicted as a mechanism that gives the employee a further choice to pursue task- and career-related goals (Blau & Boal, 1987).

For the *normative category*, absence is viewed less as a motivated behaviour and more as a habitual response to the norms of the work group (organisation) regarding absence (Blau & Boal, 1987). As such, this type of absence probably would operationalise as a consistently occurring excused absence. More importantly, rather than absenteeism appearing as a random walk, as with the medical category, definite patterns will emerge. Thus, for this group, it would be expected not only to predict frequency, but also when absenteeism will happen.

Finally the *calculative* absence is viewed as a coin of exchange (Blau and Boal, 1987; Johns & Nicholson, 1982) in either fulfilling or modifying the implicit social contract between the employee and employer, and as a time allocation strategy for enhancing non-work outcomes. This type of absence would be operationalised in terms of the employee using a certain number of excused and unexcused absences permitted by the organisation, depending on how much the employee felt he or she should modify the implicit social contract. It could be predicted that an extremely apathetic employee (low job involvement and organisational commitment) would take full advantage by using both kinds of absence. Thus, the absolute frequency and total number of days absent should be greatest for workers who are the most apathetic.

From the theoretical perspectives provided, the informal contract (Gibson, 1966) and withdrawal from the stress of work situations (Hill & Trist, 1953, 1962) has particular reference to this research. The “dynamic conflict” (Gadourek, 1965) theory has some relevance. The research on absenteeism theories is relatively dated and no new perspectives on absenteeism theory were evident from the literature reviews. Research on absenteeism seemed to have built on the initial theories and time and again highlighted the lack of theory formulation due to the complexity of the absenteeism construct.

The meaning of absenteeism applied in this research refers to Blau and Boal's (1987) calculative category. The types of absenteeism that will be investigated during this research refer to the organisationally unexcused, calculative and voluntary absenteeism.

Based on the theoretical perspectives discussed, the definition formulation of absenteeism will now be presented in section 2.3 of this chapter.

## 2.3 DEFINITIONS OF ABSENTEEISM

Owing to the large amount of research conducted on absenteeism, there are many variations to the definition of absenteeism, each one specific to the work of the researcher at the time. For the purpose of this research, an overview of the various definitions of absenteeism being used in research will be presented. Based on this, the researcher will provide a working definition of absenteeism that will be applicable for this research.

- Absence constitutes a single day of missed work (Martocchio & Jimeno, 2003).
- Absence occurs whenever a person chooses to allocate time to activities that compete with scheduled work, either to satisfy the waxing and waning of underlying motivational rhythms (Fichman, 1984), or to maximise personal utility (Chelius, 1981).
- An individual's lack of physical presence at a given location and time when there is a social expectation for him or her to be there (Martocchio & Harrison, 1993).
- Absenteeism refers to the non-attendance of employees for scheduled work (Gibsson, 1966; John, 1978; Jones, 1971).

A working definition of absenteeism for this research is that absenteeism is defined as a failure of an employee to report to work when he/she is scheduled to do so (unexcused absence). The absence that occurs refers to short periods of absence taken over a period of one year.

This contributes to the first literature aim, namely to conceptualise the construct of employee absenteeism, the origins and consequences in the workplace (see 1.3.2.1 (a)).

A further aspect of this literature aim as outlined in chapter 1 section 1.3.1, is to highlight the origins and consequences of employee absenteeism. These origins will be discussed next.

## **2.4 ORIGINS OF ABSENTEEISM**

Research on absenteeism over the past years, particularly conceptual work, has focused on absenteeism's origins or causes. The vast number of predictions these theories and hypotheses make, the breadth of approaches they take, and the scope of evidence they have generated all make one thing clear: absenteeism does not have a simple etiology (Johns, 1997). Harrison and Martocchio (1998), through their review of absenteeism research, indicated that literature suggests five loosely defined classes of variables hypothesised to be origins of absence which are (a) personality; (b) demographic characteristics; (c) job-related attitudes; (d) social context and (e) decision-making mechanisms.

### **2.4.1 Personality**

Researchers have suggested for decades that enduring personality traits account for absenteeism's moderate stability over time and situations. "Absence-proneness" emerged as a term describing this idea (Harrison & Price, 1993). Johns (1997) has labelled this perspective the "deviance" approach. Porter and Steers (1973) proposed that employees with extreme levels of emotional instability, anxiety, low achievement orientation, aggression, independence, and sociability were likely to be the most frequent absentees. Hogan and Hogan (1989) asserted that those who are at fairly high levels of hostility, impulsiveness, social insensitivity, and alienation are more prone to engage in delinquent work behaviours such as absenteeism. Ferris, Bergin and Wayne (1989) presented a more differentiated view, proposing that personality dimensions also moderate situational and attitudinal relationships with absenteeism.

## 2.4.2 Demographics

Many studies have accumulated in which gender, age, tenure, education level, and family characteristics have been measured and as evidence accumulated, demographic variables were brought into broadly inclusive and inductive absenteeism models (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998). The most influential and often cited example of such a model was developed by Steers and Rhodes (1978, 1984), which introduced a series of propositions implying that an individual's demographic characteristics (personal factors, family characteristics) indirectly influence absenteeism through sets of medial variables (such as expectations and job satisfaction) and proximal constructs (attendance motivation and ability to attend). These proximal constructs are also predicted to interact – the effects of attendance motivation are tempered or neutralised by low ability to attend. The underlying premise of Steers and Rhodes' model (1978) is that an employee's short-term motivation and ability to attend work are the direct precursors of attendance (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998).

Brooke (1986) proposed a revised and more extended model than that of Steers and Rhodes (1978, 1984). He predicted additional, direct inputs of health-related (e.g., alcohol use) and organisational constructs (e.g., permissiveness) to absenteeism, formulated more precise definitions of existing constructs, and argued for additive rather multiplicative effects. Marcus and Smith (1985) presented a sociological model of absenteeism that included demographic characteristics. Their basic contention was that previous research had concentrated too heavily on attitudinal determinants of absenteeism, and that a more fruitful approach would concentrate on absence norms, customs, and socialisations.



### **2.4.3 Attitudes**

The main conceptual paradigm for absenteeism was to treat absence taking as individual-level avoidance or withdrawal from a disliked work situation (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998). Steers and Rhodes (1978), however, assigned job attitudes a central place in their early model, predicting that the effects of all other job-related and organisational variables on absence would work their way through job satisfaction. Job attitudes are the only mid-term engine driving absenteeism in Rosse and Miller's (1984) cybernetic theory of job adaptation, and in the withdrawal theory of Hulin, Roznowski and Hachiya (1985), although both models propose behavioural responses to dissatisfaction other than absence. These models also include 'evaluation of alternatives or 'behavioural intentions' as penultimate steps to absence. Other job attitude theorist relegate a much weaker role to job satisfaction. Blau and Boal (1987) omit it entirely, instead emphasising two other forms of job-related attitudes as catalysts: organisational commitment and job involvement. Their arguments focus on the patterns of absenteeism and turnover likely to be manifest under combinations of those two attitudes.

### **2.4.4 Social Context**

Johns and Nicholson (1982) argued for a potent influence of the social environment on work absence, rejecting the traditional, implicit assumption that absence was a private behaviour that occurred without regard to interpersonal context. The influence of social context on absence is embodied in their conception of an absence culture, defined as "the set of shared understanding about absence legitimacy and the established 'custom and practice' of employee absence behaviour and its control" (p.136). Nicholson and Johns (1985) maintained that two factors shape absence cultures: (a) the values and beliefs of the larger society and its subcultures, and (b) the unique set of beliefs shared by virtue of membership in an organisation. Two themes, beliefs about absence

and assumptions about employment (psychological contract), describe the long-term character of societal-level absence culture. For example, virtually all cultures view serious illness as an acceptable reason for missing work (Rushmore & Youngblood, 1979), and this position has held for decades (Haccoun & Desgent, 1993). At the organisational level, the salience and nature of absence cultures can vary over different units (Martocchio, 1994) and over shorter, mid-term time periods.

#### **2.4.5 Decision-making**

Both economic (e.g., Chelius, 1981) and psychological (e.g., Harrison, 1995) researchers have depicted absence as the result of a daily choice process. In the economic approach, employees are assumed to make work attendance decisions in a way that strives toward utility maximisation, making themselves as happy as possible, given finite resources of time and money (Ehrensberg & Smith, 1985). A variety of marginal utility and cost functions have been proposed within this general axiom. For example, Winkler (1980) conceptualised absence in terms of work-leisure trade-offs, through which individuals maximise utility, subject to a budget constraint. A common prediction of the economic models is that individuals would take as many fully paid absence days in a given period as allowed or not penalised by their employers.

Although expected utility (anticipated affect) is part of the decision-making process in psychological theories (Fichman, 1984), it is just one of many issues thought to be considered by those facing the choices of absence or attendance at work (Harrison, 1995, Nicholson, 1977). Instead of drawing from decision-making constructs, however, Fichman's (1984) theory drew on a general theory of motivation, arguing that, to explain the timing of absence and attendance, the dynamic strengths of motives to engage in work versus non-work activities must be considered. Unfulfilled motives strengthen over time. This changing motive strength leads to switches between attendance and absence. If there were no

external constraints on time allocation, and persons could act on their motives without cost, then one could construct a deterministic model of the timing and duration of absence and attendance (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998).

Nicholson (1977) proposed that absence events were based on the extent to which an individual's choice or decision preceded it. Labelling this an A (unavoidable, no choice) - B (avoidance, choice) continuum of absence-inducing events, he argued that the relationship between such events and the likelihood of absence is influenced by attendance motivation or "work attachment". In turn this short-term construct is regarded as being a function of other mid-term and long-term variables such as work involvement and facets of the employment relationship. Martocchio and Harrison (1993) borrowed decision-making elements from the social psychology theories of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) and planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). These fluctuation cognitions combine additively to shape attendance intention, which then determines actual attendance. Harrison (1995) expanded this theory to include a choice function among intentions for alternative settings, as feelings of moral obligation as an input to attendance intentions and a feedback loop connecting attendance to the effects of future attitude, subjective norm, perceived control, and moral obligation.

This research will focus on job-related attitudes as the origin of absenteeism, particularly focusing on Blau and Boal's (1987) model (see section 1.5.2), emphasising two forms of job-related attitudes, namely organisational commitment and job involvement, as catalysts of absenteeism.

## **2.5 CONSEQUENCES OF ABSENTEEISM**

Research over the past few years has yielded relatively little cumulative knowledge regarding the consequences of employee absenteeism. Reviews of literature have consistently attributed the usually weak, often contradictory, and

generally inconclusive findings of previous research to a lack of theory formulation and the proliferation of bivariate analyses that have largely focused on correlations between job satisfaction or other job related attitudes and absenteeism (Chadwick-Jones, Nicholson & Brown, 1982; Goodman & Atkin, 1984; Johns & Nicholson, 1982; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Muchinsky, 1977; Porter & Steers, 1973; Steers & Rhodes, 1978, 1984).

One of the most frequent concerns of the consequences of absenteeism for organisation is that of cost. As pointed out in chapter 1 section 1.1, the cost of absenteeism is substantial and therefore organisations are interested in understanding this phenomenon and how to manage absenteeism. In summary, Hamilton-Atwell (2003) pointed out that the cost of absenteeism and the impact thereof on productivity alone is enough to shock any human resources managers out of any state of complacency they might have toward absenteeism. For 1% of the work force that is absent, production levels will drop by 2,5%. But the toll of absent employees is significantly more than only a 2,5% drop in production. Table 2.1 summarises the additional implications of unmanaged absenteeism (Hamilton-Atwell, 2003).

Table 2.1 *The toll of absenteeism (Hamilton-Atwell, 2003)*

Productivity	Relationships	Service Quality	Attitudes
Production delays while waiting for temporary staff	Friction amongst frequent workers and absent ones	Late deliveries	Absence becoming the accepted norm
Production loss whilst aligning temporary staff	Morale problems within groups	Dissatisfied customers	Employees developing an attitude that they have a 'right' to take time off
Diverted supervisory and management time	Increased friction between management and employees	Damaged image and reputation	Frequent employees are 'expected' to be absent to fit in with the group
Employees are wasted replacement employees	Erosion of discipline	Decline in the quality of finished goods	Standards of performance in organisation drop
Increased waste due to inexperience of temporary staff		Decline in competitiveness	

It is clear from table 2.1 that absence is a problem with costly and pervasive implications, not only for effective functioning and productivity, but also for relationships among people within the organisation.

Considering the cost associated with absenteeism, it is important to note that absenteeism does not invariably lead to reduced operating efficiency. Staw and Oldham (1978), for example pointed out that some absenteeism might actually facilitate performance instead of inhibiting it. That is, absenteeism relieves dissatisfied workers of job-related stress and in some cases may allow them to be more productive when they return to work. This contention that absences serve as safety valves for discharging accumulated stress is part of several theories (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998). Harrison and Martocchio (1998) have found little evidence that this is indeed experienced rather than being merely an anticipated consequence of absenteeism. Hackett and Bycio (1996) noticed downward and then upward shifts in affective and control variables in a small sample of nurses going through working, then absent, then working day cycles. They suggested that absenteeism served a maintenance rather than affect-enhancing function.

Fitzgibbons and Moch (1980) have identified at least three conditions or situations that might mitigate or even eliminate the consequences of absenteeism on operating efficiency. These situations are (a) jobs that have been 'people proofed' by automating production and reducing the role of employees to machine motors; (b) work environments that anticipate and adjust for expected absenteeism; (c) instances where employees have little direct effect on plant-level efficiency. According to Fitzgibbons and Moch (1980), managers can have a significant influence on improving operating efficiency in certain types of work environments if they can succeed in reducing absenteeism.

Goodman and Atkin (1984) build on the earlier ideas of Mowday et al., (1982) to bring together a broad array of possible positive and negative consequences of

absence taking. They organised these consequences by their effect on a variety of constituencies: the individual, co-workers, work group, managers, organisation, union, family and society as a whole (see table 2.2). They acknowledge that their list is not comprehensive and that situations do vary. The effects may not always be felt immediately (lagging), and the duration of absences could not determine the different consequences.

Table 2.2 *Consequences of Absenteeism (Goodman & Atkin, 1984)*

	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
<b>Individual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of job-related stress</li> <li>• Meeting of non-work role obligations</li> <li>• Benefits from compensatory non-work activities</li> <li>• Compliance with norms to be absent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of pay</li> <li>• Discipline, formal or informal</li> <li>• Increased accidents</li> <li>• Altered job perception</li> </ul>
<b>Co-workers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job variety</li> <li>• Skill development</li> <li>• Overtime payment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased work load</li> <li>• Undesired overtime</li> <li>• Increased accidents</li> <li>• Conflict with absent worker</li> </ul>
<b>Work group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater flexibility in responding to absenteeism and to production problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased productivity</li> <li>• Increased accidents</li> </ul>
<b>Organisational Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater job knowledge base in workforce</li> <li>• Greater labour-force flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased productivity</li> <li>• Increased costs</li> <li>• More grievances</li> <li>• Increased accidents</li> </ul>
<b>Union Officers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulated &amp; strengthened power position</li> <li>• Increased solidarity among members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weakened power situation</li> <li>• Increased cost in processing grievances</li> </ul>
<b>Family</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to deal with health or illness problems</li> <li>• Opportunity to manage marital problems</li> <li>• Opportunity to manage child problems</li> <li>• Maintenance of spouse's earnings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less earnings</li> <li>• Decline in work reputation</li> <li>• Aggravated marriage and child problems</li> </ul>
<b>Society</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of job stress and mental health problems</li> <li>• Reduction of marital-related problems</li> <li>• Participation in community political processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of productivity</li> </ul>

An interesting feature of their framework was the explicit recognition of the conflict between positive consequences for one constituency, such as the reduction of job-related stress for the absentee, and the negative consequence for another, greater stress because of a higher work load for the absentee's co-

workers, which creates a distinct social dilemma (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998) within the organisation.

Another potential consequence of absenteeism is turnover. One perspective casts absence as an alternative to turnover, rather than a precursor (Dalton & Todor, 1993). Staw and Oldham (1978) have argued and found evidence that absence provides coping opportunities outside the work place, especially when a person holds a job that is incompatible with his or her abilities and preferences. Mitra, Jenkins and Gupta (1992) on the other hand, found meta-analytic support for the progression model, which presumes that the problems that instigated absence will persist, leading to a move from temporary (absence) to permanent (quitting) withdrawal.

It would seem that the predominant negative consequences of absenteeism across all areas of the organisation are those of decreased productivity and increased cost. ACSA has certainly felt these consequences; therefore the aim of this research is to understand and possibly predict absenteeism in order to manage it more effectively.

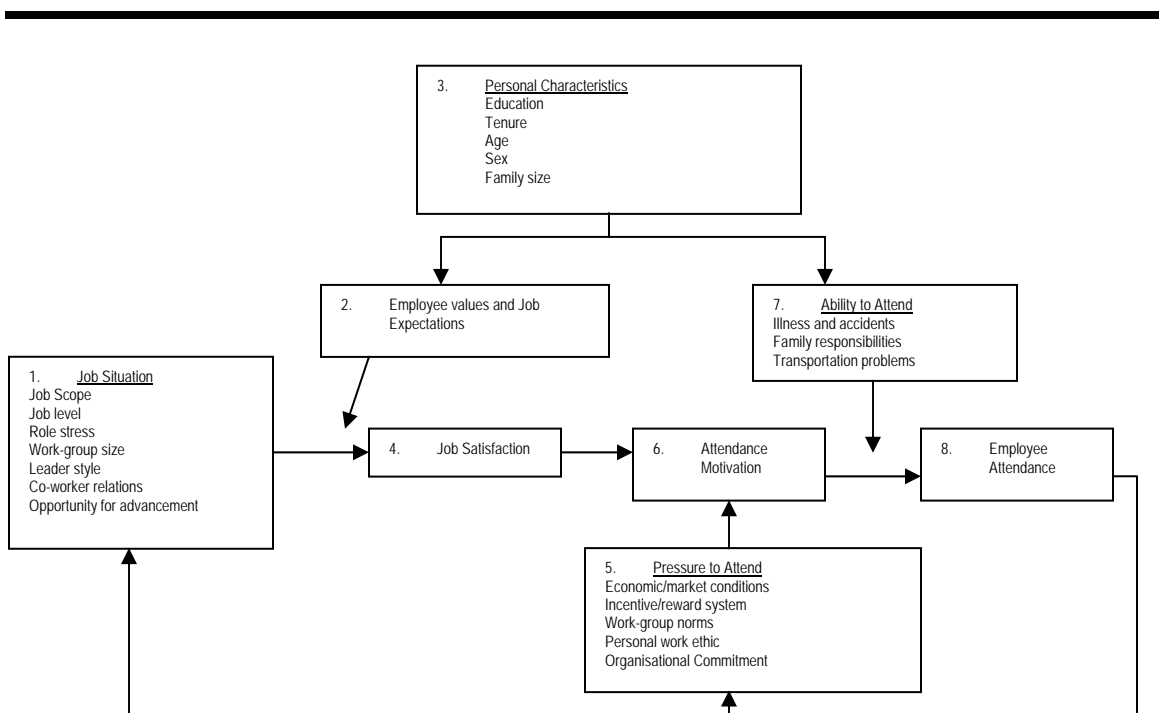
## **2.6 MODELS OF EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM**

The dominant model of employee absenteeism in the academic literature is that of Steers and Rhodes (1978, 1984). This model incorporates both voluntary and involuntary absenteeism and was based on a review of over 100 studies of absenteeism (Steers & Rhodes, 1978). Briefly stated, the model of Steers and Rhodes (1978) posits that employee attendance is largely a function of two important variables: a) an *employee's motivation* to attend and b) an employee's *ability to attend*. Although not explicitly stated by them, the determinants of attendance motivation appear to relate to "voluntary" absenteeism, whereas the ability to attend variables seems to refer to "involuntary" absenteeism. Detail on

the Steers and Rhodes model (1978) will be discussed under approach-avoidance behaviour (see section 2.6.1).

### 2.6.1 Absence as “Approach-Avoidance” Behaviour

Most absence studies using job satisfaction as their explanation for the absence are describing avoidance behaviour. In addition, the Steers and Rhodes (1978) model uses decision-making or expectancy model elements to study approach-avoidance behaviour. Withdrawal research also utilised this behavioural theory. According to the model, Steers and Rhodes (1978) suggest that an employee’s attendance is largely a function of two important variables: attendance motivation (see Box 6) and ability to attend (see Box 7) in figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1**

*The 1978 model of Steers and Rhodes’s explaining employees’ attendance behaviour: major influences on employee attendance*



Seven aspects of the job situation have been identified by Rhodes and Steers (1981) as most likely to lead to increased job satisfaction (see Box 1). These are: increased job scope and job level, reduced stress, smaller work group sizes, considerate leadership, positive co-workers relations, and greater opportunities for advancement. Not all companies have the same expectations from a job, and individual values and expectations will determine how satisfaction is experienced with the job situation (see Box 2). These values and expectations have been shaped by the personal characteristics and backgrounds of the employees (see Box 3) and will change over their career stage. During the selection of new employees, the organisation should try to match individual and organisational expectations to measure satisfaction with the job.

Five major “pressures to attend” have been recognised as enhancing attendance motivation (Box 5), (Steers & Rhodes, 1978). These are economic and market conditions, incentive and reward systems, work-group norms, personal work ethic, and organisational commitment. Even if a person wants to go to work and has a high attendance motivation (Box 6), there are instances where attendance is not possible. The individual may not always have the choice of attendance. There are three unavoidable limitations on attendance (Box 7): a) illness and accidents; b) family responsibility; c) transportation problems.

The model described is a dynamic one, with employee absenteeism often leading to a change in the job situation, which, in turn, may influence subsequent attendance motivation. Steers and Rhodes (1978) felt that their model allowed for management analysis and problem solving, primarily because the model provides a diagnostic framework and identifies many areas in which major problems may lie, thereby suggesting specific intervention strategies instead of more general and costly ones. Brooke and Price (1989) provided a causal model of absenteeism, which modifies and extends the conceptual framework of Steers and Rhodes (1978). Their model includes routinisation, centralisation, pay, distributive justice, work involvement, role ambiguity, conflict and overload,

kinship responsibility, organisational permissiveness, job satisfaction, job involvement, organisational commitment, health status and alcohol involvement as the determinants of absenteeism.

Over the years researchers have reviewed the model with mixed support. Steers and Rhodes (1984) have suggested various modifications to improve the overall utility of the model. Firstly, the modified model highlights the presence of work-group norms and absence culture in recognition of the need to place absence research in a social context. Secondly, to use the term work attitudes in place of specifying only one of the attitudes in particular. Lastly, perceived ability replaces actual ability to attend work.

Withdrawal research also utilises approach-avoidance behaviour. The progression of the withdrawal hypothesis predicts a hierarchy among withdrawal behaviours, with lateness being followed by absence, which in turn results in resignation (Rosse, 1988). While Rosse (1988), Beehr and Gupta (1978) have found some support for relating the forms of withdrawal behavioural, Clegg (1983), concludes, "The generalisation notion of withdrawal is misleading" (p.88).

Though the dynamics and withdrawal models both fall within the approach-avoidance models, there are several differences between them. In the dynamics model, absence need not be a withdrawal from unpleasant work conditions but an approach to a more attractive non-work situation (Fichman, 1984). Withdrawal theory only allows for behaviour substitution in a compensatory fashion and thus, if work is not aversive, cannot predict absences with increased attendance duration as does the dynamics model (Fichman, 1989).

### **2.6.2 Absence is the outcome of an adjustment process**

The models of Gibson (1966) and Hill and Trist (1953) can be described as adjustment models. As job conditions change, the relationship between the

organisation and the employee is renegotiated. For example, absences are compensation for unattractive aspects of the job. Cultural and social expectations are included here in the employee's control of absenteeism.

Hill and Trist (1953, 1955) introduced the concept of an "absence culture" to describe how workers learn to adjust their behaviour to the stresses of remaining in employment. An absenteeism culture is created by every organisation. Allen and Higgens (1979) state that absenteeism has its own cultural norms that constitute the expected supported and accepted ways of behaving with regard to absences from work. These norms are often symptoms of larger organisational problems (Allen & Higgens, 1979). Given the complex nature of absenteeism antecedents, and the instability of absence phenomena, absenteeism needs to be placed within a social context (Allen & Higgens, 1979).

## **2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The above literature review has attempted to give the reader a broad conceptualisation of absenteeism and an indication of the size and complexity of the subject. When studying absenteeism, the problem is not a lack of research material but deciding what direction new work should take. Theories of absenteeism were discussed which were: informal contract perspective; perceived inequity; the withdrawal from the stress of work situations perspective; dynamic conflict perspective and the social exchange perspective, as well as withdrawal, non-attendance, organisationally excused vs. organisationally unexcused, involuntary vs. voluntary and lastly a four-category taxonomy.

Definitions of absenteeism were also provided and the meanings of absenteeism provided by Blau and Boal's (1987) calculative category will be used in this research. The positive and negative consequences introduced by Goodman and Atkin (1984) were also included in this literature review. Models of employee absenteeism were described, and for the purposes of this research the model

that of Steers and Rhodes (1978, 1984), focusing mainly on attendance behaviour, is proposed.

### **Remark**

This chapter satisfies the first literature aim of conceptualising the construct employee absenteeism, the origins and consequences in the workplace (see 1.3.2.1 (a)).

## **2.8 CHAPTER CONCLUSION**

This chapter complied with the guidelines on the research design phase, namely the literature review, discussed in chapter 1. It further followed the research methodology indicated in chapter 1, following phase 1 step 1: an analysis and integration of absenteeism, discussing the origins of absenteeism as well as the consequences of absenteeism within organisations.

In chapter 3, the two work-related attitudes, namely job involvement and organisational commitment, will be discussed from a theoretical perspective. The two constructs will be dealt with separately and at the end of the chapter they will be integrated in a conceptual framework indicating the relationship with absenteeism.

## CHAPTER 3

### WORK-RELATED ATTITUDES

In this chapter the literature review of the two work-related attitudes namely, Job Involvement and Organisational Commitment, will be presented. Each construct will be discussed separately with reference to the theoretical framework, the definition, antecedences, correlates and consequences of the construct. The two constructs will then be integrated into a conceptual framework and the relationship with the construct absenteeism will also be explained.

#### 3.1 THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO WORK RELATED ATTITUDES

This research will be testing the predictability of job involvement and organisational commitment as work-related attitudes with absenteeism. Most of the prior work on job involvement has focused on its ability to predict turnover and absenteeism, with special interest on the interaction between job involvement and organisational commitment as a predictor (Brown, 1996; Huselid & Day, 1991). This is based on the conceptual framework presented by Blau and Boal (1987), in which the framework emphasises the linking of job involvement and organisational commitment as work-related *attitudes* to turnover and absenteeism. The framework uses high and low combinations of job involvement and organisational commitment to predict turnover and absenteeism. Support for this interaction hypothesis has been found by field studies of turnover, turnover intentions, and absenteeism (Blau, 1986; Blau & Boal, 1989; Martin & Hafer, 1995; Mathieu & Kohler, 1990). Steel and Rentsch (1995) found that job involvement predicted low absenteeism over a 70-month period for U.S. government employees.

Previous studies examined either the relationship between organisational commitment, an organisational attitude, and absenteeism, or that between job involvement, a job attitude, and absenteeism (Sagie, 1998). Although organisational commitment and job involvement are closely correlated, they constitute empirically distinct constructs (Brooke, Russel, & Price, 1988; Shore, Newton, & Thornton, 1990). Gellatly's (1995) theoretical approach sees absence behaviour as a consequence of one's work-related attitudes and it could be expected that both organisational commitment and job involvement be negatively correlated with volitional absenteeism.

Consequently, the relationship between the two attitudes is likely to have a significant positive effect on absence. In other words, the total negative effect of the two related attitudes on absence is lower than the sum of their negative individual effects. Blau (1986), Blau and Boal (1989), as well as Mathieu and Kohler (1990), observed similar effects concerning organisational commitment and job involvement. Another work-related attitude generally referred to in literature is the intention to leave the organisation, but this will not receive any attention during this specific research.

In addition to the observation of work-related attitudes, Sagie (1998), Blau (1986), Blau and Boal (1989), Mathieu and Kohler (1990), and Morrow (1983) also indicated that job involvement and organisational commitment represent two related but distinct types of work-related attitudes.

Literature suggests that the distinct different constructs of job involvement and organisational commitment are viewed as work attitudes. It is however not clear from the research done whether differences between these constructs are due to the type of attitude (satisfaction vs. commitment) or the focus of the attitude (job versus the organisation) (Shore, Newton & Thornton, 1990). According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1977), attitudes are directed at entities that may be defined by four different elements including attitudes towards targets, toward actions, toward

contexts, toward times, or toward any combination of elements. The work of Ajzen and Fishbein (1977) suggests that attitudes with different targets are distinct. Organisational attitudes may reflect more general employment policies and practices. In contrast, job attitudes may reflect the type of work, task, and immediate supervision experienced on the job.

The two work-related attitudes will be discussed in more detail in the following sections, starting with job involvement.

### **3.2 JOB INVOLVEMENT**

Since the job involvement construct was introduced by Lodahl and Kejner (1965), hundreds of empirical studies relating to a variety of personal and situational characteristics in a diversity of work settings have been conducted. From an organisational perspective, job involvement has been considered the key to activating employee motivation (Lawler, 1986) and a fundamental basis for establishing competitive advantage in business markets (Lawler, 1992; Pfeffer, 1994). From an individual perspective, it has also been considered to be essential to personal growth and satisfaction within the workplace, as well as to motivation and goal-directed behaviour (Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Khan, 1990; Lawler & Hall, 1970). Increasing job involvement can enhance organisational effectiveness and productivity by engaging employees more completely in their work and making work a more meaningful experience (Brown, 1996).

Job involvement is an important factor in the lives of most people. Work activities consume a large proportion of time and constitute a fundamentally important aspect of life for most people (Brown, 1996). People may be stimulated by and drawn deeply into their work or alienated from it mentally and emotionally. The quality of one's entire life experience can be greatly affected by one's degree of involvement in, or alienation from, work (Argyris, 1964; Levinson, 1976). A state of involvement implies a positive and relatively complete state of engagement of

core aspects of the self in the job, whereas alienation implies a loss of individuality and separation of the self from the work environment (Argyris, 1964; Kanungo, 1982b; McGregor, 1960). Kanungo (1979, 1982b) considered involvement and alienation to be polar opposites.

In their review of literature, Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) pointed out that there is a great deal of conceptual confusion and a proliferation of terms in theorising about the construct labelled job involvement. Brown (1996) also stated that a number of significant conceptual and methodological questions regarding job involvement have been raised and debated but not resolved. These issues include specifying the conceptual domain of job involvement, evaluating commonly used scales, and building a conceptual framework for identifying related constructs as antecedents, correlates or consequences (Brown, 1996).

In the following section a brief overview of the three theoretical perspectives on job involvement as well as the definitions, the antecedents, correlates, and the consequences of job involvement will be discussed. The connection between these perspectives and the current research will also be examined.

### **3.2.1 Theoretical framework of job involvement**

In the literature review that was conducted for this research, it was evident that various theories and perspectives exist on job involvement, although somewhat inconsistent, however, sufficient common ground was found between the most important theoretical perspectives on the construct. These theoretical perspectives presented by researchers such as Lodahl and Kejner (1965) and Kanungo (1982) have been used as a basis for most of the empirical studies of more recent research. The researcher, therefore, felt that it would still be relevant to refer to these perspectives.



Kanungo's (1982b) operationalisation of job involvement was a reaction against several specific dimensions of excess meaning in Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) scale. These included the mixing of items tapping (a) cognitive and affective states, (b) the individual's involvement in work in general as well as in the specific job, and (c) intrinsic motivation as well as job involvement. Kanungo (1982b) argued that a person's psychological identification with the job depended on both need saliency and perceptions about the job's potential for satisfying salient needs.

Based on this way of defining job involvement, Kanungo (1982b) also argued that existing scales were therefore inadequate to measure job involvement. Of the commonly used scales to measure job involvement, Kanungo's (1982b) scale is based on the clearest and most precise conceptualisation of the construct. It clearly identifies the core meaning of the construct as a cognitive state of the individual, is not contaminated by items tapping concepts outside of this core meaning, and separates job involvement from antecedent and consequent constructs (Brown, 1996).

Influential contributions to the managerial literature (Lawler, 1986; Pfeffer, 1994) have suggested that fostering job involvement is the key to unlocking employees' motivational and performance potential, but empirical research has not demonstrated how, or even whether, job involvement enhances individual performance. Processes by which job involvement results in personal growth and satisfaction for individuals are similarly unknown (Brown, 1996).

In a smaller number of studies, researchers have explicitly considered how job involvement is causally related to other constructs. Cheloha and Farr (1980) found that the relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism was mediated by job involvement in a study of state government employees. However, Hammer, Landau, and Stern (1981) found that job involvement was not related to absenteeism after controlling for job satisfaction, organisational

commitment, and demographic variables in an employee-owned firm. Smith and Brannick (1990) concluded that job involvement influences job satisfaction both directly and indirectly (i.e., through the mediation of both role conflict and expectancy).

Kohler and Mathieu (1993) found that job involvement, along with other “affective reactions” (e.g., organisational commitment, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, and job tensions), fully mediated the effects of work perceptions on absences in a sample of bus drivers. Noe and Schmitt (1986) discovered that job involvement has a positive antecedent effect on career planning and learning for educators in training for principals. Stumpf (1981) concluded that both work performance and work satisfaction had antecedent influences on job involvement.

The meta-analysis conducted by Brown (1996) strongly supported the conceptualisation of personal and situational variables as antecedent influences on job involvement. Although it is logical to posit that work outcomes, such as performance, absenteeism, and turnover, are primarily consequences of job involvement (Blau & Boal, 1987; 1989; Lawler, 1986), the aggregated data revealed only weak relationships. It is likely that unidentified psychological and behavioural linkages (e.g., emotion, motivation, effort, creativity, cooperation, teamwork and isolation) mediate relationships between job involvement and work outcomes (Brown, 1996).

Although it is more difficult to specify intuitively the ordering of relationships between job involvement and other job attitudes, such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), Brown’s (1996) conceptual framework specifies job involvement as primarily an antecedent in these relationships. Although these relationships are likely reciprocal, conceptual grounds exist for positioning the casual priority of job involvement (Brown, 1996).

Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) reported that correlates have been used in support of arguments that job involvement is determined by personal characteristics; situational characteristics; both personal and situational characteristics and personal and situational characteristics each independently. As some researchers, such as Brown (1996), refer to these variables, the researcher decided to describe each of the variables briefly.

### *3.2.1.1 Individual difference variable*

The term “individual difference” variable is used frequently in the job involvement literature (Morrow, 1983; Rabinowitz, Hall & Goodale, 1977). It refers to variables upon which individuals may differ, even if environmental / contextual factors remain constant.

Early researches (Dubin, 1956; & Lodahl, 1964) regarded job involvement as an individual difference variable. They saw job involvement as a product of early socialisation and an operationalisation of traditional work values such as the “Protestant Work Ethic”. Dubin (1956) conceived job involvement as inherent in the Protestant Work Ethic, the moral character of work and a sense of personal responsibility. Anyone who has internalised these traditional values will probably be “job involved”, regardless of the situational context within which he/she might be employed (Runyon, 1973).

Lodahl (1964) hypothesised that the main determinant of job involvement is a value orientation toward work that is learned early in the socialisation process. Lodahl (1964) further believed that job involvement operationalises the Protestant Ethic in some ways; since it is the result of the introjections of certain values of work into the self, it is probably resistant to changes in the person due to the nature of the particular job. Work done by Siegel (1969) concurred with Lodahl’s (1964) point of view.

Hall and Mansfield (1971) suggested that if job involvement is indeed a personal characteristic, then there should be little change in it during periods of organisational stress. Hulin and Blood (1968) also focused on the notion of individual differences. They felt that as a result of extra work socialisation processes, many blue-collar workers in urban industrial environments have no desire for ego need gratification while on the job. In contrast to the job-involved individual, these workers mainly view their job as a means to an end – satisfying their primary need off the job.

Support for this position was sought by investigating the correlations between job involvement and quantifiable variables that might have represented individual differences. Of these, the only variables showing fairly consistent correlations with job involvement were age, education, internal locus of control, higher order need strength and finally measures of the Protestant Work Ethic. All these relationships were in a positive direction (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977).

Morrow (1983) cited evidence supporting the hypothesis that job involvement is a function of the person, and that it is determined independently of situational variables. Morrow (1983) supported Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) finding consistently positive relationships between job involvement, and age, internal locus of control and higher order need strength.

The strongest support for the idea of job involvement being an individual difference variable came from research into the stability of job involvement scores over time. The rationale was that, if it is a personality factor, it should remain fairly constant. Test-retest reliability coefficients indicated stability over time, and coefficients of above 0,70 over a twenty month period were reported by Rabinowitz and Hall (1977). This does indicate relative stability; however, they gave little evidence of any strong situational changes that might have threatened the stability, even if job involvement were entirely situationally determined.

In concluding this section, there is some evidence of job involvement as an individual difference variable. Weak evidence exists for relating job involvement with absenteeism. Stronger evidence exists showing job involvement may also be a function of the situation.

### *3.2.1.2 Job Involvement as a function of the situation*

Vroom (1962) has suggested that job factors can influence the degree to which an employee is involved in his/her job. A person becomes ego-involved in his/her work performance to the extent that performance is perceived to be relevant to certain aptitudes, abilities, or other attributes that are central to his/her self-conception.

Participative management theorists (Argyris, 1964, & McGregor, 1960) placed a minimal emphasis on job involvement as a personal characteristic, and stress involvement as a response to organisational conditions. They viewed the organisation as blocking the gratification of ego and growth needs, a result that leads to the decline or absence of individual involvement on the job. Specifically, McGregor (1960) placed responsibility on the organisation for the behaviour of employees, stating that how people behave is in large part dependent on the assumptions management makes about them. According to McGregor (1960), management draws from one of two sets of assumptions, Theory X or Theory Y.

Theory X assumptions (McGregor, 1960) hold that people have an inherent dislike for work and must be forced to perform. Additionally, people avoid responsibility, seeking only security. Theory Y, assumes that work is natural for people, that they will exercise self-control without the threat of force. Responsibility is sought rather than avoided. Theory Y, also suggests that intellectual potential is only partially expended, given the present state of organisational life. McGregor (1960) argues that the more management applies

Theory Y assumptions, the more it can expect improved worker involvement and performance.

Argyris (1964) also placed the burden on the organisation. He argued that although it is normal for individuals, as they mature, to develop desires for independence, awareness of self, etc., the organisation does not recognise this development. According to Argyris (1964), the organisation retards growth by applying controls, demanding passivity, requiring only a few shallow abilities. Thus, if an individual is to meet the demands of an organisation, he/she must, in effect, consent to regress rather than mature. As a result, the individual will become “psychologically” ill unless he/she finds some way of adapting to conditions.

Bass (1965) concluded his discussion of job involvement by echoing the feeling that six conditions lead to a strengthening of the variable: a) the opportunity to make more of the job decisions; b) the feeling that one is making an important contribution to company success; c) success; d) achievement; e) self-determination; f) freedom to set one’s own work pace.

### *3.2.1.3 Job Involvement as an Individual – Situation interaction*

Lawler and Hall (1970) suggested that the most realistic view of job involvement would be that it is a function of an individual-job interaction. They support the individual-difference point of view by expressing the feeling that people probably do differ in the degree to which they are likely to become involved in their job as a function of their backgrounds and personal situations. However, the situational viewpoint is also alluded to, since it is also probably true that other things being equal, more people will become more involved in a job that, allows them control and a chance to use their abilities than will become involved in a job that is lacking in these characteristics.

Farris (1971) assumed that job involvement was a function of the interaction of a person with his/her environment, thus not considering it solely an individual characteristic. Lodahl and Kejner (1965), although initially stating the individual difference viewpoint, nonetheless concluded their study by declaring "It seems clear that job involvement is affected by local organisational conditions (mostly social ones), as well as by value orientations learned early in the socialisation process"(p. 35).

Wanous (1974) theorised on the relationship between the individual's socialisation process and characteristics of the job. To Wanous (1974), one of the earliest determinants of an individual's work needs is his/her socialisation environment. The result of an individual's upbringing (Protestant Work Ethic values) could cause an individual to develop a general value orientation toward work that emphasises the importance of work in one's total self-esteem and reinforces the belief that work can hold intrinsic satisfaction.

Wanous (1974) speculated that the consequences of such values is that an individual is likely to state his/her own particular desires for job characteristics, such as autonomy, variety, challenge, feedback and task identity. Wanous (1974) believed that it is likely that an involvement-prone individual will become involved when holding a job with such characteristics.

#### 3.2.1.4 *Kanungo's restricted approach to job involvement*

Kanungo's (1979) approach to job involvement can be founded in a motivational framework which emphasises the analysis of the behavioural phenomenon at the individual level. Kanungo's (1979) restricted approach to job involvement focuses on the psychological identification factor, which brings conceptual clarity compared to the other approaches, and eliminates cultural biases related to self-esteem and intrinsic motivation factors (Perrot, 2005).

## **Summary**

According to Brown (1996), Kanungo's (1982a) scale of job involvement identified the core meaning of the construct as a cognitive state of the individual. In a small number of studies, the casual relation of job involvement and other constructs, such as job satisfaction, absenteeism, demographic variables, career planning and work performance, have been investigated with varying results. Determinants of job involvement, individual/personal; situational; both personal and situational characteristics have been discussed.

In this research the individual-situation interaction of Lawler and Hall (1970) will be used in terms of the theoretical framework. The next section of this chapter will focus on the antecedents, correlates and consequences of job involvement.

### **3.2.2 Definitions of job involvement**

Different interpretations of job involvement have evolved while studying the relationship of job involvement to numerous variables, including job characteristics, performance, turnover and absenteeism (Kanungo, 1982a). Kanungo (1982) conducted a literature review that revealed several different conceptualisations of job involvement, including job involvement defined as:

- the degree of importance of one's job to one's self-image (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965; Lawler & Hall, 1970);
- the degree to which an individual is actively participating in his/her job (Allport, 1943; Bass, 1965);
- the degree to which an individual's self-esteem or self-worth is affected by his/her perceived performance level (French & Kahn, 1962; Gurin, Veroff, & Feld, 1960); and
- generalised cognitive state of psychological identification with work, insofar as work is perceived to have the potentiality to satisfy one's salient needs and expectations (Kanungo, 1979)



For the purpose of this research, job involvement is defined as the extent to which the individual identifies psychologically with his/her job (Kanungo, 1979).

### **3.2.3 Antecedents of job involvement**

Brown's (1996) conceptual framework classifies selected personality traits, an array of job characteristics and supervisory behaviours, and role perceptions as antecedent influences on job involvement. These antecedents' influences represent different conceptual perspectives on the nature and causation of job involvement. Personality research illustrates the view that job involvement is primarily an individual difference construct whose origins are deeply rooted in individual disposition and socialisation (Brown, 1996). However, research relating job involvement to job characteristics, supervisory behaviours, and role perceptions assumes that situational influences determine the degree of job involvement (Brown, 1996). The interactionist perspective posits that personality and situational variables jointly influence the level of involvement (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977).

The antecedents of job involvement will now be discussed.

#### *3.2.3.1 Personality variables*

The individual difference perspective holds that job involvement results from socialisation processes that inculcate the importance of work as a virtuous and necessary activity as well as from other stable individual differences. Research relating job involvement to work ethic, e.g., Brief & Aldag, 1977; Morrow & McElroy, 1986; Saal, 1978 (as cited by Brown, 1996), illustrates this perspective. Other personality variables have also been studied as antecedents of job involvement. The most significant of these include locus of control, self-esteem, growth need strength, and internal motivation.

### 3.2.3.2 *Motivation*

Theoretical perspectives differ in the causal precedence they ascribe to motivation in relation to job involvement. The individual-difference perspective regards motivation primarily as an antecedent. The situationist perspective however suggests that motivation is primarily a consequence rather than an antecedent of job involvement. According to Brown (1996), the empirical consideration of the relationship between motivation and job involvement has been limited almost exclusively to the individual difference perspective. Motivation is likely to be both an antecedent and a consequence of job involvement, and theoretical assumptions and operationalisations are likely to affect the order of the relationship between motivation and job involvement specified and observed in individual studies.

### 3.2.3.3 *Job Characteristics and Supervisory Variables*

In an important stream of research, psychologists have also investigated job involvement primarily as an outcome of situational characteristics. It has been studied as a function of job characteristics, such as task autonomy, task significance, task identity, skill variety, and feedback, and of supervisory behaviours, such as leader consideration, participative decision-making, and amount of communication. Contrary to the individual difference perspective, the situationist perspective implies that job involvement changes when elements of the job context change (Brown, 1996).

Work environments that (a) provide a sense of meaningfulness of one's work, (b) offer control over the methods by which work is accomplished, (c) maintain clear and consistent behavioural norms, (d) include supportive relations with superiors and co-workers, and (f) offer the opportunity for personal growth and development are conducive to job involvement (Brown, 1996).

#### 3.2.3.4 *Role Perceptions*

Role perceptions may affect a job's potential for satisfying salient psychological needs. To the extent that a worker experiences conflicting demands from different role partners (role conflict) or uncertainty regarding role requirements and expectations (role ambiguity), the job's potential for satisfying salient psychological needs is likely to be reduced. Thus role conflict and role ambiguity should negatively affect job involvement (Fisher & Gitelson, 1983).

#### **Summary**

Brown (1996) classified variables frequently studied in relation to job involvement as antecedents, correlates or consequences. He remarked that in some cases (e.g., motivation, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment), these classifications are somewhat speculative and are based on theoretical premises developed. He attempted to classify variables on theoretical grounds to stimulate additional research seeking to clarify the structure of nomological relationships involving job involvement.

#### **3.2.4 Correlates of job involvement**

Correlates of job involvement include demographic variables and involvement in broader, work-related concepts, such as career and work. Brown (1996) regards demographic variables as correlates rather than antecedents of job involvement, even though they have temporal priority, because their conceptual links to job involvement are generally weak and no necessarily causal relationship exist.

Numerous demographic variables have been studied in relation to job involvement in a large number of studies. The most frequent studied demographic characteristics include age, tenure, education, gender, salary, and marital status. These have generally been weakly related to job involvement. Other variables classified as correlates include career commitment and work

involvement. These constructs are closely related to job involvement in a conceptual sense but they represent commitment to broader concepts than a specific job (Brown, 1996). It is not clear whether commitment to a specific job leads to greater commitment to work in general or to career commitment, or vice versa. It is logical, however, that involvement in a specific job is positively correlated with work and career commitment (Brown, 1996) and he considered these constructs correlates of job involvement.

### **3.2.5 Consequences of job involvement**

Work behaviours, job attitudes, and several important “side effects” of job involvement (e.g., work-family conflict, stress, somatic health complaints, and anxiety) are specified as consequences of job involvement (Brown, 1996). This will now be discussed.

#### *3.2.5.1 Work behaviours and outcomes*

A dominant theoretical assumption underlies the classification of work behaviours as consequences of job involvement. The assumption is that a cognitive state of identification with the job, based on perceptions of its potential for satisfying salient psychological needs, precedes and then triggers motivational processes that influence motivation, effort, and ultimately performance, absenteeism and turnover (Brown, 1996). This implies that some work behaviours (e.g., effort) are more closely related to job involvement, whereas others (performance, absenteeism, and turnover) are more distantly related (Brown, 1996). It further implies that more close outcomes of job involvement mediate indirect relationships with more distant outcomes (Brown, 1996). Such causal processes have received negligible empirical attention.

### 3.2.5.2 *Job attitudes*

Previous research has not established the causal ordering of job involvement with respect to job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Brown (1996) classified job satisfaction as a consequence of job involvement, even though reciprocal causation is likely. Brown (1996) regarded job satisfaction primarily as a consequence because cognitive appraisal of the potential for need satisfaction logically precedes actual needs satisfaction. It is also likely that actual satisfaction then reciprocally influences job involvement (Brown, 1996).

Brown (1996) also considered organisational commitment a consequence of job involvement, although the reverse order of causality may also occur. Prior research has not clarified, or even addressed, the causal precedence of job involvement with respect to organisational commitment. In most cases, it is likely that workers first become familiar with, and involved in, particular jobs and then develop commitment to the organisation as their psychological needs are satisfied over time (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Thus, even though the process may occasionally work in the opposite direction (e.g., when a person working in an uninvolved job becomes committed to the organisation and then moves to a more involving job), organisational commitment is more often likely to evolve from a state of job involvement (Brown, 1996).

### 3.2.5.3 *Side effects*

It is possible that high levels of job involvement may have negative social, psychological, and even physiological side effects. In a number of studies, (e.g., Higgins, Duxbury, & Irving, 1992; Wiener, Vardi, & Muczyk, 1981), research has investigated job involvement in relation to work-family conflict, stress, somatic health complaints, and anxiety. Brown (1996) classifies these as consequences of job involvement because excessive commitment of personal resources to, and preoccupation with, work may cause or aggravate these negative outcomes.

High levels of job involvement could possibly lead to trading off family commitments in favour of job commitments. Preoccupation with work may also cause stress, anxiety, and health complaints (Brown, 1996).

### **3.2.6 Summary**

The specific literature objective of conceptualising the two constructs of work-related attitude has been met through a review of literature, explaining job involvement. Conceptual frameworks on job involvement were presented, such as job involvement as an individual difference, a function of the situation, and individual-situation interaction. The individual-situation framework will be utilised for this research. Definitions, antecedents, correlates, and consequences of job involvement were also discussed. For the purpose of this research the definition of Blau (1985), defining job involvement as “the extent to which the individual identifies psychologically with his/her job” will be applied.

#### **Remark**

In the preceding sections of the chapter, the researcher satisfied the literature review aims for job involvement, specifically steps 1 through to 4 as described in chapter 1 section 1.7.

In order to meet the rest of the specific literature objectives, the second work-related attitude, organisational commitment will now be examined.

### **3.3 ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT**

The concept of organisational commitment has received considerable attention from both managers and behavioural scientists. The interest has been demonstrated not only in theoretical efforts to explain the construct but also in empirical efforts to determine the primary antecedents and outcomes of organisational commitment for example, Buchanan, 1974; Hall & Schneider,

1972; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972; Kanter, 1968; Mowday, Porter, & Dubin, 1974; Porter, Steers, & Boulian, 1974; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991, Randall, 1990; Salanick, 1977; Sheldon, 1971; Staw, 1977; Steers, 1977; Stevens, Beyer, & Price, 1978 (as cited in Dunham, Grube, & Castañeda, 1994). Throughout these studies, commitment has been repeatedly shown to be an important factor in understanding the work behaviour of employees.

Over the decades of study, organisational commitment has been approached from a variety of conceptual and operational perspectives (Dunham, Grube, & Castañeda, 1994). Most commitment studies can be categorised as assuming either an attitudinal or a behavioural perspective. The attitudinal variable is one of the most frequently studied variables in organisational behaviour research (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Riketta (2002) proposes that the main reason for the extensive and enduring research interest in attitudinal organisational commitment is that this commitment is assumed to influence almost any behaviour that is beneficial to the organisation such as performance, attendance, and staying with the organisation (also see Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Randall, 1990).

In this section of the chapter, the multidimensionality of organisational commitment will be presented. Firstly, organisational commitment will be discussed from a theoretical perspective followed by a definition of organisational commitment. The antecedents, correlates and consequences of organisational commitment will be briefly discussed. Finally, this information will then be integrated and the relevance of the various approaches to this research will be discussed.

### **3.3.1 Theoretical framework of organisational commitment**

Studies have revealed that progress has been good in clarifying the confusion about the meaning and characteristics of this concept (Steers, 1977). This has

largely been accomplished by the acceptance of the notion that no one view of commitment is fundamentally “correct” (Meyer, Allen, & Gellantly, 1990). A singular focus on a given view of commitment is, thus, gradually being replaced with a multiple components model of commitment.

### 3.3.1.1. *Typologies*

Several researchers have suggested typologies into which the various approaches to commitment can be categorised.

#### (a) *Etzioni*

Etzioni (1961) suggested that the power of authority that organisations have over individuals is based on the nature of the individual's involvement in the organisation. Etzioni (1961) identifies three forms of involvement or commitment. The first is *moral* involvement – based on the interaction of the organisation's goals, values, and norms and on an identification with authority. The second is *calculative* involvement – based on an exchange relationship developed between the individual and the organisation. The third is *alienative* involvement – a negative orientation where individual behaviour is severely constrained.

#### (b) *Kanter*

Kanter (1968) also suggested three types of commitment. Kanter's (1968) first type is *continuance* commitment – the member's dedication to the survival of the organisation. The second is *cohesion* commitment – an attachment to social relationships in the organisation brought about by the renunciation of previous ties or ceremonies, which enhance group cohesion. The third type is *control* commitment – the individual's attachment to organisational norms that shape behaviour in desired directions.



(c) *Staw & Salancik*

Staw (1980) and Salancik (1977) suggested the need to differentiate between commitment from an organisational behaviour viewpoint (attitudinal viewpoint) and commitment from a social psychological viewpoint (behavioural viewpoint). Attitudinal commitment deals with the process through which the individual comes to identify with the goals and values of the organisation and the individual's desire to maintain membership in the organisation. Blau and Boal (1987) view this as a more positive individual orientation towards the organisation. Behavioural commitment, however, deals with the process through which the individual's past behaviour binds that individual to the organisation. Blau and Boal (1987) refer to past actions of "sunk costs" (fringe benefits, salary as a function of age and tenure). According to Blau and Boal (1987), an individual becomes "committed" to an organisation because it has become too costly for him/her to leave.

*3.3.1.2 Sub-Constructs of Commitment*

Meyer and Allen (1984) conceptualised a multidimensional organisational commitment measure that drew on the early works of such researchers as Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974); Becker (1960); and Wiener and Vardi (1980). Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed a three-component model for organisational commitment that integrated a variety of alternative conceptualisations. Affective commitment is the first of such approaches and can be defined as an emotional attachment to the organisation via identification, involvement and enjoyed membership (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Normative commitment comprises a responsibility to the organisation and is an internalised moral obligation. Lastly, continuance commitment is a cost-based association developing from the magnitude and quantity of side-bet as well as the perceived lack of alternatives (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Allen and Meyer (1990) stated that each conceptual approach can be clearly distinguished via measurement, and that these measures can be correlated to the variety of antecedent variables in literature. These three sub-constructs of commitment will now be briefly discussed.

*(a) An affective perspective to organisational commitment*

Porter, Crampon and Smith (1976) stated that two aspects indicate an affective approach. Firstly commitment is a 'global and stable alternative linkage' between the individual and the employing organisation and secondly, that the individual's feelings are representative by commitment, and these are connected to the individual's desire to be attached to the work situation.

*(b) A normative view of organisational commitment*

Wiener (1982) distinguished between identification and normative-instrumental frameworks regarding commitment to the organisation. The identification perspective implies commitment to be an 'attitudinal intervening construct', which could range between antecedents and outcomes. These include the 'personality-need variables', as well as the personal-demographic variables (for example age and tenure).

By normative, Wiener (1982) implied that the commitment needs conceptualisation within a motivational perspective, which clearly distinguishes between normative and instrumental perspectives of behaviour in organisations. Wiener (1982) state that behavioural intention is determined by the individual's perception of the 'normative pressure' concerning the conducting of the act. Therefore as commitment increases, so too does the individual's predisposition to be led by actions, as opposed to the consequences of these actions.

Committed individuals enact specific behaviours due to the belief that these are morally correct rather than personally beneficial. The individual's moral standards pertaining to the enactment are established when the individual

'internalises expectations' about this behaviour enactment. These acts, when guided by normative pressures, are not dependent on original positive or negative reinforcement. Wiener (1982) therefore stated that organisational commitment must be defined from a subjective norm.

Wiener (1982) stated that the individual's internalised normative pressures to attain organisational goals and values must possess specific behavioural characteristics. These include:

- a personal sacrifice on behalf of the organisation;
- perseverance which does not depend on positive and negative reinforcement; and lastly
- personal preoccupation and devotion to organisational activities.

This implies that commitment is enhanced if the individual remains with the organisation irrespective of opportunistic availabilities. Tenure therefore is an insufficient predictor of overall commitment.

Allen and Meyer (1990) stated that the normative approach is a less common approach to commitment. The internalised moral obligation is a contributor to behaviour and is therefore, prominent in the individual's terminating employment with the organisation.

According to Wiener and Vardi (1980) in this type of commitment the individual should feel loyal to the organisation, should make sacrifices on behalf of the organisation, and lastly, that the individual should not oppose or criticise the organisation.

*(c) Perceived cost of continuance commitment to the organisation*

Another view to organisational commitment is that of continuance commitment, which implies that affective and normative commitment play only minor roles in

the conceptualisation of this variable (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Becker (1960), as previously discussed, pursued a perceived costs approach to organisational commitment based upon a series of side-bets.

Kanter (1968) refers to continuance commitment as a 'cognitive orientation', where costs are considered when leaving or remaining with the organisation. The cost or profit then compels departure or continued participation respectively. Kanter (1968) states that 'continuous commitment can be conceptualised as a commitment to the role in a social system.'

Rusbult and Farrel (1983), in a technical worker study, found that, prior to departing from the organisation, individuals experienced a decrease in rewards and an increase in cost. Those declining aspects were used to predict job commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990) integrated the side-bet viewpoint with the findings of Rusbult and Farrel (1983) and found that continuance commitment will develop due to the magnitude and quantity of side-bets, and secondly due to the perceived lack of alternatives. The latter increases the cost associated with departure. Continuance commitment will therefore be the strongest when availability of alternatives is few and the number of investments is high.

Many studies have examined the relationship between the different kinds of commitment and absenteeism. Overall, it appears that affective commitment has the strongest relation with absence behaviour (Meyer, 1997). The results for normative commitment are less consistent. Meyer, Allen & Smith (1993) found that normative commitment was negatively related to absenteeism, while Somers (1995) found no relationship between normative commitment and absenteeism. Continuance commitment has not found strong support in the absenteeism literature (e.g., Mayer & Schoorman, 1992).

## Summary

Various typologies have been presented in the previous section. Etzioni (1961) postulated that an employee's commitment is based on the nature of his/her involvement in the organisation such as moral, calculative and alienative involvement. Kanter (1968) suggested three types of commitment namely, continuance, cohesion and control commitment. Staw (1980) and Salanick (1977) indicated that organisational commitment should be viewed from an organisational behaviour perspective or attitudinal view and from a social psychological perspective or behavioural view. Meyer and Allen (1984) developed a three-component model that integrated sub-constructs namely, affective, normative and continuance commitment.

As the conceptual framework is used as basis for this research, linking job involvement and organisational commitment as work-related attitudes to absenteeism, the *attitudinal* approach of organisational commitment and the *affective* dimension of commitment will be used for this research.

### 3.3.2 Definitions of organisational commitment

There is still disagreement among researchers over the definition of organisational commitment (e.g. Cohen & Kirchmeyer, 1995; Dunham, Grube, & Castañeda, 1994; Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994; Iverson & Roy, 1994; Jaros, Jermier, Koehler & Sincich, 1993). However, most researchers consider that commitment consists of two distinct but related concepts or components, namely attitudinal and behavioural commitment. *Attitudinal commitment* (also known as affective organisational commitment) represents the degree of loyalty an individual has towards an organisation. This form of commitment emphasises an individual's identification and involvement in the organisation (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Organisational commitment is viewed as a more positive individual orientation toward the organisation; here, organisational commitment is defined as a state in which an employee identifies with a

particular organisation and its goals, and he/she wishes to maintain membership in the organisation in order to facilitate the organisation's goals.

In contrast, behavioural commitment reflects the process by which individuals link themselves to an organisation and focuses on the actions of the individuals. In the behavioural approach, the individual is viewed as committed to an organisation if he/she is bound by past actions of "sunk costs" (fringe benefits, salary as a function of age and tenure). Thus, an individual becomes "committed" to an organisation because it has become too costly for the employee to leave. In this approach, organisational commitment is depicted as more calculated in nature (Etzioni, 1961). Becker (1960) concentrated on what he termed the 'side-bet theory', which attempted to explain the process by which employees attached themselves to organisations through investments such as time, effort and rewards.

Building on the side-bets tradition, Meyer and Allen and their colleagues (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer et al., 1993; Meyer, et al., 1990; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellately, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989; Meyer and Allen, 1984, 1991) viewed affective, normative and continuance commitment as components of attitudinal commitment. Definitions of affective, normative and continuance commitment will now be provided.

#### 3.3.2.1 *Affective Commitment*

Buchanan (1974) integrated definitions of affective commitment prior to defining the affective approach. Buchanan (1974) uses the perspectives listed below.

- Commitment is defined as the willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organisation as well as an acceptance of the goals and values of that organisation.

- Commitment is a favourable evaluation and intention to pursue the organisation's goals.
- Commitment is the willingness to exert energy and loyalty as an emotion to the group.
- Commitment is the unwillingness to depart from the organisation.
- Lastly, commitment is an degree of belongingness.

Buchanan (1974) defined commitment as a 'partisan, affective attachment' to the organisation's goals and values, and the individual's relation to these goals and values. Commitment therefore has the components of identification, (with the organisation's goals), involvement, (in the work role in the organisation), and loyalty, (an affective feeling for the organisation).

Cook and Wall (1980) also utilised an affective definition of commitment. Organisational commitment refers to 'an affective reaction to characteristics' of the organisation. Affective reactions encompass the feelings of attachment, whilst the characteristics refer to the goals and values.

Allen and Meyer (1990) defined the affective component as an emotional attachment to the organisation via identification, involvement and enjoyment membership. Allen and Meyer (1990) emphasised that affective committed individuals remain with the organisation because of a 'want to' desire.

### *3.3.2.2 Normative Commitment*

Normative Commitment is described as the totality of internalised normative pressure to act in a way that is conducive to the organisation's goals and values (Wiener, 1982).

### 3.3.2.3 *Continuance Commitment*

Stebbins (1970) defines continuance commitment as the awareness of being unable to choose another social identity because of the penalties associated with making alterations. It is a psychological state, which is not only present because of tangible rewards but rather subjective penalties associated with the desire to terminate employment with the organisation.

Widely divergent definitions for organisational commitment are found throughout literature, specifically:

- an attitude or an orientation toward the organisation, which links or attaches the identity of the person to the organisation (Sheldon, 1971);
- the willingness of social actors to give their energy and loyalty to social systems, the attachment of personality systems to social relations which are seen as self-expressive (Kanter, 1968);
- a structural phenomenon which occurs as a result of individual-organisational transactions and alterations in side-bets or investments over time (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972);
- a state of being which an individual becomes bound by his/her actions and through these actions to beliefs that sustain the activities and his/her own involvement (Salanick, 1977);
- the process by which the goals of the organisation and those of the individual become increasingly integrated or congruent (Hall, Schneider, & Nygren, 1970);and
- the nature of the relationship of the member to the system as a whole (Grusky, 1966).

Further features are listed below.

- (1) Commitment includes something of the notion of membership; (2) it reflects the current position of the individual; (3) it has a special predictive potential, providing predictions concerning certain aspects of performance,



motivation to work, spontaneous contribution, and other related outcomes; and (4) it suggests the differential relevance of motivational factors (Brown, 1969).

- Commitments come into being when a person, by making a side-bet, links extraneous interests with a consistent line of activity (Becker, 1960).
- Commitment behaviours are socially accepted behaviours that exceed formal and/or normative expectations relevant to the object of commitment (Weiner & Gechman, 1977).
- Also present is a partisan, affective attachment to the goals and values, and to the organisation for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth (Buchanan, 1974).

Attitudinal organisational commitment defined by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) as the a state in which an individual identifies with a particular organisation and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in order to facilitate these goals, will be used for the purpose of this research.

### **3.3.4 Antecedents of organisational commitment**

Kacmar, Carlson and Brymer (1999) found through their research that researchers in general have gained support for relationships between organisational commitment and a variety of personality, demographic, and organisational variables for example: Balfour & Wechler, 1990; Blau & Boal, 1989; Bennett & Linden, 1996; Luthans, Baack, & Taylor, 1987; McFarlin & Sweetney, 1992; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Settoon, Vandenberg, & Lance, 1992 (as cited by Kacmar, et al., 1999). Figure 3.1 diagrams the antecedents and consequences of organisational commitment provided by Kacmar et al., (1999), of which the antecedents will be briefly discussed in the section below. The consequences indicated in the diagram will be discussed in section 3.4.



**Figure 3.1**

*Antecedents and Consequences of organizational commitment* (Kacmar, Carlson and Brymer, 1999).

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A variety of *demographic* variables have been found to be related to organisational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Age has been a positive predictor of commitment for a variety of reasons, such as for older workers alternative employment options generally decrease (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) and they may have more commitment to their organisations because they have a stronger investment and greater history with the organisation than do the younger workers (Dunham et al., 1994). In general, women have reported more commitment to their organisations than have men (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Marital status also has been found to relate to commitment, with married individuals having greater commitment to the organisation (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Several studies conducted by Green, Anderson, & Shivers, 1996; Kinicki & Vecchio, 1994; Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardern, 1995; Nystorm, 1990; Settoon et al., 1992 (as cited by Kacmar, et al., 1999) have examined the impact of *leader-member exchange* (LMX), the quality of the relationship between the supervisor and subordinate, has on organisational commitment). Despite the wide range of measures used, all of the studies reported a statistically significant and positive relationship between LMX and commitment.

*Distributive justice* refers to the perceived fairness or equity in the amount and type of rewards organisational members receive (Folger & Konovsky, 1989). Individuals will exhibit more commitment to an organisation they view as providing fair and equitable rewards for their performance than will individuals who feel cheated by their organisations. Although few studies have investigated this relationship, some empirical support for this positive relationship exists (McFarlin & Sweetney, 1992).

Iverson and Buttigieg (1999) have categorised antecedent variables for organisational commitment. These are set out below.

First there are the *Personal variables*, comprising the individual characteristics that employees bring to, or experience in the organisation. These consist of education, tenure in the organisation, tenure in a particular location, kinship responsibilities, job expectations, values, affectivity (positive and negative), and work motivation.

Next are the *Job-related variables*, including job hazards, autonomy, co-worker and supervisory support, job security, routinisation, stress, promotional opportunities, pay, distributive justice, relationship with management, and experiences of appreciation by the public.

*Environmental variables* relate to the non-work setting, including industrial relations climate and job opportunities.

Allen and Meyer (1990) have identified the following antecedents for affective commitment as:

- job challenge – the extent to which jobs are found to be challenging
- role clarity
- goal clarity

- goal difficulty
- receptiveness by management
- peer cohesion
- equity
- personal importance
- feedback
- participation, and
- dependence on the organisation.

These variables indicate that the individual requires a feeling of comfort in relation to the organisation, coupled with a personal feeling of work role competence.

### **3.3.4 Correlates of organisational commitment**

Empirical studies carried out on the topic of organisational commitment represent a rich collection of findings with respect to both the antecedents and consequences of the construct. It was suggested that the major influences on organisational commitment could be grouped into three categories: a) personal characteristics; b) job- or role-related characteristics; and c) work experience. In a study done by Mowday et al., (1980), commitment as measured by the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was regressed on several personal characteristics, job characteristics and work experiences. Other research suggested the need to add a fourth category of antecedents, namely, structural characteristics (Morris & Steers, 1980; Stevens, Beyer, & Price 1978).

The categories of organisational commitment will now be briefly discussed as it may help to explain the psychological and behavioural processes through which commitment to an organisation develops over time.

#### *3.3.4.1 Personal correlates of commitment*

Personal characteristics studied have included, age, tenure, educational level, gender, race and various personality factors. In general, commitment has been positively related to both age and tenure (Angle & Perry, 1981; Brown, 1969; Hall, Schneider & Nygren, 1970; Hrebiniak, 1974; Lee, 1971; Morris & Sherman, 1981; Sheldon, 1971). March and Simon (1958) noted that as age and tenure in the organisation increase, the individual's opportunities for alternative employment become more limited. This decrease in an individual's degrees of freedom may increase the perceived attractiveness of the present employer, thereby leading to increased psychological attachment.

In contrast to age and tenure, education has often been inversely related to commitment (Angle & Perry, 1981; Morris & Sherman, 1981; Morris & Steers, 1980; Steers, 1977). It has been suggested that this inverse relationship may result from the fact that more highly educated individuals have higher expectations that the organisation may be unable to meet.

In other research, it has been fairly consistently found that gender is related to commitment. In studies by Angle and Perry (1981), Grusky (1966), and Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972), women as a group were found to be more committed than men.

Finally, several of studies have examined various personality factors as they relate to commitment. In isolated findings, commitment has been found to be related to achievement motivation, sense of competence, and other higher-order needs (Morris & Sherman, 1981; Steers, 1977; Steers & Spencer, 1977). It would appear that commitment to the organisation could be supported to the extent that employees see the organisation as a source of need satisfaction.

For the purpose of this research, only age will be examined. As the educational level of employees employed within the security department is generally grade 10 to 12 it will be disregarded in this research. In terms of the gender and personality, only gender will be examined.

#### *3.3.4.2 Role-Related correlates of commitment*

The second group of correlates of organisational commitment that have been identified in the literature relate to employee roles and job characteristics. There appear to be at least three related aspects of work role that have the potential to influence commitment: job scope or challenge; role conflict; and role ambiguity (Mowday et al., 1980).

For this research the above aspects will be excluded.

#### *3.3.4.3 Structural characteristics of commitment*

Structural variables that were considered in studies are organisation size, union presence, span of control, and centralisation of authority. In a study carried out by Stevens, Beyer & Price (1978) none of the variables were found to significantly relate to commitment. In a study done by Morris and Steers (1980) they found that formalisation, functional dependence and decentralisation were related to commitment. Other variables such as worker ownership and participation in decision-making were related to commitment (Rhodes & Steers, 1982).

This research will not examine the effect of the structural variables of commitment.

#### 3.3.4.4 *Work experiences*

Work experiences are viewed as a major socialising force and as such represent an important influence on the extent to which psychological attachments are formed with the organisation. Several work experience variables have been found to be related to organisational commitment namely: a) organisational dependability, b) personal importance to the organisation, c) the extent to which employee expectations were met. A further factor relating to work experiences focuses on the extent to which employees sense that their co-workers maintain positive attitudes toward the organisation (Mowday et al., 1980).

Research by Rhodes and Steers (1982) found that perceived pay equity and group norms regarding hard work were also related to commitment for a sample of wood-products employees. Finally, an important factor in facilitating commitment appears to be the degree of an employee's social involvement in the organisation (Rhodes & Steers, 1982).

#### **3.3.5 Consequences of organisational commitment**

Kacmar et al., (1999) described job satisfaction, intentions to turnover and job involvement as consequences (see Figure 3.1) of organisational commitment. In so far as job satisfaction is concerned, a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment, using a variety of satisfaction and commitment measures, has been consistently reported in past research conducted by Balfour & Wechsler, 1990; Cook & Wall, 1980; Green, Anderson, & Shivers, 1996; Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardner, 1995; McFarlin & Sweetney, 1992; Mowday et al., 1979 (as cited by Kacmar, et al. 1999). A positive relationship was found to exist between job involvement and organisational commitment (Kacmar et al., 1999; Cook & Wall, 1980; Mowday et al., 1979)

Based on the notion of Meyer and Allen (1991) that disparate outcomes or behaviours are associated with the different factors motivating employees to remain within organisations, Iverson and Buttigieg (1999) have hypothesised consequences for the three components of commitment. Affective commitment would have a negative effect on turnover intentions and absenteeism, and a positive effect on the acceptance of change (Iverson, 1996; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Somers, 1995). Employees high in affective commitment demonstrate emotional attachment, identification, with and involvement in, the organisation. This explains why these employees are less likely to engage in withdrawal behaviour and more willing to accept change (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Normative commitment is also expected to have consequences similar to those of affective commitment (Iverson & Buttigieg, 1999). This type of commitment focuses on moral obligation, which derives in part from, the socialisation practices of organisations. Employees have an obligation to reciprocate to the organisation and will therefore be more receptive to change, be less likely to leave or to be absent (Hackett et al., 1994; Meyer et al., 1993; Somers, 1995).

The third form of commitment, continuance, is anticipated to have the same relationships as affective commitment, with both turnover intentions and absenteeism (Hackett et al., 1994; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). As employees would feel a sense of being 'locked' into the organisation due to the high cost of leaving (Jaros, Jermier, Koehler, Snicich, 1993), they would be less likely to leave or be absent.

Mowday et al., (1982) have summarised five consequences of organisational commitment (job performance, tenure with the organisation, absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover) in the findings of their research and that of others. These will now be discussed.



### 3.3.5.1 *Commitment and Job Performance*

Findings from studies on commitment reveal that there is a rather weak relationship between commitment and job performance. Mowday et al., (1982) pointed out that several factors might account for the weak relationship, in particular the contemporary theories of employee motivation. Performance is influenced by motivation level, role clarity, and ability (Porter & Lawler, 1968). Attitudes like commitment would only be expected to influence one aspect of actual job performance.

### 3.3.5.2 *Commitment and Tenure*

In a study done by Mowday et al., (1982) highly significant positive correlations have been found between increased tenure and increased commitment. The question they posed was: does commitment lead to increased tenure or does increased tenure cause changes in commitment levels?

### 3.3.5.3 *Commitment and Absenteeism*

This research postulates that highly committed employees would be more motivated to attend so they could facilitate organisational goal attainment. A review of literature only provides modest support for this relationship (Smith, 1977; Steers, 1977). Mowday et al., (1982) suggest that commitment may represent one influence on attendance motivation.

### 3.3.5.4 *Commitment and Tardiness*

In a study by Angle and Perry (1981), commitment was found to be strongly and inversely related to employee tardiness. The theory underlying the construct suggests that highly committed employees are likely to engage in behaviours

consistent with their attitudes toward the organisation. Coming to work on time would certainly represent one such behaviour.

#### *3.3.5.5 Commitment and Turnover*

Following theory, Mowday et al., (1982) believe that the strongest or most predictable behavioural outcome of employee commitment should be reduced turnover. Highly committed employees are by definition desirous of remaining with the organisation and working toward organisational goals and should hence be less likely to leave.

#### **3.3.6 Summary**

In this section of the chapter the construct organisational commitment was discussed. The various definitions of organisational commitment were presented and for the purpose of this research, attitudinal organisational commitment defined by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) as a state in which an individual identifies with a particular organisation and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in order to facilitate these goals, will be used. Theories were also presented in which the various approaches to commitment can be categorised.

The construct organisational commitment was then conceptualised into two approaches namely, the behavioural or attitudinal approach, after which the antecedents, correlates and consequences of organisational commitment were discussed.

#### **Remark**

In the preceding sections of the chapter, the researcher satisfied the literature review aims for organisational commitment, specifically steps 1 through to 4 as described in chapter 1, section 1.7.

### 3.4 CHAPTER INTEGRATION

According to Morrow (1983), job involvement and organisational commitment are related, but distinct, types of work attitudes because of their different referents. For employees with a high level of involvement, the job is important to one's self-image (Kanungo, 1982a). Employees with a high level of organisational commitment feel positively about the organisations for which they work. They identify with a particular organisation and wish to maintain membership in it (Porter, Crampon, & Smith 1976). Workers with high levels of both job involvement and organisational commitment should be the most motivated because they are attracted by both the job and the organisation.

Blau and Boal (1987) found that, based on empirical research, it seems that job involvement and organisational commitment complement one another as predictors of turnover and absenteeism. From either an analysis of variance or a moderated regression standpoint (Saunders, 1956), Blau and Boal (1987) predict that the job involvement and organisational commitment interaction terms will be significant. Specific combinations of job involvement and organisational commitment levels will help to predict particular types of turnover and absence behaviour.

Brown's (1996) meta-analysis and review of organisational research on job involvement attempted to make a comparison to assess differences in relationships between the two distinct but closely related attitudinal constructs. The primary difference is that job involvement primarily reflects one attitude toward a specific job, whereas organisational commitment refers to one's attachment to the organisation (Morrow, 1983,1993). It would be possible, for example, to be very involved in a specific job but not be committed to the organisation, or vice versa (Becker, 1992; Blau & Boal, 1987).

The results from Brown's (1996) meta-analysis, found that the only relationship that was significantly stronger for job involvement than for organisational commitment involved participative decision-making. In addition, however, job involvement was substantially more strongly related to work ethic endorsement and skill variety than organisational commitment was. Job stress, communication, salary, supervisory, co-worker, pay satisfaction, promotion satisfaction, and turnover intentions were all strongly related to organisational commitment than to job involvement.

For this research the conceptual framework of Blau and Boal (1987), using high and low combinations of job involvement and organisational commitment to predict turnover and absenteeism is particularly relevant. In their framework (Blau & Boal, 1987) job involvement and organisational commitment are partitioned into high and low categories and are then combined into four cells: 1) high job involvement – high organisational commitment; 2) high job involvement – low organisational commitment; 3) low job involvement – high organisational commitment; and 4) low job involvement – low organisational commitment. Each cell is predicted to have a different impact on absenteeism. Blau and Boal (1987) derived these proposed categories using a median split on questionnaire scales, for example, job involvement (Kanungo, 1982a) or organisational commitment (Porter & Smith, 1970).

#### *Remark*

With the preceding section the researcher has satisfied the specific literature research aim (see section 1.3.2.1).

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter concluded the literature objectives as set out in section 1.3.2.1. (a) and 1.3.2.1 (b). For phase 1, the literature review of the research methodology, steps 1 through to 5 have been completed (see section 1.7).

In chapter 4, phase 2 of the research methodology, namely the empirical study will be discussed. The sample, as well as the measuring instruments for absenteeism, job involvement and organisational commitment, will be discussed in detail, after which the data gathering and data processing will be explained.

## CHAPTER 4

### EMPIRICAL STUDY

In chapter 2 and 3 a theoretical perspective of the constructs absenteeism and work-related attitudes were provided. In this chapter, phase two of the research methodology, the empirical study, will be discussed. An analysis of the composition of the sample will be provided. In addition to this the motivation for the selection of the measurement instruments as well as the reliability and validity of the instruments will be discussed. The chapter will conclude by outlining the data gathering and data processing steps followed.

#### 4.1 EMPIRICAL OBJECTIVES

The following five empirical objectives have been developed for this study (see 1.3.2.2):

- (a) to investigate what is regarded as high absenteeism, and evaluate the current status within the organisation;
- (b) to investigate whether biographical variables influence absenteeism;
- (c) to investigate and analyse whether job involvement and organisational commitment predict absenteeism in the organisation;
- (d) to determine whether there is a correlation between employee absent levels and job involvement and organisational commitment.

The following sample is a description of the steps in the empirical study.

## **4.2 STEPS IN THE EMPIRICAL STUDY**

The empirical study for this research consists of the steps described below (see section 1.7, phase 2).

### **4.2.1 STEP 1: SAMPLE**

The sample will be discussed in this section. The basic idea of sampling is that by selecting some of the elements in a population, conclusions may be drawn about the entire population. A population element is the subject on which the measurement is being taken. A population is the total collection of elements about which the researcher is to make some inferences (Cooper & Schindler, 2004).

The population that was used for this research was the security employees of Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) Ltd, who are based at Johannesburg International Airport (JIA). The security department is mainly responsible for passenger security, working inside the terminal buildings, searching passengers as they enter the restricted area. The security department's staff complement for the year in which this research was conducted was 219. These employees are all salaried staff and work eight hour shifts. The shift cycle consisted of two morning-shifts (6 am to 2 pm), two afternoon-shifts (2 pm to 10 pm), two night shifts (10 pm to 6 am) and two days off.

The first step of the sampling plan was to divide the target population into the following categories:

- (1) Aviation Security Officers who took no sick leave during a one-year period;

- (2) Aviation Security Officers who took between one and five days non-continuous sick leave during a period of one year;
- (3) Aviation Security Officers who took between six and ten days non-continuous sick leave during a period of one year; and
- (4) Aviation Security Officers who took more than 10 days non-continuous sick leave during a period of one year.

Once these groups had been identified, the individual members were ranked according to age within each group. A systematic random sample was then taken from each group, except for the category consisting of aviation security officers who took more than 10 days non-continuous sick leave. In this category all employees were included in the sample as they were such a small number. This resulted in the sample total comprising of 72 population elements. The reason why the entire population was not used for the research is that the union and executive management agreed to the research being conducted within the security department on condition that a sample was taken and questionnaires were not distributed to all the security personnel.

In chapter 2, section 2.3, the construct “absenteeism” was defined. The possibility of other variables that influence absenteeism, such as biographical variables, e.g., age and gender, and demographic variables, such as distance from work was also investigated.

#### **4.2.2 Step 2: Describing the measuring instruments.**

The aim of this research is to test the predictability of job involvement and organisational commitment on employee absenteeism as suggested by Blau and Boal (1987). A measuring instrument for each of the independent variables was utilised for this research. A biographical questionnaire was developed and given



to each of the sample subjects to collect data such as age, gender, marital status, position held, years of experience, distance from work, and type of transport used. The instruments used to measure job involvement and organisational commitment respectively were Kanungo's (1982a) 10-item Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ) and the 9-item short form Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) of Porter and Smith's (1970), which were administered to the sample together with the biographical questionnaire.

The research on the measuring instruments will now be discussed separately. The aim/development and rationale, scales and dimensions, administration, interpretation, validity and reliability and justification of inclusion will be discussed for each of the instruments.

#### *4.2.2.1 Biographical questionnaire*

The researcher developed a biographical questionnaire. This questionnaire included questions about the biographical characteristics of the research participants. The questionnaire was developed in such a way that research participants merely had to tick the most applicable box for each question. The questions aimed to determine whether biographical factors have a direct correlation with absenteeism and whether job involvement and organisational commitment predict when an individual will absent himself or herself from work. Seven items were included in this biographical questionnaire, and these are listed below.

(a) *Name*. This question was included to verify that the individual completing the questionnaire was part of the randomly selected sample group.

(b) *Job title*. This question was included to verify that the individual completing the questionnaire was an Aviation Security Officer and not employed in some

other capacity in the company. It was essential that the sample group comprise only Aviation Security Officers.

(c) *Age*. This question was included to determine if there was any significant difference in terms of age of Aviation Security Officers being absent from work.

(d) *Marital status*. This question was included to investigate if marital status influenced the sample group's levels of absenteeism in any way.

(e) *Number of dependants*. This question was included to investigate if the number of dependants supported by the Aviation Security Officer influenced levels of absenteeism in any way.

(f) *Gender*. This question was included to investigate if there was a difference between gender groups in terms of absent behaviour.

(g) *Distance travelled to work*. This question was included to investigate whether the distance the Aviation Security Officer had to travel to work would impact on the level of absenteeism.

#### 4.2.2.2 *Records of Absenteeism*

##### (a) *Aim and Rationale*

Absenteeism has been identified as an area of concern for the management of ACSA, especially within the aviation security department at Johannesburg International Airport, not only due to the cost of work hours lost, but also the legislative implications it may have on the functioning of the airport if not enough personnel are in place as any given time. The general aim for the research is to investigate whether work-related attitudes, job involvement and organisational commitment, can predict employee absenteeism (see section 1.3.1). In order to establish this relationship, absenteeism records of all aviation security officers

were obtained from the Human Resources Department. The records collected from the management information system mostly indicated reasons for absence. For this research, the researcher specifically focused on the frequency of short (one day) absences which, according to ACSA's policy, employees were not required to submit a medical certificate for their absence which meant that some of the absence instances did not indicate reasons for the absence.

The absence records of the sample population were divided into four categories as discussed under section 4.2.1 in this chapter. The categorisation was done based on attitudinal absence (frequency of one day absences) over a mid-term (i.e. 12-months) as discussed under section 2.1.

*(b) Measures of absence*

An absence is constitutively defined in a very small time period, usually a single workday (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998). Echoing this definition, some theorists have proposed that absences occur whenever a person chooses to allocate time to activities that compete with scheduled work, either to satisfy the waxing and waning of underlying motivational rhythms (Fichman, 1984) or to maximise personal utility (Chelius, 1981). To understand the nature of employee absenteeism in various organisations, researchers must first understand how (or whether) it is measured in empirical studies.

There is systematic variation in absenteeism over very short time periods (Harrison & Hulin, 1989), but absence data are seldom available at such a fine-grained level. When fine-grained data are available, their low base-rate distributions usually suffer from severe discreteness, skewness, and kurtosis (Hammer & Landau, 1981). Therefore, researchers often rely on absences aggregated over convenient or arbitrarily longer times – typically one year (Mitra, Jenkins & Gupta, 1992).

To compound the problem, sets of independent variables in absence research carry a mix of dynamism. They range from demographic features such as sex that are constant over a lifetime (Price, 1995), to constructs such as attendance attitudes that fluctuate daily (Hackett, Bycio, & Guion, 1989). Absences clearly do arise from a mix of causes, however different causes are more or less detectable given the time frame over which absenteeism is cumulated (Epstein, 1983). The same is true for the consequences of absenteeism. The levels of individual absenteeism cumulated over any time period are most likely to reflect variables that are defined in and relatively stable over that period. Harrison and Martocchio (1998) used a time-based system to help organise, summarise and analyse research on employee absenteeism published from 1977 to 1996.

Section 1.2 explains that different approaches are proposed in measuring absenteeism. The first approach was proposed by Huse and Taylor (1962), examining four instances of absenteeism and the second, seven indices of absenteeism proposed by Chadwick-Jones, Brown, Nicholson and Sheppard (1971). It was noted in section 1.2 that the absence frequency measurement will be applied to this research.

The one-day absence frequency rate has been named the “Attitudinal Index” (Huse & Taylor, 1962) and is viewed as reflecting voluntary absenteeism (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982; Hackett & Guion, 1985). An employee may take one day off work to do something enjoyable, otherwise the absence may be motivated by negative attitudes to work (Huse & Taylor, 1962).

However, neither time lost, absence duration nor frequency indices alone provide a representative picture of absence behaviour. Authors such as Cheloha and Farr, 1980 and Muchinsky, 1977 suggested utilising multiple measures of absenteeism in determining the existence of an absenteeism problem.

Van der Walt (1999) argued that grouping the causes of absenteeism into different categories can not only shed more light on the causes themselves but is also a good starting point to look for solutions to this problem. One such classification method categorises the causes of absenteeism into personal (income level, health, length of service, marital status, educational level and gender), organisational (type of work, size of organisation and work groups, nature of supervision, incentive schemes and shift work), attitudinal (job satisfaction and general state of the economy) and social factors (child care problems, religious beliefs and inclement weather).

For the purpose of this research the researcher used the mid-term variance in absenteeism, generally referred to as having a time span of between three months and one year. Rosse and Hulin (1985) reported that the notion of a mid-term level of time also corresponds to periods over which global job attitudes remain fairly stable. Thus, for mid-term periods, job attitudes will be at their peak relevance for, and peak correlation with, absenteeism. Hackett (1985) and Steel and Rentsch (1995) also provide support for this idea.

*(c) Administration*

The researcher downloaded the number of sick days taken from the Human Resources System. Based on the information obtained from the HR system, the respondents were categorised according to the number of one-day sick leave days over a 12-month period.

*(d) Interpretation*

Employees in the fourth category (the highest number of one day instances of sick days taken), are less committed and involved than the employees who have taken no sick leave.

*(e) Validity and Reliability*

There is no information that could be found on the validity of sick leave days as a measuring instrument. However, access to the companies' HR system is limited to authorised users only, who input sick leave and leave information where a signed sick leave / leave form and certificate from the doctor are attached and approved. Based on this, leave days taken by respondents can be a valid predictor of sickness.

The information downloaded from the HR system is reliable, as all the employee's absences, be they sick leave or any other kind of leave, are recorded on the system in term of ACSA's conditions of service. The reliability is further enhanced by the fact neither employees nor managers have access to the HR system.

#### *4.2.2.3 Job Involvement*

*(a) Development and Rationale*

Various scales have been developed to measure job involvement of which some are mentioned in the following paragraphs. Brown (1996) noted that in the article by Lodhal and Kejner (1965) on the definition and measurement of job involvement, they incorporated two conceptual dimensions into their definition and scale of the construct. The first of these, stemming from the work of Allport (1947), French and Kahn (1962), and Vroom (1962), related to the extent to which job performance affected a person's self-esteem (performance-self-esteem contingency). A second dimension of job involvement, which was identified in the abstract but not the text of the article of Lodahl and Kejner's (1965), concerned the extent to which a person identifies psychologically with his or her work or the importance of work in total self-image. This second dimension grew primarily out of earlier work by Dubin (1958, 1961). Both conceptual dimensions were represented in the operational scale of job involvement devised by Lodahl and Kejner's (1965).

Saleh and Hosek (1976) also proposed a multidimensional scale of job involvement, reflecting four dimensions:

- (1) work as a central life interest;
- (2) the extent of a person's active participation in the job;
- (3) the extent of performance-self-esteem contingency, and
- (4) consistency of job performance with the self concept.

The Saleh and Hosek (1976) scale has been strongly criticised by Kanungo (1979, 1981, 1982a, 1982b) as reflecting not only the psychological state of an individual, but also the antecedent circumstances and consequent outcomes of this psychological state. The measurement incorporates considerable extraneous conceptual content, in addition to the core meaning of the cognitive state of psychological identification with one's job. It has seen relatively little empirical usage and cannot be recommended as a measurement of involvement (Brown, 1996). Other scales have been developed by Farrell and Rusbult (1981), Jans (1982), and Wollack, Goodale, Witjing and Smith (1971), but these too have seen little use (Morrow, 1993).

Subsequent research has largely followed the definition of job involvement by Lawler III and Hall's (1970) as "psychological identification with one's work" and "the degree to which the job situation is central to the person and his or her identity" (p. 310-311). Kanungo (1982b) advanced his scale based on the conceptualisation of involvement as "a cognitive or belief state of psychological identification" (p. 342). Kanungo's (1982b) operationalisation was a reaction against several specific dimensions of excess meaning in Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) scale. These include the mixing of items tapping:

- (i) cognitive and affective states;
- (ii) the individual's involvement in work in general as well as in the specific job;  
and
- (iii) intrinsic motivation as well as job involvement.

Kanungo (1982b) argued that a person's psychological identification with the job depends on both need salience and perceptions about the job's potential for satisfying salient needs. Kanungo (1982b) also argued the existing scales are inadequate to measure job involvement defined in that way. Of the commonly used scales of job involvement, that of Kanungo (1982b) is based on the clearest and most precise conceptualisation of the construct. It clearly identifies the core meaning of the construct as a cognitive state of the individual, is not contaminated by items tapping on concepts of this core meaning, and separates job involvement from antecedent and consequent constructs (Brown, 1996).

*(b) Scales and dimensions*

Kanungo's (1982a) 10-item JIQ was used to measure the degree to which the individual identifies with his or her present job. The responses were made on a five-point, Likert-type scale, which ranged from "1" = strongly disagree to "5" = strongly agree.

*(c) Administration*

The JIQ can be administered individually or with groups. The individual reads the instructions on the questionnaire and then answers the ten items by deciding to what extent he/she agrees with the statements made regarding the current job he/she is engaged in as well as decide which point on the scale describes him/her best, keeping in mind the description of the scales (Cook, Hepworth, Wall, & Warr, 1981). Items scores are added to reach a total score.

*(d) Interpretation*

The total score is an indication of the degree to which the individual identifies with his/her present job (Kanungo, 1982a). The higher the score the more involved the individual is judged to be.



(e) *Validity and Reliability*

Kanungo (1982a) reported evidence supporting the reliability and validity of this measure. Kanungo (1982a) reported that the internal consistency reliability for the scale based on data from 703 respondents measured 0,87. The test-retest reliability coefficients based on a separate sample of 63 respondents, who were administered the questionnaire twice within a three-week interval, measured 0,85. The data of the 63 respondents used in the test-retest study was not very different from the main sample of 703 respondents. The data suggests that both the reliability of the repeated measurements and of the internal consistency of items is adequate for the JIQ scales (Kanungo, 1982a).

Boshoff and Hoole (1998) tested the portability of Kanungo's Job Involvement Questionnaire between the United States and South Africa and found an internal consistency of 0,83. All ten items loaded  $>0,30$  on the one factor loadings varying between 0,34 and 0,76. Riipinen (1997) tested the relationship between job involvement and well-being and found the reliability coefficient of the scale to be 0,86. In a study conducted by Van Wyk, Boshoff and Cilliers (2003) predicting job involvement of pharmacists and accountants, the principal factor analysis indicated a one-factor solution with the scale having a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0,88. All items loaded  $>0,35$  on the single dimension, except for one item, item 7 which loaded 0,20. Blau (1985) found that nine items in Kanungo's (1982a) measure loaded sufficiently on the job involvement factor, while one item (7) did not load highly on either factor.

Kanungo (1982a) tested the convergent and discriminant validity of six job involvement measures by comparing the medial values of the off-diagonal correlations among scale items under conditions: monotrait-heteromethod, heterotrait-monomethod, and heterotrait-heteromethod (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). From the validity diagonals, all correlations are statistically significant ( $p < 0,01$ ), suggesting the convergent validity of the scales. The magnitude of the correlations suggests that the convergent validity of the JIQ of  $r = 0,80$  is quite

high. The monotrait-heteromethod correlation for the JIQ reported 0,80, which is substantially higher than the monomethod-heterotrait correlation of 0,36 and heteromethod-heterotrait correlation of 0,33.

Various studies were conducted determining the correlation of job involvement and other constructs. Van Wyk, Boshoff and Cilliers (2003) found a significantly positive relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction ( $r = 0,23$ ). In their review of research they found that most studies confirm a positive significant relationship between job satisfaction and job involvement, such as: Adams, King & King, 1996; Batlis, 1980; Brown, Corn, & Leigh, 1993; Feldman & Turnley, 1995; George, 1995; Harris & Massholder, 1996; Heaven, 1994; Holton & Russell, 1997; Jamal & Badawi, 1995; Jenkins & Maslach, 1994; Mael & Tetrick, 1992; Mishara, 1997; Newcombe, 1997; Parasuraman & Alutto, 1984; Riipinen, 1994; Riordian & Griffenth, 1995; Rosin & Korabik, 1995; Siegall & McDonald, 1995; Smart, 1998; Smith & Tisak, 1993; Strümpher, 1997 (as cited by Van Wyk, Boshoff, & Cilliers, 2003). Low but significant correlations were found between job involvement and entrepreneurial attitude orientations: economic innovation ( $r = 0,29$ ); achievement/ personal control ( $r = 0,12$ ) and self-esteem ( $r = -0,11$ ) (Van Wyk, Boshoff, & Cilliers, 2003).

The relationship between job involvement and career orientations sub-scales was significant in terms of service dedication ( $r = 0,31$ ); entrepreneurship ( $r = 0,14$ ) and life style integration ( $r = -0,16$ ) (Van Wyk, Boshoff, & Cilliers, 2003). The relationship between job involvement and the Type A total and sub-scale scores was found to be significantly positive with achievement ( $r = 0,27$ ); hard driving / competitive ( $r = 0,19$ ) and Jenkins total ( $r = 0,29$ ) (Chusmir & Hood, 1986, 1988; Van Wyk, Boshoff & Cilliers, 2003). Van Wyk, Boshoff and Cilliers (2003) found a significant positive relationship is indicated between job involvement and internal locus of control ( $r = 0,26$ ). This corresponds with previous findings by Dailey, 1980; Edwards & Walters, 1980; Heaven, 1994; Knoop, 1981; Parasuraman & Alutto, 1984; Remondet & Hansson, 1991. The

relationship between job involvement and the power self-concept sub-scale indicated a significant correlation ( $r = 0,23$ ) (Van Wyk, Boshoff, & Cilliers, 2003). The study by Orpen (1982) also indicated a positive relationship between job involvement and the self-concept of policemen ( $r = 0,05$ ) and bank clerks ( $r = 0,05$ ).

It would therefore seem that the JIQ is statistically acceptable for this research in terms of validity and reliability. According to Boshoff and Hoole (1998) and Van Wyk, Boshoff and Cilliers (2003), the JIQ seems to indicate that the measure is a robust, probably unidimensional scale and the JIQ can be used with a great deal of confidence in South Africa.

*(f) Justification for inclusion*

As pointed out in section 4.3.3.1, Kanungo's (1982a) scales of the JIQ are among the most commonly used and are based on the clearest and most precise conceptualisation of the construct. It clearly identifies the core meaning of the construct as a cognitive state of the individual, and is not contaminated by items tapping concepts outside of this core meaning, and separates job involvement from antecedent and consequent constructs (Brown 1996).

#### *4.2.2.4 Organisational Commitment*

*(a) Development and rationale*

Porter and Smith (1970) distinguished between the treatment of organisational commitment as an attitude and as behaviour, and took the former approach. The construct is thought to be more global than job satisfaction, being a generally *affective* reaction to the organisation rather than specifically to the work. Organisational commitment is also held to differ from job satisfaction in that it is likely to be less subject to transitory changes associated with day-to-day events.

Organisational commitment is defined as the strength of an individual's identification, with and involvement in, a particular organisation, and is said to be characterised by three factors; a strong belief in, and acceptance of the organisation's goals and values; a readiness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation; and a strong desire to remain a member of the organisation (Mowday et al., 1982).

According to Buchanan (1974) and Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian (1974), organisational commitment can be viewed in terms of three interrelated components: *identification*: pride in the organisation, internalisation of the organisation's goals; *involvement*: willingness to invest personal effort as a member of the organisation, for the sake of the organisation; and *loyalty*: affection for and attachment to the organisation, a wish to remain a member of the organisation.

Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian (1974), based on their own definition of organisational commitment, developed the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire, which can be used in two ways: in its full 15-item form or in its reduced 9-item form. These authors characterised affective commitment in terms of three factors, however, they measure it in a one-dimensional way, having tested the internal consistency and reliability of the 15- and 9-item versions of the OCQ. Commeiras and Fournier (2001) pointed out that many studies have however observed the OCQ's multidimensionality.

Angle and Perry (1981) made the distinction between 'value commitment' (items, 1,2,4,5,6,8,10,13 and 14); 'commitment to stay', the equivalent of Etzioni's (1961) calculative commitment (items 3, 7, 9,11, and 15) (see section 3.3.1.1); and the third factor (item 12 only), which was eliminated due to its instability. Support for these results is provided by other studies that distinguish an affective dimension and a calculative dimension (Cohen & Gattiker, 1992; Tetrick & Farkas, 1988). Although Tett and Meyer (1993) and Aktar and Tan (1994) confirm the

multidimensionality of the OCQ, they question the meaning of the calculative commitment dimension.

Luthans, McCaul and Dodd (1985) found in their study of organisational commitment among American, Japanese and Korean employees that the scale yielded one factor for the American and Japanese samples and two factors for the Korean sample. The studies conducted by Koh, Steers and Tergorg (1995); Bar-Hayim and Berman (1992) reveal two factors. Benkhoff (1997) showed in a confirmatory factor analysis that the 15-item version is composed of the three factors stated in the definition by Porter et al., (1974). Koslowsky, Caspy, and Lazar (1990) also found that the 15-item version of the scale yielded three factors. According to the research of Commeiras and Fournier (2001), these studies revealed that the make up of the dimensions differs and it would seem that the factorial structure of the OQC is unstable.

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) along with Tetrick and Farkas (1988); Allen and Meyer (1990); Meyer and Allen (1991); Morrow (1993); and McElroy, Morrow, Crum Dooley (1995), recommended using the short version of the OCQ to measure organisation commitment. This short version, however, only measures the affective or behavioural dimension of organisational commitment, which is acceptable in this research.

*(b) Scales / dimensions*

The 9-item short form OCQ of Porter and Smith (1970), as cited in Cook et al., (1981) was used for this research. The 9-item scale was developed with three items tapping each of the components, as pointed out in 4.2.2.4: items 1, 5 and 8 cover Organisational Identification, items 3,6 and 9 cover Organisational Involvement, and items 2, 4 and cover Organisational Loyalty.

The responses were made on a seven-point, Likert-type scale, which ranked from “1” = strongly disagree to “7” = strongly agree and totalled across the items.

The higher the score, the more organisationally committed an individual is judged to be (Porter & Smith, 1970).

*(c) Administration*

The OCQ can be administered individually or with groups. The individual reads the instructions on the questionnaire and then answers the nine items by deciding which point on the scale is more like him/her, keeping in mind the description of the scales (Porter & Smith, 1970). Items scores are summed and the mean is taken.

*(d) Interpretation*

The responses are on a seven-point dimension scored 1 to 7 respectively and totalled across the items, so that the possible range of scores for the scale is from 9 to 63. The higher the score, the more organisationally committed an individual is judged to be.

*(e) Validity and Reliability*

According to Bagozzi, Yi and Philips (1991), a construct exhibits substantial convergent validity if the t-test value associated with the factor loading of the variables is above 1,96. Commeiras and Fournier (2001) found in their study that certain items were not significantly correlated with the OCQ dimensions. Item 4 was poorly represented on the dimensions in both the samples for both the 15-item and 9-item questionnaires in their study. Item 7 was poorly represented in the second sample, and the t-values for all the other items were greater than 1,96. They concluded that the convergent validity of the constructs was good.

In so far as the reliability is concerned they found that the reliability of the affective dimensions (measured by Cronbach's alpha) was 0,81. This pattern is consistent with the results of Peterson's (1994) meta-analysis, where the average alpha reliability in involvement studies was 0,79. For the calculative dimensions, reliability was not nearly as good being only 0,66 for sample 1 and

0,73 for sample 2 (Commeiras & Fournier, 2001). As for the unidimensional approach, Commeiras and Fournier (2001) found that the measurement reliability was good in each sample for both the 15-item version (0,85 and 0,86 for samples 1 and 2 respectively) and the reduced version (9-item) 0,81 in both samples.

Commeiras and Fournier (2001) found that the results of their study indicated good discordant validity for the organisational commitment and intent-to-leave constructs. Predictive validity was tested by studying the correlation between organisational commitment and intent-to-leave, and the correlation between the two constructs was found to be significant, both on the affective dimension and on the calculative dimension.

A study conducted by Randall (1990) to determine the relationship between organisational commitment and different work outcomes, job performance, job effort, attendance (or its converse, absenteeism), coming to work on time (or its converse, tardiness) and remaining with an organisation (or its converse, turnover), found that the relationship was generally positive and weak, but the strength of the relationship varied by type of work outcome – from 0,80 for attendance to 0,23 for remaining employed in an organisation. In the case of attendance, Randall (1990) found that the confidence interval surrounding the mean correlation coefficient did not rule out the possibility that the true relationship between organisational commitment and attendance might be negative. Randall (1990) found that the corrected mean coefficients varied substantially between groups, from 0,21 for the attitudinal / moral organisational commitment to 0,12 for the calculative commitment, suggesting that the attitudinal conceptualisation of organisational commitment has a stronger relationship with work outcomes.

Mowday et al., (1979) estimated the internal consistency through the use of three methods namely, coefficient alpha, item analysis and factor analysis. The coefficient alpha was found to be consistently high between 0,82 (Mowday et al,

1979) and 0,93 (Stumpf & Hartman, 1984) with a mean of 0,90. Mathieu and Zajac (1989) also reviewed 13 studies, which used this measure and found an average reliability of 0,86.

Item analysis indicated that, for each positively phrased item, there was a positive correlation with the total score for the OCQ, with the extent of the correlations between 0,36 and 0,72, with a mean correlation of 0,64. Factor analysis was conducted with varimax-rotation and only one factor emerged and where different, Mowday et al., (1979), indicated that it was rejected by general psychometric rules.

Illustrative test-retest reliability coefficients from the review of Mowday et al., (1979) reviewed 0,72 across two months and 0,62 across three months. Evidence for convergent validity of the OCQ comes from significant negative correlations with the stated intention of leaving the organisation and positive associations with work-orientated interests. Mowday et al., (1979) found significant positive correlations across five studies. In another study Mowday et al., (1979) found a strong correlation with employees' estimation of how long they would remain within an organisation. In general it was found that convergent validity existed for the OCQ.

Mowday et al., (1979) concluded that relatively strong evidence could be found that internal consistency and test-retest reliability exist for the OCQ. Evidence also exists for satisfactory levels of convergent, discriminant and predictive validity.

It would therefore seem that the OCQ is acceptable for this research in terms of validity and reliability.

*(f) Justification for Inclusion*

For the purposes of this research, the short version of the OCQ of Porter and Smith's (1970), as in Cook et al.; (1981) was selected for this research as



organisational commitment is seen as an 'attitude' and not as behaviour. In Chapter 3 (see section 3.3.6) the researcher indicated that the attitudinal approach of organisational commitment would be applied in this research and with this approach, organisational commitment is viewed as more of a positive individual orientation toward the organisation. Organisational commitment is defined as a state in which an employee has identified with a particular organisation and its goals, and he/she wishes to maintain membership in the organisation in order to facilitate its goals.

Many questionnaires are available to measure organisational commitment, amongst others are the questionnaires by Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972), Buchanan (1974), Franklin (1975) and London and Howatt (1978) (as cited in Cook et al., 1981). Some questionnaires have specific dimensions of organisational commitment, such as the "Organisational Commitment Scale" of Penley and Gould (1988) and the ACS-, CCS-, and NCS-questionnaires of Allen and Meyer's (1990). As the aim of this research is to determine the predictability of job involvement and organisational commitment as work-related *attitudes* on employee absenteeism, the extent to which an employee identifies with the organisation is required, as opposed to specific aspects of organisational commitment.

#### **4.2.3 Step 3: Distribution of questionnaires to sample population**

The questionnaires were printed and the selected employees were requested to complete the questionnaires during their breaks on their shifts. Prior arrangements with the shift supervisors had been made to ensure that as many of the selected employees had the opportunity to complete the questionnaires.

#### **4.2.4 Step 4: Data gathering**

The strategy followed to execute the research was to have appointments with the respective shifts and ask the employees to complete the questionnaires. An explanatory cover sheet was attached to the biographical questionnaire and to each of the job involvement and organisational commitment questionnaires. Spaces for answers was provided on the questionnaires.

All the questionnaires were in English. The procedure for execution consisted of an explanation of the research's purpose, and assurance of confidentiality and an overview of each of the instruments and its completion process.

Once the completed questionnaires were collected the capturing and statistical analysis was to begin.

##### *4.2.4.1 Electronic capturing and processing of data*

The responses of the 72 subjects to the biographical section of the questionnaire and the items of the job involvement scale and the organisational commitment scale were captured in a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (SPSS, 2001) database.

##### *4.2.4.2 Descriptive statistics*

Simple descriptive statistics were calculated for each variable in the research. In the case of categorical data, this involved the calculation of the frequency distribution of the responses to each category. A frequency distribution shows in absolute or relative (percentage) terms how often (popular) the different values of the variable are found among the respondents (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Biographical and organisational questions are generally categorical in nature as were the case in the present research. In the case of interval-scaled variables

such as age and the two psychological scales used, the means and standard deviations were calculated.

#### 4.2.4.3 *Relations between variables*

In the final analysis, research is about relations between variables. The appropriate statistical strategy necessary to ascertain the existence or not, of a relation depends mostly on the measurement scale of the two variables involved (Rosnow, 1996). The following scenarios are presented in this research.

- (a) Both variables are categorical in nature. In such cases contingency tables of frequencies are calculated between the two variables involved and the Chi-square of independence (Rosnow, 1996) calculated to test whether the two variables were related.
  
- (b) Both variables are measured on an interval scale. In such cases the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (Rosnow, 1996) is calculated as a measure of the linear relation between the two variables. Correlations estimate the extent to which the changes in one variable are associated with changes in the other variable and are indicated by the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ). Correlation coefficients can range from +1,00 to -1,00. A correlation of +1,00 indicates a perfect positive relationship, a correlation of 0,00 indicates no relationship and a correlation of -1,00 indicates a perfect negative relationship (Rosnow, 1996).
  
- (c) Both variables are measured on an interval scale but the influence of other variables controlled. The relationship between two variables, such as job involvement and organisational commitment, may depend on other variables such as age, level of education, etc. To control these “other” variables, their effect was partialled out by computing the correlation between job involvement and organisational commitment while specifying these other

variables as variables to be partialled (Hays, 1963). The same strategy was used when the relationship of job involvement and organisational commitment with absenteeism was investigated.

#### *4.2.4.4 Internal consistency and reliability analyses of the scales*

In the present research the internal consistency reliability of the job involvement and organisational commitment scale was calculated by calculating the Cronbach Alpha as an index of the internal consistency reliability of the scales (Lemke & Wiersma, 1976). According to Lemke and Wiersma (1976) "internal consistency" means the degree to which the items inter-correlate or the degree to which the items measure the same trait.

### **4.2.5 Step 5: Data processing**

In the section that follows, a description will be given of the statistical methods that were followed when conducting the study.

#### *4.2.5.1 Factor analysis*

A statistical technique, which is particularly suited to the investigation of the underlying structure of a questionnaire, is "factor analysis" (Kerlinger, 1986). Factor analysis is especially useful when the purpose is to uncover dimensions in a questionnaire. Those items that refer to the same dimension or share the same dimension should correlate closely with one another and factor analysis uses this to uncover factors or dimensions.

Kerlinger (1986, p.569) describes factor analysis as follows:

"Factor analysis serves the cause of scientific parsimony. It reduces the multiplicity of tests or measures to greater simplicity. It tells us, in effect, what tests or belong together - which ones virtually measure the same thing, in other

words, and how much they do so. It thus reduces the number of variables with which the scientist must cope. It also helps the scientist locate and identify unities or fundamental properties underlying tests and measures."

The strategy of this research was to perform a principle axis factor analysis (Field, 2000; Morrison, 1976; Mulaik, 1972) on the items of the two questionnaires, namely job involvement and organisational commitment. The purpose was to ascertain whether a measure of divergent validity existed. In other words: Are job involvement and organisational commitment two separate factors? The factor analysis program of the statistical software package SPSS (2001) was used for this purpose.

In the present research two factors were extracted as it was expected that the items of each of the two scales would load on one of two factors. Hopefully, the items of job involvement would all load on the same factor whereas the items of organisational commitment would load on the other factor. The scree plot of eigenvalues was nevertheless given and inspected for confirmation of the existence of a two-factor structure. For the latter purpose, the eigenvalues associated with underlying factors, were plotted against the factor numbers and Cattell's scree test (Stevens, 1992) was performed which involved studying the slope of the plotted eigenvalues. The eigenvalue of a factor indicates the amount of variance that factor explains of the data. The larger the eigenvalue of a factor, relative to the size of the eigenvalues of the other factors, the more variance the factor explains. Cattell (1979) suggested that one should extract factors that account for the majority of the variability in the original data. An inspection of the eigenvalues usually reveals that the initial drop in the eigenvalues of the first few consecutive factors is large, but grows less and less as more factors are considered.

At a particular stage, the drop becomes small and constant so that the shape of the graph is that of a straight line with a gradual downward slope. This "straight-line" segment is referred to as a "scree" and there can be more than one.

According to Cattell (1979), one should note the number of the factor at which the first “scree” begins. Factors from this number onward represent minor or error factors. The number of “real” factors are thus “the number of the factor where the first scree begins minus 1”

The KMO and Bartlett test was also performed to establish whether the sample data was adequate for factor analysis purposes. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy tests whether the partial correlations among variables are small. Bartlett's test of sphericity tests whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, which would indicate that the factor model is inappropriate (Field, 2000).

In the present research factor solutions were rotated obliquely according to the promax criterion (Cureton & Mulaik, 1975), with KAPPA = 4 to obtain interpretable solutions. Kappa = 4 is the default setting of the SPSS program (Field, 2000) which allows factors to be moderately inter-correlated.

The promax oblique rotation results in several factor solution matrices of which the so-called factor pattern solution matrix is the more important (Cattell, 1979) and which is reported in the present study. The values in these factor pattern solution matrices are called factor loadings and give the regression of the items on the factors. These regression coefficients are also referred to as factor loadings. As a rule-of-thumb factor loadings larger than 0,30 in absolute value (Field, 2000) will be considered significant loadings.

#### *4.2.5.2 Statistical Computer Package*

All statistical analyses in the present research were computed using the SPSS statistical package for Windows version 10.1. (SPSS, 2001)

#### *4.2.5.3 Level of statistical significance*

Conventionally, most researchers use the significance levels 0,05 and 0,01. These are small values, as the researcher wishes to be sure before a significant result can be concluded. The intention is to limit the risk of committing a so-called Type I error, namely the rejection of the null hypothesis when in fact it is true. It is as if the researcher would rather run the risk of missing a significant result, than drawing a mistaken conclusion.

#### **4.2.6 Step 6: Reporting and interpreting the results from the empirical study**

This step consists of the reporting of statistical findings by means of tables. Tables 5.1 to 5.8 provide descriptive statistics: while tables 5.9 to 5.20 illustrate factor analysis, alpha coefficients and correlations.

The results will be interpreted and discussed by comparing findings with similar studies in order to provide explanations for the results obtained.

#### **4.2.7 Step 7: Presentation of the combination of conclusions, limitations and recommendations based on the research**

The final step in the research will be achieved by providing conclusions regarding the findings of the literature survey and the empirical study. Recommendations will be made regarding aspects that require future investigation and research. Limitations for the current research will also be outlined.

### **4.3 FORMULATION OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

The following hypothesis is formulated for this research.

Job involvement and organisational commitment on the one hand are related to non-continuous sick leave on the other hand.

#### **4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The empirical study was discussed in this chapter, firstly by describing the empirical objectives of the research as well as the sample group used for this research. The measuring instruments, the biographical questionnaire, absenteeism and job involvement and organisational questionnaires, were then discussed. The job involvement and organisational commitment questionnaires were described in terms of their development, rationale, administration, reliability and validity as well as the justification of inclusion. The chapter concluded with a description of the statistical methods that were used during the research.

#### **4.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION**

This chapter satisfies steps one to six in phase two of the research methodology as outlined under paragraph 1.7. Chapter 5 will deal with the reporting and interpretation of the results from the empirical study.



## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS

In this research the predictability of work-related attitudes (job involvement and organisational commitment) as predictors of absenteeism is explored. In this chapter the results of the empirical study are reported and interpreted. Although the main focus was on the variables job involvement and organisational commitment as predictors of absenteeism, the possibility that biographical variables, such as gender and age, as well as some demographic variables such as distance from work, may explain absenteeism, is also explored. The composition of the sample will be given first, followed by the factorial validity and the internal consistency reliability item analysis of each of the two scales (job involvement and organisational commitment). Thereafter, an attempt is made to explain absenteeism in terms of biographical and demographical factors and finally, the predictive or explanatory values for job involvement and organisational commitment are explored. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

#### 5.1 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

In this section the following descriptive statistical analysis provides a profile of the sample group, namely, the Aviation Security Officers in terms of age, number of dependants, distance from work, marital status, gender composition and ethnic origin.

##### 5.1.1 Composition of sample

In section 4.2.1 the sampling plan was discussed. This sampling plan involved as a first step the division of the target population into the following subgroups:

- those security officers who took no sick leave during a period of one year;

- those security officers who took between one and five days non-continuous sick leave during a one year period;
- those security officers who took between six and 10 days non-continuous sick leave during a one year period; and
- those security officers who took more that 10 days non-continuous sick leave during a one year period.

Once these groups had been identified, a systematic random sample was taken from each of the four groups. See section 4.2.1 for a full explanation of the sampling plan used.

The final composition of the four absenteeism groups in terms of absence rate and biographical variables is given below, as well as the mean scores and standard deviations scores (see section 5.1.1.8).

#### 5.1.1.1 Degree of absenteeism of sample population

Table 5.1 sets out an analysis of the sample group's degree of absenteeism over a period of one year.

**Table 5.1**  
***Degree of absenteeism***

Non-continuous sick leave days	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
11+	8	11,11	11,1	100,00
6-10	19	26,39	26,4	88,89
1- 5	24	33,33	33,3	62,50
0	21	29,17	29,2	29,17

#### (a) Reporting

It is clear from the data that 70,83% of the sample group were absent from work on one or more occasions during the one-year period. Just more than a third (33,33%) of the sample group fell into the category of being absent from work for

between one and five days, while more than a third (37,5%) were absent from work for more than six days.

*(b) Interpretation*

A fairly equal distribution of number of respondents is found for three of the four categories of absenteeism.

*5.1.1.2 Age distribution*

Table 5.2 categorises the age distribution of the sample group.

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
21 – 30	27	38	38	37,5
31 – 40	33	46	46	83,33
41 – 53	12	17	17	100
Total	72	100	100	

*(a) Reporting*

The sample group comprised of employees aged between 21 and 53. The largest number of respondents (33 respondents, or 46% of the respondents) fell into the age category 31 to 40 years.

*(b) Interpretation*

The fact that the age distribution of the general population is below the age of 40 and that the age distribution of the sample population is within the same range, may be coincidental. Scott and McClelland (1990) cited that the reports from the Bureau of Labour Statistics (1982) in the United States shown that men and women tend to exhibit different rates of absenteeism. The incidences of absenteeism decrease as men age but then rise after the age of 55. Women

have their highest rates in the 25 – 34 age group and have their lowest rates between 35 – 44 and over 55. Côté and Haccourt (1991) found that, at least in Western Cultures, women tend to exhibit more absence than men. This is then in line with international findings.

### 5.1.1.3 *Number of dependants*

The results in terms of the number of dependants of each research participant for the sample group ranged between 0 and five, with an average of two dependants per participant in the sample group. The results of this are summarised in table 5.3.

**Table 5.3**  
***Number of dependants***

Dependants	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
0	11	15,3	15,5	15,5
1	12	16,7	16,9	32,4
2	14	19,4	19,7	52,1
3	14	19,4	19,7	71,8
4	15	20,8	21,1	93,0
5	5	6,9	7,0	100
Total	71	98,6	100	
Missing	1	1,0		
Total	72	100		

#### *(a) Reporting*

It is clear from Table 5.3 that at least 85% of the research participants have dependants who require one or another type of support. The majority of the sample group have between two and four dependants. The respondents who form the largest part of the sample group have four dependants.

#### *(b) Interpretation*

Most of the sample population is below the age of 40, which is generally the age at which they start a family. It is therefore not surprising that most of the respondents have dependants. Scott and McClelland (1990), through their

review of studies, found that the studies suggest a significant positive relationship between the number of dependants and absenteeism rates for women but not for men.

#### 5.1.1.4 *Distance travelled to work*

The distances employees are required to travel to work are presented in table 5.4.

**Table 5.4**  
***Distance from work***

	Km	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
	1 - 10	16	22,2	22,4	22,5
	11 - 20	26	36,2	36,6	59,2
	21 - 30	17	23,6	23,9	83,1
	31 - 40	6	8,4	8,4	91,5
	41 - 65	6	8,4	8,4	100
	Total	71	98,8	100	
Missing	System	1	1,4		
Total		72	100		

#### (a) *Reporting*

The distance travelled to work by the sample group ranges between two and 65 kilometres.

#### (b) *Interpretation*

Most of the respondents reported that they made use of public transport to get to work. Steers and Rhodes (1978) believe that attendance motivation is a primary determinant of actual attendance provided that the employee has the ability to attend. Ability to attend is determined by variables such illness, accidents, family responsibility and transportation problems, which can act as constraints on employees' choice to attend. According to Scott and McClelland (1990), transport problems can affect an employee's ability to get to work and, in their review of

research, there is an indication that there may be an interaction between distance to work and gender, such that a positive relationship to absenteeism will be found for women but not for men.

#### 5.1.1.5 *Marital status*

The marital status of the sample group can be categorised as set out in table 5.5.

**Table 5.5**  
***Marital status***

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Single	31	43,06	43,1	43,056
Married	31	43,06	43,1	86,11
Widowed	1	1,39	1,4	87,5
Living together	9	12,50	12,5	100
Total	72	100	100	

#### (a) *Reporting*

It is clear from this analysis that the sample group is evenly split in terms of being married or being single. Once the living together group result was added to the married group, however, this group formed the largest percentage of the sample group, namely, 54%.

#### (b) *Interpretation*

It can be said that the sample population is fairly evenly split between single and married (including living together). No significant interpretation can be made as to the difference in the degree of absenteeism for single or married groups as yet.

### 5.1.1.6 Gender composition

The result of the sample group in terms of gender composition is summarised in table 5.6.

**Table 5.6**  
**Gender composition**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Male	34	47,22	47,22	47,22
Female	38	52,78	52,78	100
Total	72	100	100	

#### (a) Reporting

The sample group was fairly evenly spread, with females forming 53% of the group and males 47%.

#### (b) Interpretation

As the gender composition of the sample is fairly evenly spread, no significant conclusions can be made yet with respect to whether more males or females are absent. Literature generally (e.g., Farrell & Stamm, 1988; Frone, Russel & Cooper, 1992; Haccoun & Desgent, 1993) indicates that females tend to have higher instances of absence than males.

### 5.1.1.7 Ethnic origin

Table 5.7 gives a summary of the ethnic composition of the sample group.

**Table 5.7**  
***Ethnic origin***

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
White	11	15,28	15,3	15,28
Black	43	59,72	59,7	75
Coloured	10	13,89	13,9	88,89
Asian	8	11,11	11,1	100
Total	72	100	100	

*(a) Reporting*

The largest percentage of the respondents was black (59,7%). Whites, coloureds and Asians made up the other 40,3% of the sample.

*(b) Interpretation*

Based on the fact that the general population consisted of 70% black with the rest made up of Whites, coloureds and Asians, it is not coincidental that the majority of the sample population is black. No research could be found that related ethnic origin specifically to absenteeism.

*5.1.1.8 Mean scores and Standard Deviations of age, number of respondents and distance from work*

The average age of respondent, the average number of dependants and the average distance they travel to work is given below in table 5.8.

**Table 5.8**  
***Average age, number of respondents and distance from work***

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age of respondent	72	21	53	33,29	7,01
Number of dependents	71	0	5	2,35	1,54
Distance from work	71	2	65	22,54	15,29



*(a) Reporting*

Respondents are between 21 and 53 years old. The average distance travelled to work is 22,54 km.

*(b) Interpretation*

The mean age of 33,29 indicates that the respondents fall within the age of highest absenteeism, especially for women. As the respondents generally have two dependants to look after, it could have an impact on their ability to attend due to family responsibility reasons, such as ill children. The respondents reported that the majority make use of public transport, and due to the hours that they work, transport is not always available or reliable which impacts on the employee's ability to attend.

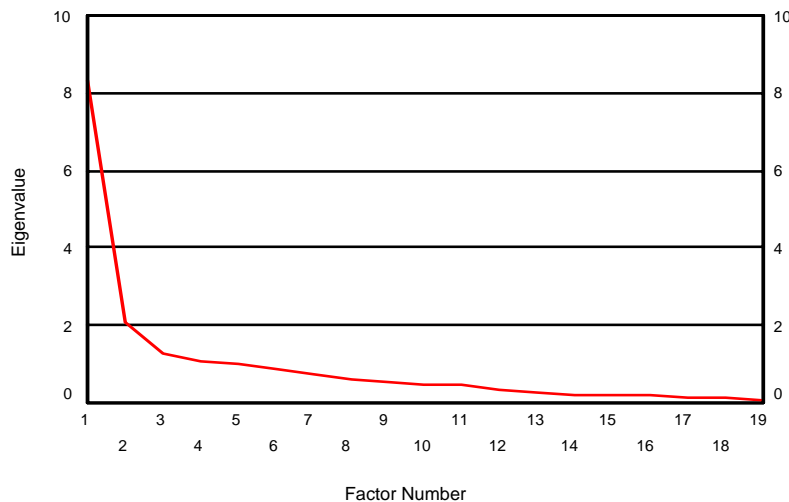
## **5.2 REPORTING OF INTERNAL CONSISTENCY RELIABILITY AND FACTORIAL VALIDITY OF SCALES**

It is expected that the two scales job involvement and organisational commitment, should correlate positively. The question is whether these two scales have a measure of divergent validity. The sample size of 72 did not justify a confirmatory factor analysis (Kerlinger, 1986) approach. It was decided to perform a principal axis factor analysis (Morrison, 1997; & Field, 2000), extract two factors and rotate the solution obliquely with the aim of inspecting the factor loadings of the pattern solution matrix in order find some support for two separate factors that could reasonably represent job involvement and organisational commitment.

As a first step, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (Field, 2000) was computed and found to be 0,859, which is well above the required value of 0,50. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant ( $p=0,000$ )

indicating that the sample was adequate for the purpose of factor analysis (Field, 2000).

The scree plot of eigenvalues is presented in figure 5.1 below.



**Figure 5.1**

*Scree-plot of eigenvalues of ORGs of the job involvement and organisational commitment ORGs (n = 72)*

---

*(a) Reporting*

The plot of the eigenvalues against the factor number reveals that the “scree” begins at factor 3, which indicates the existence of two common factors.

*(b) Interpretation*

In the present study two factors were extracted, as it was expected that the items of each of the two scales would load on one of two factors. The scree plot of eigenvalues was given and inspected for confirmation of the existence of a two-factor structure. The results revealed that two common factors exist. The eigenvalue of a factor indicates the amount of variance that the factor explains of the data. The larger the eigenvalue of a factor, relative to the size of the

eigenvalues of the other factors, the more variance the factor explains. From the results, it is evident that the values are quite small.

Table 5.9 below presents the promax-rotated two-factor matrix.

**Table 5.9**

***Promax-rotated two-factor matrix***

	Pattern Matrix (a)	
	Factor 1	Factor 2
ORG8	,873	-,116
ORG7	,842	
ORG2	,830	-,166
ORG5	,756	,103
ORG1	,702	
ORG9	,659	,172
ORG4	,620	
ORG3	,608	,130
ORG6	,536	,407
JOB7*	,386	-,138
JOB2*	,251	,251
JOB4	-,195	,948
JOB5		,774
JOB10	-,137	,714
JOB3		,682
JOB6		,671
JOB9	,133	,613
JOB8		,598
JOB1		,573

Notes: 1. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.  
2. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalisation.  
3. \* Item reverse scored

### (a) Reporting

An inspection of the factor loadings in table 5.9 clearly identifies factor 1 as “Organisational Commitment” while factor two appears to be “Job Involvement”. In the case of the latter, the only item that does not appear to belong to this factor but rather to the factor “ORG6” is item JOB7. On the whole, the two scales do appear to be separate constructs and thus possess a measure of divergent validity.

The Cronbach Alpha was subsequently computed for the two scales as a measure of the internal consistency reliability of these scales. The Cronbach Alpha for the job involvement scale is 0,845 and that of the organisational commitment scale is 0,916.

*(b) Interpretation*

In their study of the portability of job involvement and job satisfaction constructs between the United States of America and South Africa (Boshoff and Hoole 1998), item 7 in the JIQ was removed as the item measured had a r value of 0,28 and they felt it should not be included in the measure if a one-factor solution was to be accepted. For the similar reason, JOB7 will be discarded for this research.

### **5.3 REPORTING OF BIOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHICAL PREDICTORS OF ABSENTEEISM**

The following is an analysis of the biographical and demographic details of the sample group as it relates to the various categories of absenteeism. The focus is to determine which of the various biographical factors correlate with absenteeism.

#### **5.3.1 Gender**

The distribution of males and females in each category of absenteeism is depicted below in table 5.10. The chi-square test results (for differences between the cells) are given below in table 5.11.

**Table 5.10**  
***Distribution of males and females across the categories of absenteeism***

Category of absenteeism		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
<b>0 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	9	12	<b>21</b>
	% Within Gender	26,47	31,58	<b>29,17</b>
<b>1-5 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	14	10	<b>24</b>
	% Within Gender	41,18	26,32	<b>33,33</b>
<b>6-10 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	7	12	<b>19</b>
	% Within Gender	20,59	31,58	<b>26,39</b>
<b>11+ days non- continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	4	4	<b>8</b>
	% Within Gender	11,76	10,53	<b>11,11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>72</b>
	<b>% Within Gender</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>

*(a) Reporting*

It seems that there are slightly more females in the categories 0 days (31,58%) and 6 – 10 days (31,58%) non-continuous sick leave than there are men. There are slightly more males (41,18%) than females in the category 1 – 5 days non-continuous sick leave. An almost equal number of male and female respondents are found in the category more than 11 days non-continuous sick leave.

*(b) Interpretation*

The frequency of absence in the various categories for women is fairly similar and, compared to that of men, slightly higher. It would therefore seem that there is not a significant difference in absence days taken between male and females.

**Table 5. 11**  
***Chi-square tests for gender by category of absenteeism***

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2,196(a)	3	0,533
Fisher's Exact Test	2,231		0,541
N of Valid Cases	72		

(a) 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.78.

*(a) Reporting*

The differences between the two cells indicated for the Pearson's chi-square test a value of 2,196 and for the Fisher's Exact Test a value of 2,231.

*(b) Interpretation*

It is clear from tables 5.10 and 5.11 that the distribution of males does not differ significantly from that of females (p-value of chi-square test = 0,546) across the categories of absenteeism. Males (34 of 72 = 47,20%) and females (38 of 72 = 52,80%) were about equally represented in the total sample.

**5.3.2 Marital status**

The distribution of the marital status groups across the categories of absenteeism is presented in table 5.12 and the chi-square tests in table 5.13.

Table 5.12

*Distribution of the marital status groups across the categories of absenteeism*

		Marital status				Total
		Single	Married	Widowed	Living Together	
<b>0 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	14	5		2	<b>21</b>
	% Within Marital status	45,16	16,13		22,22	<b>29,17</b>
<b>1- 5 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	10	7	1	6	<b>24</b>
	% Within Marital status	32,26	22,58	100	66,67	<b>33,33</b>
<b>6-10 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	4	15			<b>19</b>
	% Within Marital status	12,90	48,39			<b>26,39</b>
<b>11+ days non- continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	3	4		1	<b>8</b>
	% Within Marital status	9,68	12,90		11,11	<b>11,11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>72</b>
	<b>% Within Marital status</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>

*(a) Reporting*

Mostly single respondents (45,16%) fell within the category 0 days non-continuous sick leave. For the other three categories the results indicated mostly married (and living together) have higher instances of non-continuous sick leave.

*(b) Interpretation*

The sample consisted largely of security officers who were either single (31 of 72 = 43%) or married (also 31 of 72 = 43%). About 12,5% (9 of 72) reported that they lived together with a partner. An inspection of the frequency percentages in table 5.12 reveals that the difference is primarily between those who were single and those who were married or living together.

**Table 5.13*****Chi-square tests for marital status groups by category of absenteeism***

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21,104 (a)	9	0,012	(b)
Fisher's Exact Test	20,295			0,004
N of Valid Cases	72			

a. 10 cells (62,5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,11.  
b. Cannot be computed because there is insufficient memory.

*(a) Reporting*

From the chi-square test and Fisher exact test, there were differences in the distribution of the various marital status groups across the categories of absenteeism.

*(b) Interpretation*

It would seem that the married security officers (and those living together) were more highly represented in the “high” absenteeism categories than those who were single.

**5.3.3 Ethnic origin**

Table 5.14 contains the distribution of the ethnic origin groups across the categories of absenteeism. The chi-square test results for ethnic origin are presented in table 5.15.

Table 5.14

*Distribution of the ethnic origin groups across the categories of absenteeism*

		Ethnic origin				Total
		White	Black	Coloured	Asian	
<b>0 days non-continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	4	15	1	1	<b>21</b>
	% Within Ethnic origin	36,36	34,88	10,00	12,50	<b>29,17</b>
<b>1- 5 days non-continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	3	15	3	3	<b>24</b>
	% Within Ethnic origin	27,27	34,88	30,00	37,50	<b>33,33</b>
<b>6-10 days non-continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency	4	6	5	4	<b>19</b>
	% Within Ethnic origin	36,36	13,95	50,00	50,00	<b>26,39</b>
<b>11+ days non-continuous sick leave</b>	Frequency		7	1		<b>8</b>
	% Within Ethnic origin		16,28	10,00		<b>11,11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>72</b>
	<b>% Within Ethnic origin</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>100,00</b>

*(a) Reporting*

The largest ethnic group were the blacks (43 of 72 = 59,70%) followed by the whites (11 of 72 = 15,30%).

*(b) Interpretation*

The distributions of these ethnic groups across the absenteeism categories were not found to differ significantly between the groups. This means that the ethnic groups did not differ with regard to absenteeism.

Table 5.15

*Chi-square tests for ethnic origin groups by category of absenteeism*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12,819(a)	9	0,171	(b)
Fisher's Exact Test	11,695			0,177
N of Valid Cases	72			

a. 13 cells (81.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .89

b. Cannot be computed because there is insufficient memory

*(a) Reporting*

From the chi-square and Fisher exact tests it would seem that there is a greater distribution of blacks across the categories of absenteeism



*(b) Interpretation*

From the distribution of the ethnic origin across categories, no significant conclusion can be made concerning the higher or lower rates of absence between the two categories.

### 5.3.4 Age

Descriptive statistics regarding the age of each of the categories of absenteeism are given in table 5.16 below.

**Table 5.16**  
*Age by category of absenteeism*

Category of absenteeism	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<b>0 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	21	30,19	6,73	21,00	46,00
<b>1- 5 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	24	35,04	5,85	24,00	50,00
<b>6-10 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	19	34,16	8,70	24,00	53,00
<b>11+ days non- continuous sick leave</b>	8	34,13	4,49	28,00	41,00
<b>Total</b>	72	33,29	7,01	21,00	53,00

*(a) Reporting*

The average age across the various categories of absenteeism ranged from 30,19 to 35,04.

*(b) Interpretation*

A one-way analysis of variance (Cooper & Schindler, 2003) was performed on the means in table 5.16 above. The F-value (Cooper & Schindler, 2003) was found to be 2,09 with a p-value of 0,107, which represents a non-significant result at the 0,05 level. The categories of absenteeism therefore do not differ significantly with respect to age. In his study Hackett (1990) found partial support for the model of Steers & Rhodes (1978, 1984) that depicts age and tenure as indirectly related to voluntary absenteeism and directly related to involuntary

absences. His study also revealed that age was found to be unrelated to unavoidable absences.

### 5.3.5 Number of dependents

Descriptive statistics regarding the number of dependents in each of the categories of absenteeism are given in table 5.17 below.

#### (a) Reporting

The average number of dependants reported for the various categories of absenteeism ranged between 2,05 to 3,88.

**Table 5.17**  
**Number of dependents by category of absenteeism**

Category of absenteeism	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<b>0 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	20	2,20	1,36	0,00	4,00
<b>1- 5 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	24	2,21	1,67	0,00	5,00
<b>6-10 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	19	2,05	1,43	0,00	4,00
<b>11+ days non- continuous sick leave</b>	8	3,875	1,126	2,000	5,000
<b>Total</b>	71	2,352	1,541	0,000	5,000

#### (b) Interpretation

A one-way analysis of variance (Cooper & Schindler, 2003) was performed on the means in table 5.17 above. The F-value (Cooper & Schindler, 2003) was found to be 3,268 with a p-value of 0,027, which represents a significant result at the 0,05 level. Post-hoc Bonferroni tests indicated that the absenteeism category “11+ days sick leave” had on average a higher number of dependents than the other absenteeism categories. The Bonferroni p-values of the category “11+ days sick leave” with the other categories were as follows:

- “11+ days non-continuous sick leave” and “0 days sick leave”:  $p = 0,050$

- “11+ days non-continuous sick leave” and “1- 5 days sick leave:  $p = 0,047$ ”
- “11+ days non-continuous sick leave” and “6-10 days sick leave:  $p = 0,027$ ”

A possible reason for this could be that the family responsibilities could be higher for the group, which fall within the category 11+ days of non-continuous sick leave, i.e. sick children. What is also interesting to note is that this group on average lives furthest from their work, 28,13 kilometres.

### 5.3.6 Distance from work

The mean and standard deviations for distance from work is provided in table 5.18 below.

#### (a) Reporting

The average distance from work reported by respondents ranged from 20,08 to 28,13.

**Table 5.18**  
*Distance from work by category of absenteeism*

Category of absenteeism	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<b>0 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	20	23,40	15,42	3,00	<b>65,00</b>
<b>1- 5 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	24	21,92	14,44	2,00	<b>60,00</b>
<b>6-10 days non- continuous sick leave</b>	19	20,08	14,76	5,00	<b>60,00</b>
<b>11+ days non- continuous sick leave</b>	8	28,13	19,81	5,00	<b>65,00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>22,54</b>	<b>15,30</b>	<b>2,00</b>	<b>65,00</b>

#### (b) Interpretation

A one-way analysis of variance (Cooper & Schindler, 2003) was performed on the means in table 5.18 above. The F-value (Cooper & Schindler, 2003) was

found to be 0,543 with a p-value of 0,654. No significant differences was found between the categories as far as distance from work were concerned. The distance an employee lived from his or her work did not seem to relate to the degree of absenteeism.

### **Remark**

From the analyses above it appears that the degree (category) of absenteeism was associated only with marital status and number of dependents. The latter two variables could be expected to correlate. It would be interesting to explore whether the number of dependents has an effect on degree (category) of absenteeism irrespective of whether a person is married (or are living together) and are single. The categories of absenteeism are correlated to the number of dependents for groups married (as well as those living together) and single separately. For the single group the correlation was found to be small and insignificant ( $r = 0,008$ ;  $p = 0,967$ ) but significant and positive for those living together (which included the marital group) ( $r = 0,332$ ;  $p = 0,039$ ). The relationship between number of dependents and the degree of absenteeism depends on the marital status of a person. A variable to represent this interaction effect between marital status and number of dependents was created as the product between the latter two. The model “Degree of absenteeism = marital status + number of dependents + interaction effect” was tested and it was found that a stepwise regression procedure selected only the variable marital status.

## **5.4 JOB INVOLVEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AS PREDICTORS OF ABSENTEEISM**

The main hypothesis of this research concerns the relationship of job involvement and organisational commitment with the degree of absenteeism. Logically the researcher expects a negative correlation, i.e. the higher job

involvement and/or organisational commitment, the lower the degree of absenteeism. It was previously shown that the biographical variables marital status and number of dependents are related to degree of absenteeism (see points 5.3.2 and 5.3.5). It was thus necessary to consider these two biographical variables effect, and their possible interaction effect, on absenteeism as possible nuisance variables when exploring job involvement and/or the relationship of organisational commitment to absenteeism.

The zero-order correlations are given in table 5.19 while the partial correlations are given in table 5.20.

**Table 5.19**

***Zero order correlations between job involvement, organisational commitment, sick leave and marital and number of dependent variables***

		Job involvement	Organisational commitment	Degree of absenteeism	Number Of dependents	Married/Living together Vs. Single
Job involvement	<b>Correlation</b>	1,00				
	2- tailed p-value	0,00				
Organisational commitment	<b>Correlation</b>	0,60	1,00			
	2- tailed p-value	0,00	0,00			
<b>Degree of absenteeism</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	-0,07	-0,06	1,00		
	1- tailed p-value	0,29	0,35	0,00		
Number of dependents	<b>Correlation</b>	0,27	0,19	0,20	1,00	
	2- tailed p-value	0,03	0,13	0,10	0,00	
Married/Living together vs. Single	<b>Correlation</b>	-0,08	-0,11	0,30	0,15	1,00
	2- tailed p-value	0,51	0,37	0,01	0,23	0,00
Marital Status x Number of dep. (Interaction effect)	<b>Correlation</b>	0,19	0,18	0,33	0,87	0,53
	2- tailed p-value	0,12	0,13	0,01	0,00	0,00

*(a) Reporting*

It is clear that no linear relationship was found between the degree of absenteeism and job involvement or organisational commitment of the security officers.

*(b) Interpreting*

As a result of the non-linear relationship between the degree of absenteeism and job involvement and organisational commitment it is clear that job involvement and organisational commitment do not relate to absenteeism.

Table 5.20 contains the results of the correlations between job involvement, organisational commitment and degree of absenteeism when marital status, number of dependants and the effect of the two variables have been controlled.

**Table 5. 20**

***Partial correlations between job involvement, organisational commitment and degree of absenteeism (controlling for marital status, no of dependents and the effect of these two variables)***

		Job involvement	Organisational commitment	Degree of absenteeism leave
Job involvement	Correlation	1,00		
	2–tailed p-value	0,00		
Organisational commitment	Correlation	<b>0,56</b>	1,00	
	2–tailed p-value	<b>0,00</b>	0,00	
Degree of absenteeism	Correlation	<b>-0,11</b>	<b>-0,12</b>	1,00
	1–tailed p-value	<b>0,20</b>	<b>0,17</b>	0,00

*(a) Reporting*

When the biographical variables “marital status” and number of dependents are controlled, the correlations become slightly more negative, but are still not statistically significant at the 0,05 level.

*(b) Interpretation*

A moderate correlation exists between job involvement and organisational commitment. These findings are consistent with the findings of Elloy, Everett and Flynn (1995) in their study of multidimensional mappings of the correlates of Job involvement (0,54). Huselid and Day (1991) also reported a moderate correlation between job involvement and organisational commitment.

## Summary

The gender groups within the sample population were equally represented and the largest ethnic group represented in the sample was blacks followed by whites. In general, only marital status (whether the employee was single or married) and number of dependents were related to the degree (category) of absenteeism. It appeared that married employees (and those living together) tended towards more absenteeism than did employees who are single. It was also found that those employees in the higher levels of absenteeism, tended to have more dependents. A possible relationship between marital status and the number of independents was explored by correlating the degree of absenteeism to the number of dependents for the marital groups separately. A significant correlation was found for the marital group (which included the group “living together”) but not for the single group – indicating that the relationship between absenteeism and number of dependents depended on marital status.

In chapter 1 (see section 1.2) the problem statement was discussed which lead to specific research questions. The research question relating to whether job involvement and organisational commitment predict employee absenteeism, with the results for this specific research presented in this chapter, can be concluded as not achievable. The general aim and specific objectives set out in chapter 1 (see section 1.3.1 and 1.3.2) are herewith satisfied. The aim of the research was achieved through the review of the literature, which presented support from the literature for the predictability of job involvement and organisational commitment on employee absenteeism. The hypothesis was tested through the distribution of questionnaires and these were statistically processed, which produced the results as set out in this chapter.

## **5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter the results from the empirical study were reported and interpreted. The composition of the sample and the factorial validity and the internal consistency reliability item analysis of each of the two scales (job involvement and organisational commitment) were set out in table form and interpreted. Thereafter absenteeism was explained in terms of biographical and demographical factors and finally, the predictive or explanatory value of job involvement and organisational commitment was explored. The possibility that the biographical variables, such as gender and age, as well as distance from work, may explain absenteeism was also discussed.

In chapter 6 the conclusions on the research will be discussed, the shortcomings of the research will be pointed out and recommendations for future research will be provided.



## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

In this chapter conclusions relating to the literature findings, the results from the empirical study and the integration of the literature and empirical results will first be presented. Secondly, recommendations will be made relating to the findings of the research for industrial psychology, after which recommendations relating to future research will be discussed. The limitation of the research will then be discussed and the chapter summary will conclude this chapter.

#### 6.1 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions will be made relating to the literature review that was conducted, as well as the empirical study. Conclusions will also be made relating to the relationship between the literature findings and the empirical findings.

##### 6.1.1 Conclusions relating to the literature review

In chapter 2 the nature of absenteeism was explained and specifically the complex issue of measuring absenteeism. The frequency of absence measured over a mid-term variance of 12 months is identified as being the most accurate measurement of employee behaviour. The theories presented indicated further contributed to the complex nature of absenteeism in that the phenomenon cannot be viewed from a one-dimensional aspect.

Certain conclusions can be made relating to the literature findings of chapter 2. These are set out below.

Absenteeism carries a mixed dynamism in that sets of independent variables range from demographic features such as gender that are constant over a

lifetime, to constructs such as attendance attitudes that fluctuate daily. Due to this fluctuation in attitudes it becomes increasingly important to understand what precedes the attendance instance. To achieve this, the timeframe within which absenteeism is measured becomes quite significant, as does the accurate recording of reasons for absence. Without this, it is difficult to come to any meaningful conclusions as to what causes or affects employee absenteeism, specifically voluntary or organisationally unexcused absenteeism.

In chapter 3 the work-related attitudes job involvement and organisational commitment were conceptualised. The relationship of each of the work-related attitudes with absenteeism were discussed. The literature suggested that there exist a possibility that the two work-related attitudes could predict employee absenteeism. Some evidence for the hypothesis that employees with high levels of job involvement and high levels of organisational commitment will have low levels or no absence instances were provided.

Certain conclusions can be made relating to the literature findings of chapter 3. The two work-related attitudes, job involvement and organisational commitment, are closely correlated but constitute empirically distinct constructs. This was proven by the statistical analysis as discussed in chapter 5. Independently the two constructs, job involvement and organisational commitment, have provided varied results in their ability to predict absenteeism. The results in fact indicate a weak predictability of absenteeism.

The integration of absenteeism and the work-related attitudes indicated that absenteeism and work-related attitudes are very different constructs though some research has indicated that there is some level of predictability toward employee absenteeism.

### **6.1.2 Conclusions relating to the empirical study**

In chapter 5 the results of the empirical study were reported and interpreted. Conclusions will now be made regarding the outcomes of the empirical findings. The conclusions will firstly be made in terms of job involvement, then organisational commitment and finally in relation to absenteeism.

Through the empirical study, the construct job involvement was proven to be a distinct construct. Sufficient evidence was provided to refer to job involvement as a separate construct. The empirical study also proved that the organisational commitment is distinctive and can be referred to as a separate construct.

The empirical study further found that a relationship exists between job involvement and organisational commitment. Furthermore, it would seem that marital status and number of dependants has some level of impact on employee absenteeism.

### **6.1.3 Conclusions relating to the relationship between the literature findings and the empirical findings**

The literature findings, that i.e., there is evidence that employees with high levels of job involvement and high levels of organisational commitment have lower levels of absence, are not supported by the empirical findings of this research. Although the literature referred to the effect that demographic variables have on employee absence, it was not the focus of this research. The hypothesis presented in chapter 4 (see section 4.3) is therefore not proven.

#### **Remark**

With this, the research hypothesis stated in chapter 4 (see section 4.3) namely that job involvement and organisational commitment on the one hand are related to non-continuous sick leave on the other hand.

## **6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations will now be made, firstly relating to the findings of the research, and secondly relating to future research on the topic.

### **6.2.1 Recommendations related to the predictability of work-related attitudes on absenteeism for Industrial Psychology.**

Absenteeism will remain a costly phenomenon for organisations and managers and human resources professionals alike need to endeavour to understand what within their organisations causes employee absenteeism or affects employee attendance motivation.

Future research into employee motivation and other work-related attitudes might shed some light onto understanding the dynamics of employee absenteeism. Although research into absenteeism has produced significant insights, the research efforts are quite diverse and it is difficult to draw meaningful general conclusions or assumptions from the research. Future work needs to focus on providing a robust theoretical base, which will incorporate the various definitions, causes and antecedents of absenteeism.

### **6.2.2 Recommendations for future research.**

Certain recommendations for future research pertaining to the topic are made. These are listed below.

- Research incorporating a broader range of absence correlates will assist in a more complete understanding of the factors that antecede and flow from absence episodes.
- Research into attendance motivation, will assist in determining absence behaviour.

- Research into accurate recording of absence reasons and using quantitative study methods (interviews) will determine the real reasons for absence.
- Research could be undertaken with other questionnaires that measure organisational commitment and job involvement.
- Research should be done to investigate the effect shift work has on the attendance of employees.

### **6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

Although every effort has been made to plan and execute the research design and research method (see section 1.6 and 1.7), some limitations are evident. Although a variety of limitations can be highlighted, these are not that relevant for this research, and only the most important limitations, namely sample and measuring instruments will be discussed.

#### **6.3.1 Sample**

As a result of the discussions with management and the union at Johannesburg International Airport (JIA), the researcher was only permitted to conduct this survey with a sample of the broader security population at JIA. This resulted in a small sample size of only 72 respondents and the findings can, therefore, not be conclusive.

In addition to this, the sample consisted only of security officers at Johannesburg International Airport and thus the conclusions made cannot be generalised for the security departments within the other regions in South Africa. This limits the depth of the research.

### **6.3.2 Measuring instruments**

The measuring instruments used in this research have various inherent shortcomings, which were discussed in chapter 4. In addition to this, further shortcomings as outlined in chapter's 2 and 3 with specific reference to the theoretical basis of the constructs and questionnaires were also discussed.

In order to test the predictability of job involvement and organisational commitment, other questionnaires available could have been used in this research. This specifically refers to the use of the organisational commitment questionnaire devised by Allen and Meyer (1990).

Not one of the questionnaires used in the research is South African or standardised for South African usage, with the exception of the job involvement questionnaire in which Boshoff and Hoole (1998), tested the portability of Kanungo's (1979) job involvement questionnaire between the United States and South Africa.

## **6.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter conclusions were presented relating to the findings of the research, firstly referring to the literature review, secondly relating to the empirical study and finally regarding the relationship between the literature findings and empirical findings. This was followed with recommendations for the field of Industrial Psychology, as well as for future research into the predictability of work-related attitudes and absenteeism. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the most important limitations of the research.

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