

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND  
WORK PERFORMANCE IN AN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY**

**BY**

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**SUPERVISOR: PROF A.M. VIVIERS**

**OCTOBER 2008**



## **DECLARATION**

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I declare that "The relationship between Organisational Commitment and Work Performance in an Agricultural Company" is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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## **SUMMARY**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND WORK PERFORMANCE IN AN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY**

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**DEPARTMENT : INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**DEGREE : MA (Industrial Psychology)**

The purpose of the research was to investigate the relationship between organisational commitment and work performance in an Agricultural company. Allen and Meyer's Organisational Commitment Questionnaire was used as well as the organisation's verbal performance rating tool. The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire was completed by a sample from the organisation and the performance ratings of the employees in the sample were used as comparison. A positive relationship between the two constructs was established while no statistically significant relationship could be established.

Further research in this field is suggested in the South African context.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH**

This dissertation focuses on the relationship between organisational commitment and work performance. The aim of this chapter is to provide the background and motivation for this research. The problem statement will be discussed and the aims will be specified. The paradigm perspectives of the research will be given. Thereafter, the research design and methodology will be presented and the chapter layout will be given. This chapter will end with a chapter summary.

#### **1. 1. BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION**

The world economy is going through a massive change (Ferres, Firms & Travaglione, 2000). According to Burack (2000), there is a shift from manufacturing to services, globalisation of industries and world wide dissemination of advanced computer and information technologies. According to McKay (2002), globalisation and new business environments has led to organisations enduring enormous tension to change the way they do business, so that they may remain competitive. Burack (2000) further proposes that the change is motivating managers to fit their organisation's structure, culture and management processes to the demands of the external environment. Internally the change is viewed as motivating the implementation of participative management and employee involvement processes, which lead to high employee commitment to the organisation and higher performance. According to Travaglione (2000), this is taking place in a context where corporate restructuring and downsizing have likely changed the traditional psychological contract between employees and employers.

The last decade, with its tumultuous changes in organisations, left many employees emotionally detached from their workplace. According to Manion (2004), mistrust, increasing cynicism, escalating financial pressures, and continuing challenges adversely impact on the workforce's organisational commitment and performance. Manion (2004) further states that accelerating change, increasing organisational challenges and crises, workforce shortages and mounting environmental pressures make the need for committed and fully engaged employees more important than ever. Gaining commitment of employees to needed or desired organisational initiatives and to their work, is a challenge faced by all (Manion, 2004).

According to the Corporate Leadership Council (2004), there are some advantages to addressing this challenge, as the findings of the Employee Engagement Survey (2004) stipulate that organisations that improve workforce commitment will see improvement in the level of discretionary effort provided, as well as a corresponding change in performance. The findings of the research show that employees who move from being uncommitted to being committed demonstrated a 57 percent improvement in the level of discretionary effort exerted on the job, which then translates into a 20 percent improvement in performance levels.

The argument above demonstrates the value of having a committed workforce, the advantages for business as well as the changing nature of the employment relationship. These changes necessitate a change in the manner in which organisations are run and require a new management approach. According to Felstead, Gallie and Green (2001), an important current thinking in the last decade has emphasised the need for a shift from control to commitment as the central objective of management employment policies. The late 1980's and early 1990's saw a growing advocacy of new philosophies of management, proposing a shift from control to commitment as the focal concern of management policies.

Traditional Taylorist methods of management, with their emphasis on a high degree of division of labour and tight supervisory control, were increasingly thought to lead to demotivation among employees and to a purely instrumental approach to work (Kalleberg & Marsden, 1995). Kalleberg and Marsden (1995) note that there is an emphasis on a commitment-oriented performance management approach, which seeks to control employees by strengthening their attitudinal or affective organisational commitment rather than by co-ercion. According to the Corporate Leadership Council's Employee Engagement Survey (2004), a comparison of two organisations with different levels of affective commitment, showed that strong affective commitment translated into a workforce where 15,8 percent of employees demonstrate the highest level of discretionary effort. Low affective commitment on the other hand resulted in a workforce where only 7,8 percent of employees demonstrate the highest level of discretionary effort.

The perceived value of organisational commitment, coupled with the necessary changes in management practices in the new work place, all take place in the context of a dynamic and complex business environment, with employee attitudes that have turned around to the opposite of what they were in the past. According to McMorow (1999), the changing nature of business and the end of the so called "psychological contract" between employer and employee has created a vacuum in the lives of many people. A focus on commitment rather than control is likely as modern business processes require individuals to be responsible for their own decisions (Guevara & Ord, 1996). The emergence of lean production methods goes hand in hand with widespread business practices of subcontracting, outsourcing, off-shoring, consulting and accordingly downsizing and customising. Part time jobs, temporary work, flexible work time and self employment are on the rise in all countries. This trend points towards a transformation of the work arrangement (McMorow, 1999). According to McKay (2002) it is important therefore to identify how to maintain the organisational

commitment of employees when re-organisations and other fundamental changes take place.

The global challenges have an impact on a national level as well. South Africa is a country that is growing at a rapid rate in all sectors of the economy. The transition and democratic elections of 1994 gave rise to a free market system, which increased global competition and put pressure on developing countries like South Africa to connect and face similar challenges as the global environment.

According to Oberholzer (2001), low birth rates and the technology explosion have contributed to a situation in developed countries where there is a shortage of skilled people. All these pressures have pushed up salaries and the value of their benefits to extra ordinary heights, and made it very difficult to retain skilled employees. In this climate of extraordinary demand, South Africa is proving to be a poacher's paradise. Overseas companies are luring away this country's best brain power with hard to beat offers.

According to Oberholzer (2001), it is apparent that the nature of the workforce is changing. Trends include increasing levels of education, increased professionalism, and decreasing organisational loyalty among the workforce. These trends may not be independent - that is, increasing levels of education and professionalism may contribute to generally reduced commitment and loyalty to employers.

Organisations often make provision for restraint of trade agreements and noncompete clauses in addition to the contract of employment. This is specifically common in the Agricultural Sector in South Africa, which is characterised by shortage of specialist skills. This shortage of skill is within a very complex environment, characterised by innovation in technology and programmes and processes which take long to yield results and require

continuity in terms of leadership and composition of teams. In this context, it becomes critical for organisations to have a committed and productive workforce. The agreements that employees sign restrict key employees from leaving the organisation and joining competitors. Companies often pay large sums of money, in an effort to retain their key personnel and protect themselves and the investments they make towards the development of their staff. This often opens up a debate of whether employees stay in the organisation because they have to or because of commitment to the organisation. The performance and individual contribution of employees under these circumstances is a concern for all who are in business today.

As businesses face increasing competitive challenges, a strategy that will develop committed and loyal employees holds the promise of exceptional financial returns (Chambers, 1998; Huselid, 1995). According to Camilleri (2002), commitment is one of the great engines of business success. A people centered strategy is an important source of competitive advantage because, unlike technology, cost or new product development, people are difficult to imitate.

Loyal, engaged employees tend to generate high performance business outcomes as measured by increased sales, improved productivity, profitability and enhanced employee retention (Rogers, 2001; Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Hite, 1995). These employees commit themselves to the organisation's vision and mission. Commitment to the organisation has evolved as a key indicator of an employee's attitude to the organisation. Coupled with commitment, is the need from the organisational side, for employees that are able to deliver business results in a highly competitive environment.

## 1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Organisations are under constant pressure to produce more, with less. More and more, investors are not willing to put more money towards resources, while they expect returns on their investments. Investors are also not loyal to any one company, and they are often ready to make alternative investment decisions when expectations are not met by the company. In this context, organisations need a core of employees who are committed to the values and goals of the organisation and perform to their maximum potential (Caudron, 1996; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

In the broad context of organisational commitment, research indicated that some authors raised a concern as to whether or not commitment was a reasonable expectation for employers to hold for their employees in today's work environment where changes in leadership and organisational focus may occur rapidly (Hawkins, 1998). Laabs (1996) stated that the old employment contract of lifetime employment in exchange for loyalty is gone. Unfortunately for many companies, commitment fled with it. Morrow and McElroy (1993) reported however that the notions concerning the lack of commitment to organisations today have served as a catalyst for the further study of organisational commitment.

According to Baldry, Hyman & Scholarios (2004) this is taking place in a context where expectations and attitudes have not only changed for employees, but for employers as well. Organisations do not expect employees to stay with them for life long employment, but aim to become employers of choice, by offering professional development. This changing psychological contract can be seen as a "new deal" in which high commitment and trust can only be generated through a negotiated process of reciprocity (Baldry, Hyman & Scholarios, 2004).

There are a lot of changes that have come with this new process of reciprocity. According to Loscocco (1989), as people play a variety of roles in life, they make choices about the relative importance of work. The concept of work commitment has received growing attention from researchers (Cohen, 2000). According to Rousseau (1989), new age employees demonstrate high levels of work commitment, which is commitment not to the organisation or career, but to the work itself. However the conditions of the new organisational paradigm once again seem to challenge this conventional wisdom by creating work arrangements that ensure work commitment while paying little attention to developing organisational commitment.

The Agricultural Industry in South Africa is characterised by a shortage of skills. The shortage is mainly in the research fields like breeding, breeding technology and biotechnology. The competitiveness of each company is mainly based on its research section and the employees often have access to information that is highly proprietary. Losing a senior member of a breeding programme could lead to the programme collapsing and the competitors having access to highly confidential information. In this context, it is important for the employees to be committed to the organisation and its vision and perform to their maximum potential.

Even though the opportunities in organisations are challenging, employees are often faced with above average salary offers from competitors, as the pool of talent in the industry is limited. The organisation in which the study will be conducted (Monsanto SA) is an organisation in the Seed industry, also specialising in Biotechnology. Biotechnology companies have a large concentration on knowledge workers. Professionals compose at least 50 percent of the workforce, often including 20 percent or more Ph.D's (PHRMA, 1997). Performance is rewarded contingently, with bonuses and stock. Firm specific skills involve advanced scientific work on projects that are highly specialised and



take significant time to learn. In general, firms wish to retain employees but cannot promise them security. Skilled biotechnology employees have considerable opportunity to move from one company to another, making commitment a key concern of employers and a critical factor in organisational practices.

The organisation, as an employer of choice in the Agricultural industry, is keen to establish if a relationship exists between organisational commitment and work performance. This has been due to a number of challenges, faced by the case study organisation. One of the key challenges was the decline in productivity. This led to major client complaints and had a negative impact on the general good will of the organisation. Competitors saw this as an opportunity and recruited some of the key personnel of the case study organisation.

The market share of the organisation dropped from 60% to 48% according to information obtained from the marketing department. The Industry bodies in the Agricultural Sector advised farmers who are clients of the case study organisation not to plant in the summer season of 2005, due to high stock inventory being available from previous years. This, coupled with the significant drop in the maize price (making the majority of farmers to lose on profits), the anxiety in the Industry and among clients of the organisation around the uncertainty caused by Agriculture Black Economic Empowerment Act, as well as the uncertainty facing the organisation's clients around the events taking place in neighbouring countries like Zimbabwe, which cause instability in the Industry, put more pressure on the organisation to maximise efficiency, have a committed work force and adhere to client expectations through the work performance of staff.

The organisation had recently employed a number of younger professionals. The change in the psychological contract which happened over the past decade became obvious, as younger, new employees joined the organisation. The highly

competitive nature of the industry in which the organisation operates, as well as the scarcity of skill essential for the core areas of the business, requires a large degree of commitment, confidentiality and ownership.

The number of people that had recently left the organisation posed a competitive risk to the business, in terms of proprietary information. In addition to this, the organisation had in a few months gone through a cost cutting exercise, which led to some departments closing down and key personnel being retrenched. The above challenges led the organisation to investigate organisational commitment and its relationship to work performance. The organisation opted for the affective component of organisational commitment because there was a strong focus on emotional attachment to the organisation. The organisation wanted to retain its staff members through loyalty and emotional identification with and attachment to the organisation and the affective component measures these dimensions.

Based on this discussion, the following research questions were formulated:

- How can organisational commitment be conceptualised?
- How can work performance be conceptualised?
- How can the two concepts be integrated?
- Can organisational commitment and work performance be related statistically?
- Do levels of organisational commitment differ on the basis of individual and organisational variables (age, tenure and gender)?

### **1.3. AIMS**

Given the specific problem to be investigated, the aims of this study are listed below.

### **1.3.1 General Aim**

The general aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between organisational commitment and work performance.

### **1.3.2 Specific Aims**

In terms of the literature study, the specific aims are to:

1. Conceptualise organisational commitment
2. Conceptualise work performance
3. Integrate the concepts of organisational commitment and work performance

In terms of the empirical study, the specific aims are to:

1. Investigate the statistical nature of the relationship between organisational commitment and work performance.
2. Investigate differences in organisational commitment according to age, gender and tenure (number of years in the organisation).

Further aims of the research are to:

1. Relate theory and results.
2. Formulate recommendations for further research in this field.

#### **1.4. RESEARCH MODEL**

The research model of Mouton and Marais (1994) will be used as a framework in this study. This model aims to incorporate the five dimensions of social sciences research, namely sociological, ontological, teleological, epistemological and methodological dimensions and to systematise them within the framework of the research process.

Mouton and Marais (1994) describe social sciences research as a collaborative human activity in which social reality is studied objectively with the aim of gaining a valid understanding of it. The model is described as a systems theoretical model with three sub systems which interrelate with each other and with the research domain of the specific discipline. In this case, the relevant discipline is Industrial Psychology.

The figure below is Mouton and Marais's Research Model (Mouton & Marais 1994, p22)

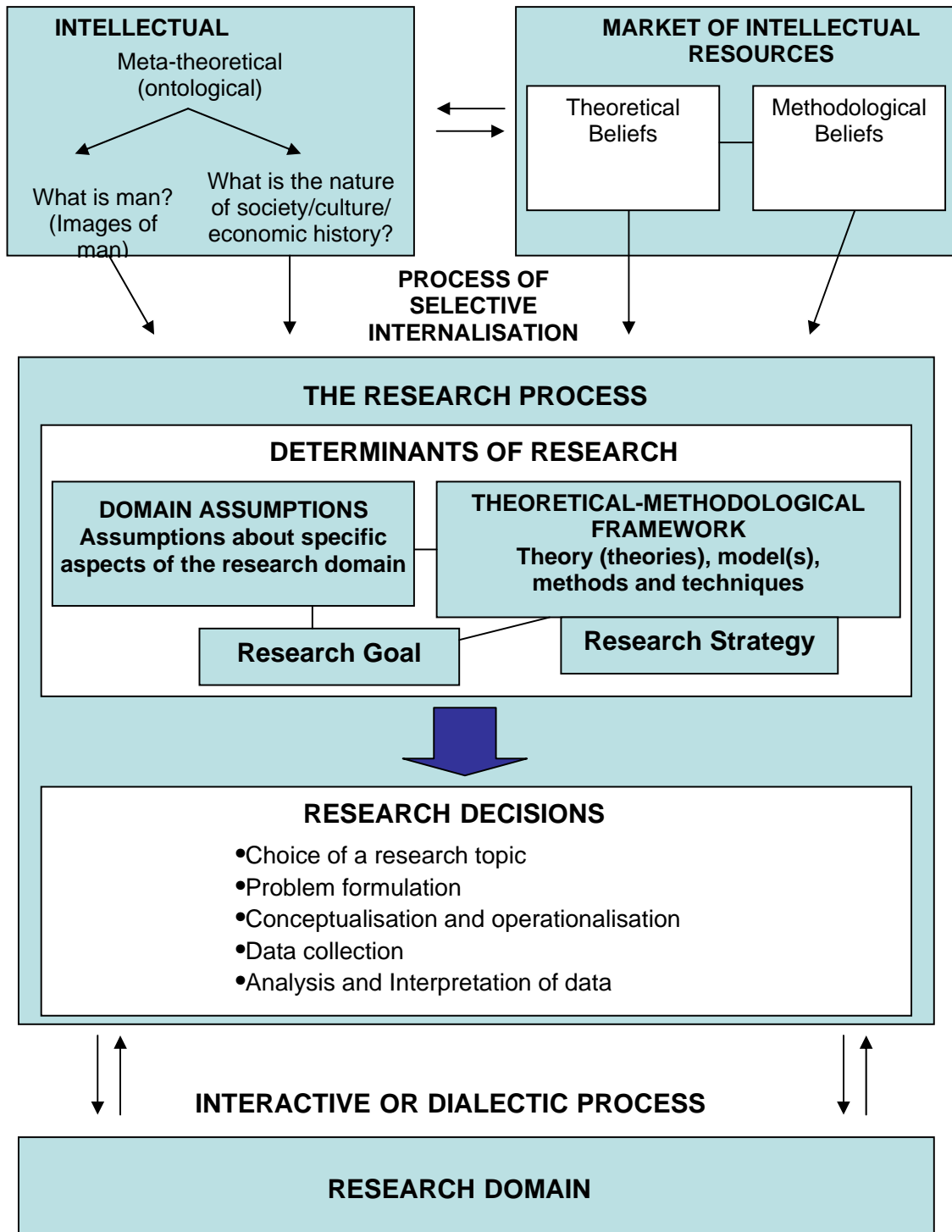


Figure 1 (Research model, Mouton & Marais, 1994)

## 1.5 PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

Mouton and Marais (1994), refer to paradigms as collections of meta-theoretical, theoretical and methodological beliefs, which have been selected, from the intellectual climate and the market of intellectual resources of a particular discipline. The concept paradigm therefore refers to research which is conducted within the framework of a given research tradition or paradigm. For the purposes of this study, a multi-paradigmatic approach will be adopted.

Organisational Commitment (OC) will be presented primarily from the behaviourist paradigm (Ivey & Simek-Downing, 1980). This paradigm is concerned with the observable, immediate and durable action in the life of the individual. It assumes that the human condition can be studied objectively and predicted and that the success of predictions and interventions can be measured. It postulates that an individual's behaviour is directly related to events and stimuli in the environment, and that behaviour develops and maintains itself through a system of rewards or reinforcers and punishments. Also, behaviour change must be relevant to the individual.

Work performance will be presented from the humanistic paradigm. According to Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (1997), the humanist paradigm presents human beings as integrated persons who actively and consciously strive towards the actualisation of their potential. Humanists acknowledge the subjective experiential world of the individual and conceptualise human nature as positive. They focus on conscious processes and on the individual as an active participant in the determination of his or her own behaviour. Maslow (1970), in his statement on motivation, states that human relation is the integration of people into a work situation that motivates them to work productively, cooperatively, and receive economic, psychological and social satisfaction. To gain employee support, we need to understand the basic needs shared by all employees,

regardless of their position within the company. This is really nothing more than an extension of our basic emotional needs, the desire for affection, emotional security or trust and self-worth. These translate in the workplace as a sense of belonging, corporate identity and identity among one's peers, a feeling of accomplishment, self-esteem, and outlet for creative expression (Honeycutt, 1989).

The empirical study will be presented from the functionalist paradigm (Morgan, 1980). This paradigm is primarily regulative and pragmatic in its basic orientation. It is concerned with understanding society in a way which generates useful empirical knowledge. Society is depicted as having concrete, real existence, and a systemic character oriented to produce an ordered and regulated state of affairs. It also encourages an approach to social theory that focuses upon understanding the role of the individual in society. Behaviour is always seen as being contextually bound in a real world of concrete and tangible social relationships.

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **1.6.1 Research variables**

The dependant variable in this study is work performance and the independent variable is organisational commitment.

### **1.6.2 Type of research**

A quantitative research approach will be applied in this study. The study will be descriptive in nature, as the relationship between organisational commitment and work performance would be described through the research. Christensen (1997) indicates that the primary characteristic of the descriptive research

approach is that it represents an attempt to provide an accurate description or picture of a particular situation or phenomenon. According to Mouton and Marais (1994), explanatory research goes further than merely indicating that relationships exist between variables, it indicates the direction of the relationship in a causal relationship model. In this study, organisational commitment is hypothesised to have a positive impact on work performance. The research is thus also explanatory in nature.

### **1.6.3 Unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis for this study will be the individual responses to an organisational commitment questionnaire. Individual performance management scores from company records as well as feedback from Line Managers will also be analysed.

### **1.6.4 Methods to ensure reliability and validity**

#### **1.6.4.1 Validity**

The author will strive to enhance both internal and external validity. According to Christensen (1997), external validity is the extent to which the results of research can be applied to and across different persons, settings and times. According to Mouton and Marais (1994), for research to be internally valid, the constructs must be measured in a valid manner, and the data measured must be accurate and reliable.

Theoretical validity which postulates the clarity of concepts and their scope, should be addressed in the literature review (Mouton & Marais, 1994). Theoretical validity will be addressed in chapters 2 and 3 of this research where detailed concepts and dimensions of organisational commitment and work



performance will be narrated. This will also include definitions for both organisational commitment and work performance.

The information will be extracted from relevant literature. The author will explore the latest literature, while also sourcing literature that will give a historical perspective.

The validity of the empirical research will be ensured through the use of appropriate measuring instruments, which have been tested for validity and reliability. Taking a large sample will enhance reliability and validity of the research. All employees within the company in which the research will be conducted, will be invited to take part in the study.

#### 1.6.4.2 Reliability

According to Christensen (1997), reliability refers to consistency or stability. Reliability in the literature review will be ensured by using existing literature sources, theories and models that are available to other interested academics.

In the empirical study, all research participants will be given the same instructions. The research participants will complete the organisational commitment questionnaire on-line. The researcher will send an email to the organisation, explaining the purpose of the questionnaire, the number of questions, how long the questionnaire takes to complete as well as assuring the participants of the confidentiality of the process. The responses would automatically go to the central data base created by the organisation's information technology department, and the manager in the department would forward the final ratings to the researcher.

The participants who completed the organisational commitment questionnaire would then be requested to complete their performance ratings for the year online. This would be done in the form of a separate email, explaining to participants that if they completed the online organisational commitment questionnaire, they should also select the performance rating allocated to them, in line with the company's verbal rating scale categories.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHOD**

### **1.7.1 Phase 1 Theoretical study**

The literature review will investigate specific literature relating to organisational commitment and work performance, according to the following stages:

- Step 1            Organisational commitment
- Step 2            Work Performance
- Step 3            Integration

### **1.7.2 Phase 2 Empirical study**

#### **1.7.2.1. Step 1: Population and sample**

The population will consist of 300 employees of the case study organisation, which is the total staff complement. The sample will consist of 183 employees. The sampling methodology used is that of convenience sampling. This is due to the fact that some of the employees of the research organisation work outside of the office, and often in remote areas. The sample thus would consist only of employees in the organisation's head office, who have access to a computer. The demographic questions for the study will consist of number of years in the organisation, gender and age.

#### 1.7.2.2 Step 2: Measuring Instruments

Organisational commitment will be measured using Allen and Meyer's (1990) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire. The Affective Commitment Scale Items will be used for the purposes of this study as explained in section 1.2. For the purpose of this study, the use of the term "Organisational Commitment" will refer to the affective component thereof, unless used in a broader sense. The empirical investigation focussed only on the affective component of the concept as formulated by Allen and Meyer (1990). Responses on each item are made on a 7- point scale with anchors labeled (1) strongly disagree and (7) strongly agree. The psychometric properties had been extensively evaluated (Allen & Meyer, 1990), and will be discussed in chapter 4.

Individual job performance will be measured with supervisor's ratings generated by the organisation's formal performance appraisal process. The rating scale consists of 5 levels of performance namely: superior, very strong, strong, moderate and unacceptable. Participants will be required to submit the performance rating allocated to them during the preceding performance management cycle.

#### 1.7.2.3 Step 3: Data collection

Questionnaires will be loaded on the organisation's intranet and employees will be allowed to complete them during their individual spare time. A link with the questionnaire will be sent to all employees with an explanation of the process to be followed and the reasons for completing the questionnaire. The employees would then submit completed questionnaires online, and the author would pull a status report on an ongoing basis. The SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2003) programme will be used to analyse data.

### 1.7.3 Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship between organisational commitment and work performance.

## 1.8 CHAPTERS

The research will comprise the following chapters:

Chapter 2: Organisational commitment

Chapter 3: Work performance

Chapter 4: Methodology

Chapter 5: Results

Chapter 6: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between organisational commitment and work performance within an Agricultural organisation in South Africa. This chapter began by describing the background and motivation for this research. The aim of the study was then discussed and the appropriate research model was described. The paradigm perspective, the research design, the research method and the flow of the research were then explained. The chapter concluded by providing an outline of the chapters to follow. Chapter 2 presents the first step in the literature study which discusses organisational commitment.

## **CHAPTER 2            ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT**

Chapter 1 explored the background to and the motivation for this study, with specific reference to organisational commitment and work performance as the main concept. In this chapter the concept of organisational commitment is explored in more detail.

This chapter's main focus areas include the following theoretical aspects of the concept of organisational commitment: conceptualisation with a specific focus on definition, approaches and models of organisational commitment.

### **2.1    CONCEPTUALISATION OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT**

In this section, the conceptualisation of the concept of organisational commitment will be discussed, with a specific focus on the definition of organisational commitment, approaches to organisational commitment as well as the various models of organisational commitment.

#### **2.1.1            Definition of organisational commitment**

This section will focus on the various definitions of the concept of organisational commitment. A definition specific for this study will be formulated. Defining organisational commitment is the first step at conceptualising organisational commitment.

Definitions of the concept of organisational commitment include Porter's (1974) definition, which define organisational commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation.

According to Mowday, Steers and Porter's (1979) definition, organisational commitment entails three factors: 1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the

organisation's goals and values, 2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation and 3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organisation.

Meyer and Allen (1991) defined organisational commitment as reflecting three broad themes: Affective, Continuance, and Normative. Thus commitment is viewed as reflecting an affective orientation toward the organisation, recognition of the costs associated with leaving the organisation, and a moral obligation to remain with the organisation.

Subsequently, many definitions have been proposed for the commitment concept, but a recurring strand seems to be the idea of a psychological bond - an intrinsic attachment or identification of a person with something outside of oneself (Firestone & Pennell, 1993).

O'Reilly (1989, p 17) defines organisational commitment as "an individual's psychological bond to the organisation, including a sense of job involvement, loyalty and belief in the values of the organisation". Organisational commitment from this point of view is characterised by employee's acceptance of organisational goals and their willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organisation (Miller & Lee, 2001).

Chow (1994) defined organisational commitment as the degree to which employees identify with their organisation and the managerial goals, and show a willingness to invest effort, participate in decision making and internalise organisational values. According to Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) organisational commitment can be conceived as a binding force that is experienced as a mind-set or as a psychological state that leads an individual towards a particular course of action, while according to Zangaro (2001), employees are regarded as committed to an organisation if they willingly continue their association with the organisation and devote considerable effort to achieving organisational goals.

Cohen (2003) states that commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets. This general description of commitment relates to the definition of organisational commitment by Arnold (2005, p 625) namely that it is “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in the organisation”.

Miller (2003, p 73) also states that organisational commitment is “a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organisation and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in the organisation”. This definition is also supported by Kreitner and Kinicki (1995).

Best (1994, p 69) maintains that “committed individuals enact specific behaviours due to the belief that it is morally correct rather than personally beneficial”. Reichers (1985, p 468) is of the opinion that “organisational commitment as a behaviour is visible when organisational members are committed to existing groups within the organisation”. Therefore, organisational commitment is a state of being, in which organisational members are bound by their actions and beliefs that sustain their activities and their own involvement in the organisation (Miller & Lee, 2001).

For the purposes of this study, organisational commitment is defined as a psychological bond individuals have toward their organisation, characterised by a strong identification with the organisation and desire to contribute towards attainment of organisational goals. This definition relates to Allen and Meyer’s affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The definition is linked to the questionnaire used for the study, namely Allen and Meyer’s Affective Commitment Scale, which measures the affective dimension of commitment. (See chapter 4 for a full description). See also 1.2 for reasons for choosing the affective component of the scale.

### **2.1.2 Approaches to organisational commitment**

Approaches to organisational commitment is conceptualised in a variety of ways. Stevens (1978) suggested that the different conceptions of organisational commitment can be subsumed in two categories, exchange approaches and psychological approaches. Exchange approaches view commitment as an outcome of inducement/contributions transactions between the organisation and member, with an explicit emphasis on the instrumentalities of membership as the primary determinant of the member's accrual of advantage or disadvantage in the ongoing process of exchange. In contrast to the exchange-based conception of commitment, the psychological approach as originally conceived by Porter and Smith (1970) is a more active and positive orientation toward the organisation. The two approaches will be discussed further in the following sections:

#### **2.1.2.1 Exchange approaches**

The exchange approach is made up of two approaches, namely behavioural and attributions approach. The two approaches are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

##### **(a) Behavioural Approach**

The behavioural approach grew out of Becker's (1960) work. This is known as the exchange-based or side-bet theory (Becker, 1960) and holds that individuals are committed to the organisation as far as they hold their positions and accumulate better benefits (or incur greater costs at departure), this may dissuade them from seeking alternative employment. Individuals are committed to the organisation because the benefits assimilated with staying in the organisation are higher than the alternative opportunities and costs to leave (Blau & Boal, 1987; Collins & Seller, 1988). Commitment is thus an outcome of



inducement or contribution transactions between an organisation and its members (Blau & Boal, 1987).

According to Stevens (1978), a limitation of exchange-based measures of commitment stems from the lack of empirical evidence that they are, in fact related to particular ongoing behavioural outcomes within the organisation.

#### (b) Attributions Approach

This approach focuses on attitudes that result in the attribution of commitment. According to Johnston and Snizek (1991), these attributions are made in part in order to maintain consistency between one's behaviour and attitudes. This is a moral or attitudinal approach in which the individual behaviour is guided by emotions or heart, or what Etzioni called affective/value rationality (Johnston & Snizek, 1991). The individual is socialised by showing active participation and affective participation for the goals of the organisation (Bar-Hayim & Berman, 1992; Randall, 1990). Accordingly, organisational commitment is conceptualised as a state in which an individual identifies with a particular organisation and its goals, and he/she wishes to maintain membership in the organisation in order to facilitate its goals (Blau & Boal, 1987).

The attributions approach (Reichers, 1985) conceptualises commitment as a binding of the individual to behavioural acts, which occurs when individuals attribute an attitude of commitment to themselves after engaging in behaviours that are volitional, explicit, and irrevocable.

#### 2.1.2.2 Psychological Approach

The psychological approach relates to the process of identification and dedication of one's own energies to the organisation's goals. An organisation has to foster in its employees feelings of commitment to their work world, commitment to the organisation and its values and goals, commitment to one's occupation,

commitment to one's career, and a strong work ethic (Cohen, 1995; Dalton & Tudor, 1993; Jaros, Jermier, & Sincich, 1993; Steers & Porter, 1985). This is also known as the psychological approach, and conceptualises commitment as an attitude or an orientation toward the organisation that links or attaches the identity of the person to the organisation. The three components of this orientation consist of a) identification with the goals and values of the organisation, b) high involvement in its work activities and c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organisation (Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian, 1974; Steers, 1977).

According to Buchanan (1974), together these psychological approaches to commitment depict a decidedly positive, high-intensity orientation towards the organisation. In addition, they include, but go beyond the hesitancy to leave component that has been the fundamental dimension represented in exchange-based measures of organisational commitment.

There are thus two approaches to organisational commitment, namely exchange based and psychological approaches.

### **2.1.3 Models of organisational commitment**

A search in the literature shows that the study of organisational commitment can be classified into various models. Models are important in the study of organisational commitment as they explore the different perspectives studied and documented and how they are expressed in an organisational setting. The various models classify organisational commitment as either unidimensional or multidimensional. The following paragraphs will explore these models in detail.

#### **2.1.3.1 O'Reilly and Chatman's model**

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986), as discussed in Meyer and Herscovitch (2001 p 305), developed their multidimensional framework based on the assumption that

commitment represents an attitude toward the organisation, and that there are various mechanisms through which attitudes can develop. Based on Kelman's (1958) work on attitude and behaviour change, O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) argued that commitment takes on three forms, namely:

**Compliance:** This occurs when attitudes and corresponding behaviours are adopted in order to gain specific rewards.

**Identification:** This occurs when an individual accepts influence to establish or maintain a satisfying relationship.

**Internalisation:** This occurs when influence is accepted because the attitudes and behaviours an employee is being encouraged to adopt are congruent with existing values. The employee's psychological attachment can reflect varying combinations of these three psychological foundations (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986).

Organisational commitment is thus multidimensional and takes on three forms namely: compliance, identification and internalisation.

#### 2.1.3.2 Morrow's major commitments

In her book, Morrow (1983) identifies five major commitments which she thinks have a reciprocal influence on each other. These five commitments are divided into two main groups. The first group examines commitments that influence work attitude with no relation to the organisation in which the worker is employed. It includes commitments such as: Protestant work ethic (Mirels & Garret, 1971), Career commitment (Greenhaus, 1971) and Job commitment (Blau & Boal, 1989). The second group includes commitments that are influenced directly by the organisation in which the worker is employed, including both continuance and affective organisational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1993).

According to Morrow (1983), career commitment is connected to continuance and affective commitment to the organisation. In turn, continuance commitment to the organisation relates to affective commitment, and both of these commitments influence job involvement. Morrow (1983) argued that there is a reciprocal connectedness between the different levels of commitment.

#### 2.1.3.3 Etzioni's model

Etzioni's model encompasses three perspectives, namely: Moral commitment, Calculative commitment and Alienative commitment. These perspectives will be explored in the paragraphs below:

##### (a) Moral commitment

Moral commitment represents one of the two affective perspectives of organisational commitment. Calling it moral commitment, Etzioni (1961), viewed it as emanating from a symbolic compliance structure. Moral commitment is characterised by the acceptance of and identification with organisational goals (Patchen, 1970). According to Hall (1970), it may be thought of as a kind of organisational identification. Wiener (1982) labelled such forms of affective organisational attachment (e.g. moral involvement), commitment. He used this label because of his association of organisational identification with the commitment work of Porter and his colleagues (Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian, 1974; Steers, 1977). Thus measures such as those of Hall (1970) and Porter (1974) are currently intended to operationalise affective dimensions of commitment, similar to Etzioni's (1961) moral involvement.

##### (b) Calculative commitment

Calculative commitment is based on the employee receiving inducements to match contributions. Etzioni (1961) saw this type of organisational attachment as typical compliance systems which are based on an exchange. Thus, it is

conceptually rooted in the exchange theory of Barnard (1938) and March and Simon (1958). Calculative commitment needs not be reduced to willingness to retain organisational membership. It may be thought of in the broader terms of an instrumental organisational attachment. In fact, retention or forfeiture of organisational membership – the traditional concept of calculative commitment may be more closely associated with an affective form of organisational commitment. For example, a willingness to forfeit organisational membership may be the result of anger (negative affect) towards the organisation. Consistent with Etzioni's (1961) model, such feelings emanate from alienation (affective organisational attachment) rather than a calculative commitment. Moreover, retention of membership may reflect a personal identification with the organisation, and such positive affect may be more appropriately associated with moral involvement in the Etzioni model (Etzioni, 1961).

(c) Alienative commitment

Alienative commitment represents an affective attachment to the organisation. Etzioni (1961) originally described alienative involvement as typical of a prison or military basic training camp in which a coercive compliance system is prevalent. Alienation can be viewed as a basis for organisational commitment if one thinks of an employee's commitment to the organisation as a consequence of a) a lack of control over the internal organisational environment and b) the perceived absence of alternatives for organisational commitment (Etzioni, 1961).

Etzioni (1961) borrowed the word alienation from the work of Karl Marx who gave alienation its classic definition, a lack of control which is a perceived inability to change or control the organisation in this context. To the alienatively committed worker, rewards and punishment may seem random rather than a direct result of the quality or the quantity of work (Etzioni, 1961). The employee's perceived sense of randomness provides the sense of loss of control. Thus the negative affective attachment to the organisation, ascribed by Etzioni to

the alienatively involved employee develops. An employee who is alienatively committed to the organisation may stay because of lack of alternatives or fear of serious financial loss. Thus, according to Etzioni (1961), alienative commitment is a negative organisational attachment which is characterised by low intensity of intentions to meet organisational demands coupled with intentions to retain organisational membership.

Organisational commitment is thus classified into various models, namely O'Reilly and Chatman's model, Morrow's major commitments and Etzioni's model.

In the following few paragraphs, Meyer and Allen's three component model will be explored further. This is the model used in the current study.

#### 2.1.3.4 Meyer and Allen's three-component model

Meyer and Allen made the biggest contribution to the organisational commitment literature, with over fifteen studies published from 1984. Meyer and Allen's three-component model of commitment was chosen for this study, because it has undergone the most extensive empirical evaluation to date (Allen & Meyer, 1996).

Meyer and Allen (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1984) developed their three component model from an identification of common themes in the conceptualisation of commitment from existing literature. Common to all conceptualisations, they argued the belief that commitment binds an individual to an organisation and thereby reduce the likelihood of turnover. The key difference is in the mindset presumed to characterise the commitment. The mindsets reflected three distinguishable themes:

Affective attachment to the organisation, labelled Affective commitment, perceived cost of leaving, labelled Continuance commitment and obligation to

remain at the organisation, labelled Normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Meyer and Allen (1991 p 67) noted that organisational commitment is the view that commitment is a psychological state that a) characterises the relationship with the organisation, and b) has implication for the decision to continue membership with the organisation. They describe these three components as affective, continuance and normative. The components are explored in the paragraphs below.

(a) Affective orientation (affective)

The first component of organisational commitment in the model is affective commitment. According to Meyer and Allen (1997) affective commitment is the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation. Organisational members who are affectively committed to the organisation continue to work for the organisation because they want to (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Members who are committed on an affective level stay with the organisation because they view their personal employment relationship as congruent to the goals and values of the organisation (Beck & Wilson, 2000).

Kanter (1968, p 507) defines it as the attachment of an individual's fund of affectivity and emotion to the group. According to Sheldon (1971), it is an attitude or an orientation toward the organisation, which links or attaches the identity of the person to the organisation.

Hall (1970) defines the affective component as the process by which the goals of the organisation and those of the individual become increasingly congruent. It is also viewed as a partisan, affective commitment to the goals and values of the organisation, to one's role in relation to goals and values, and to the organisation for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth (Buchanan, 1974 p

533). Gould (1979) observed that some employees put effort into their work beyond what appears to be instrumentally required for the expected reward, and attributed this to the affective component of organisational commitment. Meyer and Allen (1997) further indicate that affective commitment is influenced by factors such as job challenge, role clarity, goal clarity, and goal difficulty, receptiveness by management, peer cohesion, equity, personal importance, feedback, participation, and dependability.

Affective commitment development involves identification with the organisation and internalisation of organisational values (Beck & Wilson, 2000).

(b) Cost based (continuance)

The second component of Allen and Meyer's model of organisational commitment is continuance commitment. Meyer and Allen (1997, p 11) define continuance commitment as "awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organisation". Kanter (1968, p 504) supports this definition and states that it is the "profit associated with continued participation and a cost associated with leaving the organisation". It is calculative in nature because of the individual's perception or weighing of costs and risks associated with leaving the current organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Meyer and Allen (1991) further state that employees whose primary link to the organisation is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so.

Continuance commitment can be regarded as an instrumental attachment to the organisation, where the individual's association with the organisation is based on assessment of economic benefits gained (Beck & Wilson, 2000). Another view to continuance commitment is that it is a structural phenomenon, which occurs because of individual-organisational transactions and alterations in side bets or investments over time (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972, p 556).



Meyer et al (1990, p 715) also maintain that “accrued investments and poor employment alternatives tend to force individuals to maintain their line of action and are responsible for these individuals being committed because they need to”. Individuals stay in the organisation because of the investments they accumulate due to the time spent in the organisation, not because they want to. This is different to affective commitment wherein individuals stay in the organisation because they want to, and they identify with the organisation and its values.

(c) Obligation or moral responsibility (normative)

The last component of the organisational commitment model is normative commitment. Meyer and Allen (1997) define normative commitment as a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Internalised normative beliefs of duty and obligation make individuals obliged to sustain membership in the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The normative component is viewed as the commitment employees consider morally right to stay in the company, regardless of how much status enhancement or satisfaction the firm gives him or her over the years (Marsh & Mannari, 1977, p 59).

According to Wiener and Gechman (1977) commitment behaviours are socially accepted behaviours that exceed formal and/or normative expectations relevant to the object of commitment. Normative commitment is also viewed as the totality of internalised normative pressures to act in a way which meets organisational goals and interests (Wiener, 1982, p 421).

The strength of normative organisational commitment is influenced by accepted rules about reciprocal obligation between the organisation and its members (Suliman & Iles, 2000). The reciprocal obligation is based on the social exchange theory, which suggests that a person receiving a benefit is under a strong normative obligation or rule to repay the benefit in some way (McDonald &

Makin, 2000). Meyer and Allen (1991, p 88) argue that this moral obligation arises either through a process of socialisation within the society or the organisation. Employees consequently feel obliged to repay the benefits from the organisation by remaining as part of the work force.

The intergration of the forms of commitment sensitised researchers to the multidimensional nature of commitment. What differentiates the various dimensions of commitment in the multidimensional conceptualisation is the nature of the underlying mindset. Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that affective, continuance and normative commitment are components of organisational commitment, rather than types because the employee-employer relationship reflects varying degrees of all three. The multi- dimensional framework or conceptualisation does not seem to be incompatible. Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested the lack of consensus in the definition of commitment contributed greatly to its treatment as a multidimensional construct.

Meyer and Allen (1997) use the tri-dimensional model to conceptualise organisational commitment in three dimensions namely, affective, continuance and normative commitments. Allen and Meyer (1996) urged researchers to investigate the dimensionality of organisational commitment across cultures to discern if multidimensional conceptualisations developed in the US are applicable to other cultures or not. Within past decades, a multidimensional approach to the conceptualisation and assessment of organisational commitment has been proposed and refined (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1984, 1991, 1997). Many studies have examined the construct validity of the Meyer and Allen's (1991) three component model and its measures. Allen and Meyer (1996) reviewed results from over 40 samples and claimed that construct validity was strong enough to support the continued use of scales.

Many studies have attempted to explore its effect on work outcomes such as job performance. According to Meyer and Allen, "the models of commitment have

been developed and tested in Western countries. There is a need for more systematic research to determine whether these models apply elsewhere" (1997, 218). The author wanted to test this model in South Africa. The model of Allen and Meyer is thus used as the basis for this study.

Allen and Meyer (1997) view commitment as a multi-dimensional concept. The tri-dimensional model was discussed in this section focusing on affective, continuance and normative commitments.

**REMARK:** In this chapter the focus areas included the following theoretical aspects of the concept of organisational commitment, namely the conceptualisation of organisational commitment by defining, discussing approaches and models of organisational commitment. With this the first theoretical aim has been satisfied. (See chapter 1 section 1.3.2).

## **SUMMARY**

This chapter's main focus areas included the following theoretical aspects of the concept of organisational commitment: conceptualisation with a specific focus on definition, approaches and models of organisational commitment. The specific model adopted for this study (Allen and Meyer's model) was discussed in more detail. In the following chapter, the theoretical aspects of the concept of work performance will be explored in detail.

## **CHAPTER 3            WORK PERFORMANCE**

Chapter 2 explored the theoretical aspects of the concept of organisational commitment, with specific reference to definition, approaches and the models of the concept.

This chapter's main focus areas include the following theoretical aspects of the concept of work performance: conceptualisation by defining the concept, and discussing the various approaches and dimensions of the concept and a discussion on the performance appraisal as a tool to measure performance. This chapter will also focus on the integration of the concepts of organisational commitment and work performance.

### **3.1                    CONCEPTUALISATION OF WORK PERFORMANCE**

Work performance will be conceptualised by defining the concept, looking at the different approaches to the concept and how it developed as well as discussing the different dimensions to the concept of work performance.

#### **3.1.1                Definition of the concept of work performance**

On a macro level (organisational), performance is defined as a process where the processing of inputs (energy, labour) into outputs (profit, number of units), according to certain quality and quantity specifications (level of customer satisfaction), while attempting to achieve certain work goals (Williams, 1998; Roe, 1999).

Byars and Rue (2006) define performance as the extent to which an employee accomplishes the tasks that make up his or her job.

Performance can be defined as a record of outcomes produced during a specific job, over a specific time (Williams, 1998). Performance is directly related to the concept of productivity because of aspects such as efficiency, quality and

effectiveness (Spangenberg, 1994; Williams, 1998). On a micro level (eg individual), performance refers to the amount of effort, initiative and absenteeism, maintenance of standards and commitment displayed by individuals while performing the job tasks (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1996). Performance is the translation of potential into behaviour, can be viewed in terms of standards individuals must achieve in their work and can be seen as the desired result of behaviour (Cascio, 1995; Ivancevich & Matteson, 1996). The direction, intensity and duration of effort expended by individuals influence the quality of their job performance (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1996).

The focus in most of the literature about organisational management is on the performance management process and not on defining the concept of work performance. Dessler (1983) suggests that work performance is a measure of how well an employee meets the standards that are required on a specific job. Ivancevich and Matteson (1996) define work performance as the quality and quantity of human output necessary to meet work goals agreed upon between employees and their managers. It is therefore clear that performance can only be evaluated as good or bad if a standard of performance has been agreed upon between employees and their managers.

For the purposes of this study, performance will be defined as the output required from employees, measured against specific set standards, which contributes towards attainment of organisational goals.

### **3.1.2 Approaches to work performance**

Work performance is a result of two distinct determinants, namely motivation and ability. According to Cummings and Schwab (1973), work performance is seen as most directly a consequence of the employee's ability and motivation to perform. Expectancy theory initially hypothesised that ability and motivation interact to determine performance. Schwab (1973) states that someone with no

ability to complete a task cannot successfully perform, no matter how highly motivated he/she may be to do so. Likewise, at least some modest amount of motivation is required, regardless of one's ability to do a task before success can be expected. Individual's learning, perspective and cognitive abilities together with their attitudes and values influence their job performance (Bergh & Theron, 2002).

The above determinants, namely ability and motivation are influenced by individual differences in intelligence, personality, motivation, perception, demographics, attitudes and competencies (Bergh & Theron, 2002; Ivancevich & Matteson, 1996; Williams, 1998).

An individual's ability to perform can also be influenced by organisational variables. A specific variable which has a direct influence on work performance is task design, often done by supervisors. Employees can argue that if the supervisors do not explain and document what they have to do and the expectations from the organisation, it might be difficult to perform according to expected standard (Cummings & Schwab, 1973). Cummings and Schwab (1973) states that the organisation should avoid this by specifying the type of behaviour it expects and will reward.

In this section, two determinants of performance were identified, namely ability and motivation. The organisational variables which influence work performance were also discussed.

### **3.1.3 Dimensions of work performance**

According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993) and Campbell, Gasser, and Oswald (1996), it is widely agreed that work performance is a multidimensional construct. The various dimensions of work performance will be explored in the following sections:

### 3.1.3.1 In-role or formal job performance

In role or formal job performance includes completion of assigned duties, performance of assigned tasks and other formal performance aspects of the job. Theory suggests that individuals affectively committed to the organisation are characterised by high involvement in the organisation and commitment to its goals (Angle & Lawson, 1994), and activities likely to result in better job performance. In-role behaviours parallel Katz' (1964) category of behaviours that reliably carries out specific role or job requirements. In-role job performance is thus an integral part of the individual's work performance as it entails demonstration of an employee's ability to carry and complete assigned tasks.

### 3.1.3.2 Helping or citizenship behaviour

According to Batson (1995) and Morrison (1994), helping behaviour (sometimes also called pro-social behaviour) is frequently studied in the management and social psychology literature. Helping reduces friction and increases efficiency in the organisation (Borman & Motowild, 1993) and thus is usually considered a critical aspect of individual performance.

Helping or citizenship behaviours are described as behaviours that are, in some manner, more spontaneous or discretionary on the part of employees than those that are prescribed by formal organisational roles or job descriptions (George & Brief, 1992; Organ, 1988). Organ (1988, p. 4) referred to these as organisational citizenship behaviours, or OCBs, which he initially defined as "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation". Such behaviours typically go beyond an employee's job description, but are useful to the organisation as a whole. Employees generally have more control over the amount of citizenship behaviours they exhibit than is

true of core task behaviours (Schnake & Dumler, 1993; Thompson & Werner, 1997).

Organ (1988) defined citizenship behaviour as a type of behaviour of an organisation's employees that is aimed at promoting the effective performance of the organisation, regardless of the individual productivity objectives of each employee. Key elements are: behaviour that is very important for the company performance and operational success (Netemeyer, 1997) as well as a type of behaviour that goes beyond what is formally prescribed by the organisation.

A literature review identifies two main approaches to the concept of citizenship behaviours, namely extra-role and an approach that maintains that citizenship behaviour must be considered separately from work performance. Organ (1988), as well as other early researchers of this topic, considered extra-role behaviour to be individual contributions in the workplace that go beyond the specified role requirements and are not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system. Graham (1991) stated that another stream of research suggests that citizenship behaviour must be considered separately from work performance, thus obviating the problem of distinguishing between role and extra role performances. In this view, citizenship behaviour must be conceived as a global concept, which includes all relevant positive behaviours of individuals within organisations.

### 3.1.3.3 Contextual performance

Contextual performance is comprised of individual efforts that are not directly related to the individual's main task functions but are important because they shape the organisational, social, and psychological context that serves as the critical catalyst for task activities and processes (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). While there are some differences between the dimensions proposed for citizenship behaviour versus contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo,



1993; Moorman & Blakely, 1995; Organ, 1988; Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994; Werner, 1997), Organ (1997) argued that citizenship behaviour be viewed more along the lines of how contextual performance has been defined. As Organ (1997 p. 91) writes, citizenship behaviour is "less likely to be considered an enforceable job requirement," and "is less likely than task performance to be regarded by the performer as leading confidently to systemic rewards".

Contextual performance (or interpersonal job performance) is a function of an individual's interpersonal skill knowledge that supports the broader social environment in which the technical core must function. Contextual performance tends to promote desirable organisational behaviour. Contextual performance, in contrast, refers to behaviours that contribute to the culture and climate of the organisation, in other words, the context within which transformation and maintenance activities are carried out. Volunteering for extra work, persisting with enthusiasm, helping and cooperating with others, following rules and procedures, and supporting or defending the organisation are all examples of contextual performance behaviours (Motowidlo & Schmit, 1999).

According to McCall (1988), Mumford and Marks (2000), Mumford and Zaccaro (2000) and Yukl (2002), as managers are assigned more complex problems or broader areas of responsibility, their behaviour focuses more on co-ordination and negotiation with other constituencies, planning, and development of organisation strategy. Because these types of behaviours require attention to the context within which tasks are performed, managers who report exhibiting these types of higher-level leadership functions should value contextual performance in the organisation more than managers who do not engage in these activities. Thus, it is predicted, according to McCall (1988), Mumford and Marks (2000), Mumford and Zaccaro (2000) and Yukl (2002), that ratings of the importance of task performance in the organisation will be positively related to the extent to which managers report performing day-to-day supervisory activities, and ratings

of the importance of contextual performance will relate to the extent to which managers report performing higher level leadership activities.

Contextual performance behaviours support the environment in which the technical core operates. Common examples of contextual performance behaviours include helping co-workers, volunteering for tasks, and defending the organisation (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). These behaviours are important for achieving organisational outcomes and particularly for supporting long-term success (Allen & Rush, 1998; Ostroff, 1992). The construct of contextual performance expands the performance domain to include a variety of non job-specific behaviours (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993).

Studies of contextual performance build on research in the areas of prosocial organisational behaviour (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986), extra role behaviour (Katz & Kahn, 1966), and organisational citizenship behaviour (Bateman & Organ, 1983). More recently, the constructs of organisational spontaneity (George & Brief, 1992) and personal initiative (Frese, Kring, Soose & Zempel, 1995) have been introduced to describe important aspects of work behaviour not captured in traditional descriptions of work performance. Contextual performance incorporates key aspects of these constructs to describe a broad dimension of work performance distinct from core task activities. Although these behaviours have long been recognised as important in organisations, only recently has their role been defined in terms of individual performance and differentiated from cognitive and attitudinal constructs (Conway, 1999).

Contextual performance behaviour affects the organisational, social, and psychological context in which the work is performed (e.g. working co-operatively with others, persisting to reach difficult goals, following organisational rules) (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Organ & Paine, 1999). It is this aspect of performance that would seem particularly relevant for employees

with supervisory or management responsibilities because of the need to facilitate the technical, job-specific activities of others (Conway, 1999).

#### 3.1.3.4 Task performance

According to O'Reilly and Chapman (1986), task performance (or technical job performance) is the behaviour associated with maintaining and servicing an organisation's technical core. Task performance is also the proficiency with which incumbents perform activities that are formally recognised as part of their jobs; activities that contribute to the organisation's technical core, either directly by implementing a part of its technological process or indirectly by providing it with needed materials or services (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). According to Murphy (1989) task performance entails the accomplishment of duties and tasks that are specified in a job description. However, as Schmidt (1993) points out with changing jobs, job descriptions may not provide solid grounds for defining task performance.

Task performance can also be referred to as overall or formal job performance, including completion of assigned duties, performance of assigned tasks, and other formal performance aspects of the job. Motowidlo and Schmit (1999) states that task performance includes behaviours that contribute to the core transformation and maintenance activities in an organisation, such as producing products, selling merchandise, acquiring inventory, managing subordinates, or delivering services. Conway (1999) observed that supervisors tended to focus more on task performance than contextual performance when evaluating subordinates, suggesting that supervisors and managers are generally concerned about the task performance of their work units.

Less experienced managers are typically assigned well-structured problems of limited scope where their behaviours are closely monitored (Mumford & Marks, 2000; Yukl, 2002). According to McCall (1988), Mumford and Marks (2000) and

Mumford and Zaccaro (2000), these types of limited assignments require day-to-day monitoring, coaching, support, and evaluation of subordinates. Managers who exhibit these types of day-to-day supervisory activity should be focused on the accomplishment of specific or narrow tasks, and are, therefore, likely to value the task performance of their subordinates more than managers who do not exhibit these.

According to Viswesvaran and Ones (2000), early attempts at exploring the job performance construct focused on task requirements. Fleishman (1967) attempted to develop a taxonomy of human performance based on learning theories and training techniques. The objective was to develop homogeneous task clusters applicable across jobs. Although Fleishman's objective was to develop a comprehensive taxonomy of job performance dimensions, given the exclusive focus on ability requirements, this model is classified by Viswesvaran and Ones (2000) as one postulating specific stand alone dimensions across jobs.

The following section will deal with the specifics of managing performance in an organisational setting, in the form of performance appraisal.

### **3.2 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AS A TOOL TO MEASURE PERFORMANCE**

According to Anderson (1993), all organisations must face up to the challenge of how to evaluate, utilise and develop the skills and abilities of their employees to ensure that organisational goals are achieved and also to ensure that individuals gain as much satisfaction as possible from their jobs, while making effective contributions. Performance appraisal is one of the most important Human Resources (HR) practices (Boswell & Boudreau, 2002) and one of the more heavily researched topics in work psychology (Fletcher, 2002). Performance appraisal may be defined as a structured formal interaction between a subordinate and supervisor, that usually takes the form of a periodic interview

(annual or semi-annual), in which the work performance of the subordinate is examined and discussed, with a view to identifying weaknesses and strengths as well as opportunities for improvement and skills development (Fletcher, 2002).

Appraisals are traditionally conducted by supervisors, or managers. In the following section, the focus will be on the different methods used to evaluate employee's performance. Employee performance can be evaluated by the employees themselves, their supervisors as well as by multiple evaluators. The first focus will be on self appraisal, followed by the different forms of supervisory appraisal and the multiple rating methods.

### 3.2.1 Self – appraisal

With this method, the employee is given the opportunity to comment on his or her performance (Anderson, 1993). This approach is aimed at involving the employee in the process of managing performance, share information on challenges faced, as well as recommendations on what can be improved.

### 3.2.2 Supervisor rating

Supervisor rating has been used in numerous ways. The discussions below indicate some of the alternative methods applied to implement this form of managing performance.

#### 3.2.2.1 Free written report

In this method, the appraiser is given an opportunity to write about the performance of his or her subordinates in an unstructured form (Anderson, 1993). The information can be captured in the form of a report and the content differs for each employee.

### 3.2.2.2 Controlled written report

This report is similar to the free written report, but is structured in the form of headings, to guide the appraiser's report (Anderson, 1993). The headings are helpful as comparison mechanisms between employees. Similar to the free written report, this method requires the supervisor to think carefully about the performance of each employee.

### 3.2.2.3 Critical incidents technique

According to Anderson (1993), this method requires the appraiser to record critical incidents or performance highlights during the appraisal period. The method highlights highly effective performance as well as ineffective performance, creating an overall picture of the employee's performance. Similar to both the free and controlled written reports, this method requires careful thought by the appraiser.

### 3.2.3 360 degree assessment

As narrated above, performance management has typically been limited to a feedback process between employees and managers. USOPM (1997) states however that with the increased focus on teamwork, employee development and customer service, the emphasis has shifted to employee feedback, from the full circle of sources including superior, internal customer, peer and subordinate. According to Hooft, Flier and Minne (2006) performance management in an organisational setting by multiple sources, or 360 degree feedback, is enjoying great popularity.

### 3.2.4 Developmental performance appraisal

Both practice and research have moved away from a narrow focus on psychometric and evaluation issues to developmental performance appraisal

(e.g., Fletcher, 2001; Lefkowitz, 2000; Levy & Williams, 2004; Waal, 2003), which may be defined as any effort concerned with enriching attitudes, experiences, and skills that improve the effectiveness of employees (Boswell & Boudreau, 2002). The developmental performance appraisal process has different stages, namely goal-setting, feedback and performance rating. These stages are discussed in the paragraphs below:

#### 3.2.4.1 Goal-setting

As organisations realise the value of having a robust performance management process, they are investing more time in establishing strategic direction and goal-setting. Goal setting is valuable at both the organisational level and individual level. At organisational level, goal setting ensures that the different organisational units all strive towards a common goal. At individual level, goal-setting ensures clarity of purpose as well as alignment of individual efforts to organisational goals. The following are steps in a goal-setting process recommended by Mone and London (2002):

- Managers tell their employees that they are starting the goal-setting process for the upcoming performance year and indicate the time frame in which they want to have the goal-setting process completed.
- In preparation, managers advise their employees to do the following to create a context for current goal setting, re-read the department's mission and vision, review their job descriptions, review their current goals, strategies and tactics, identify any new overarching goals and develop a working draft for team goals for their departments if necessary (Fitzgerald, 1995).
- Managers share the overarching goals and department goals, if any with their employees. They also share any other strategic messages that may be important for their employees to consider.

- Using the above information, managers ask their employees to develop drafts of their performance goals, strategies and tactics, and development goals.
- Managers meet with each of their employees to review and discuss their goals, strategies and tactics. During this meeting, managers will want to ensure that their employee's performance goals are aligned with the overall direction of the company and department, are challenging and meaningful and are realistic.
- Once the goals, tactics and strategies have been finalised to the manager's requirements, managers ask their employees to develop the goal measures of success and goal measurements
- Managers meet with their employees to review, discuss and finalise measures
- Managers and each of their employees should sign off on the agreed goals and strategies and each should keep a copy for their files.

For this process to be successful, the fundamental principle is that employees are involved and take ownership of this process. According to Mone and London (2004), the idea that goal setting is likely to be more effective when people participate in setting goals than when goals are assigned to them originates from the notion that participation increases commitment to the goal. The presumption is that people who participate in setting goals are likely to be more motivated to achieve them than those who are given goals created by others. A meta-analysis of 83 independent studies revealed that goal commitment has a strong, positive influence on performance (Klein, Wesson, Hollenbeck, & Alge, 1999). Furthermore the meta-analysis revealed that goal commitment is higher when people find the goal to be attractive and likely to lead to positive outcomes and that goal commitment is not highly related to people's abilities or desires. The motivational hum of goal setting consists of personal (self-set) goals, goal commitment and self efficacy which is an individual's belief that he can bring



about positive outcomes (Latham, 2002). Locke and Lathan's (1990) goal-setting theory holds that specific and challenging goals lead to higher performance, than no goals.

#### 3.2.4.2 Feedback

Goals and feedback work together to affect goal accomplishment. Employees need feedback to help calibrate their progress toward a goal, as well as to suggest ways to adjust the level or direction of their efforts or to shift performance strategies. The combination of goals plus feedback is more effective than goals alone (Locke & Latham, 2002). Overall feedback focuses attention on performance goals that are important to the organisation, helps discover errors, maintains goal direction, influences new goals, provides information on performance capabilities and how much more effort is needed to achieve goals, and provides positive reinforcement for goal accomplishments (London, 2003).

#### 3.2.4.3 Performance rating

Employee's performance is evaluated by using performance rating scales. This evaluation is done to determine employee's performance and often linked to how employees are rewarded and recognised in an organisation. According to Barnes-Farrell and Lynch (2003), performance rating is aimed at facilitating accurate communication of employee's performance. Behavioural expectations and outputs need to be outlined and calibrate both rater and ratee.

The company in which this study was undertaken uses a verbal performance rating scale, with 5 levels of performance rating. This is used in conjunction with the developmental approach. More detail on the rating scale and the approach followed will be discussed in chapter 4.

**REMARK:** In this chapter, the focus areas included the following theoretical aspects of work performance, namely conceptualisation with a specific focus on

definitions, approaches and dimension of work performance. Performance appraisal was discussed in detail with a specific emphasis on the developmental performance appraisal, which is the appraisal form used for this study. With this, the second theoretical aim has been satisfied (see chapter 1, section 1.3.2)

## **SUMMARY**

This chapter focused on the theoretical aspects of work performance. Work performance was conceptualised with a specific focus on definitions, approaches and models of work performance. The performance appraisal process was also discussed with a focus on the different forms of appraisal, specifically the developmental appraisal process applicable to this study. The next section is an integration of the concepts of Organisational Commitment and Work Performance.

## **INTEGRATION**

The preceding theoretical chapters discussed the concepts organisational commitment and work performance respectively. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between the two concepts.

In chapter 2 Organisational Commitment was conceptualised, defined and identified as both a uni-dimensional and multi-dimensional concept. Allen and Meyer's (1996) three component model was identified as suitable for the study.

The beginning of chapter 3 focused on conceptualisation of Work Performance, defining it and identifying the different dimensions within the concept. Performance appraisal and its various approaches and dimensions were also explored in the chapter.

Documented theoretical relationships will be explored in this section of the study.

There is comparatively little research that examines the organisational commitment-performance relationship. This is likely attributable, in part, to the fact that several early studies failed to demonstrate a significant organisational commitment-performance relationship (Angle & Lawson, 1994; Randall, 1990). Indeed, (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) meta-analysis indicated only a weak direct relationship ( $r=.05$ ) between commitment and measures of individual performance. However, design shortcomings and other ambiguities may have contributed to null findings in several studies, leading some to suggest that the commitment-performance relationship may still be an important component of organisational dynamics.

The link between affective commitment and performance is usually theoretically justified with a motivational argument. Those committed to organisational goals are likely to work harder, and most consistently with organisational expectations

than those who are not (Chelte & Tausky, 1986; Zahra, 1984). Assuming a minimum ability level is met (Porter & Lawler, 1968), high levels of organisational commitment should result in higher levels of performance (Angle & Lawson, 1994).

According to Knippenberg (2000), the stronger an employee's identification with an organisation or commitment, the stronger the motivation to make the organisation superior to competitors. This motivation should translate into better work performance (Knippenberg, 2000).

There is some evidence that affective organisational commitment is positively related to job performance, but the relationship is inconsistent across samples and measures of performance. Affective organisational commitment is defined in terms of support for the organisation, which should translate into job performance (Birnbaum & Somers, 2000).

Job performance as an outcome of organisational commitment has also received substantial attention from researchers. Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin and Jackson (1989) have found affective commitment and emotional attachment to and identification and involvement with the organisation, to be positively correlated with job performance. Continuance commitment and the perceived costs associated with leaving the firm were found to be negatively correlated with job performance.

Some evidence exists to support the above argument. Becker, Billings, Eveleth and Gilbert, (1996) found a stronger correlation between commitment to supervisor and in-role performance than that between organisational commitment and in-role performance. Gregersen (1993) found the relationships between commitment to supervisor and extra-role behaviour to be more

enduring than the relationship between organisational commitment and extra-role performance.

Several meta-analyses revealed that Affective Organisational Commitment does correlate positively with a number of beneficial work behaviours and intentions such as in-role performance, extra-role performance (e.g. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Riketta, 2002; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

While performance is influenced by many factors, organisational commitment is one key contributor, especially when loyalty and extra effort matter (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Theory suggests that individuals affectively committed to an organisation are characterised by high involvement in the organisation and commitment to its goals (Angle & Lawson, 1994), activities likely to result in better job performance. Thus a positive relationship between helping behaviour (sometimes called pro-social behaviour) is frequently studied in the management and social psychology literature (Batson, 1995; Morrison, 1994). These behaviours are forms of contributions to work organisations that are not contractually required or monetary or otherwise rewarded (Organ, 1994; Organ & Ryan, 1995).

Helping behaviour has received a great deal of attention as a dimension of citizenship behaviour (Organ, 1994; Organ & Ryan, 1995). The commitment models of Weiner (1982) and Scholl (1981) propose that organisational commitment is partially responsible for behaviours such as helping, which reflect a personal sacrifice to the organisation and do not depend on formal rewards or punishment. Thus a positive relationship between organisational commitment and helping behaviour is predicted.

Matthew and Zajac (1990) regarded organisational commitment as critical for job performance. Various studies have suggested that sub-factors of organisational

commitment (i.e. affective commitment and continuance commitment) have differential relations with job performance (e.g. Meyer, Pounonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jackson, 1989). The broad concept of organisational commitment has also been related to other performance related concepts. Moskal (1995) reports that employees promoted most frequently earn high marks for job performance and are viewed as more committed to the organisation.

The relationship between affective organisational commitment and positive work outcomes has been well established in a number of industries (Angle & Lawson, 1994; Becker, Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989; Mowday, 1998; Somers & Birnbaum, 1998; Vandenberghe, Bentein & Stinglhamber, 2004). For example, Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky (2002) demonstrated that affective commitment, or the employee's desire to stay with the organisation because he or she wants to, has been linked consistently to increased job performance. Vandenberghe et. al (2004) found that supervisor commitment and organisational commitment were related to employee performance and intent to quit. Somers and Birnbaum (1998) found that organisational commitment was not related to task efficiency types of performance but was strongly related to other beneficial outcomes such as client satisfaction.

The literature on performance management (e.g. Haynes, 1986; McCune, 1989) makes it clear that increasing the involvement of employees and gaining their commitment to organisational goals and values is a central aim. The assumption is that this will lead to higher motivation and enhanced performance at the individual level. Various studies (e.g. Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991) give some support for that assumption. The research (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) suggests that job, role and organisational characteristics are amongst the antecedents of organisational commitment, indicating that it is legitimate to expect the elements of performance management to influence measures of this variable. Randall

(1990) conducted a meta-analysis of studies examining links between work outcomes and organisational commitment, and concluded that attitudinal commitment measures show stronger relationships. Consequently, this type of measure was used in the present study.

In this section the relationship between organisational commitment and work performance was explored further with specific reference to documented theoretical relationships and findings.

**REMARK:** In chapters 2 and 3, the aim was to explore theoretical aspects of the concepts of organisational commitment and work performance with a specific focus on conceptualisation, definition and dimensions of the two concepts. Integration of the two concepts was also part of chapter 3. By integrating the two concepts, a specific theoretical aim was met (see chapter 1, section 1.3.2).

## **SUMMARY**

This chapter focused on the theoretical aspects of the concept of Work Performance, with specific reference made to conceptualisation by defining the concept, discussing approaches to the concept as well as dimensions of the concept. The concepts of organisational commitment and work performance were also integrated according to documented theoretical relationships. In the next chapter, the methodology used in the empirical study will be discussed.

## **CHAPTER 4          EMPIRICAL STUDY**

Chapter 2 and 3 explored the theoretical study of the concepts of organisational commitment and work performance respectively. This was followed by an exploration of documented theoretical relationships between the two concepts. This chapter presents the methodology used in the empirical study, which includes a description of the population, the sample, the measuring instruments, and formulation of hypothesis. The performance rating process of the company in which the study is conducted will also be illustrated.

### **4.1                    POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

A population refers to all of the events, things or individuals to be represented in the study (Christensen, 2001). The research was performed in a large multinational Agricultural Company. The population of this study consisted of all employees (N=300), as reflected on the personnel list obtained from the Human Resources department of the organisation.

Owing to the geographical spread of the branches of the company throughout South Africa, as well as the nature of work done in some functions, wherein employees spend a lot of time out of the office, in the field, sampling needed to be done on the basis of convenience. Even though the questionnaires were sent by email, most of the employees do not access their email as they are not office based. The planned sample consisted of employees who had access to computers and did not spend a lot of time out of the office. Most of these employees were located at the company head office in Johannesburg. The subjects were full-time employees of the company who participated in the research during working hours. The questionnaires were sent to all employees (N=300), and only one hundred and eighty three responded.



The sample consisted of one hundred and eighty one (181) people, which resulted in a response rate of 60%. This response rate can be seen as good when compared to the guidelines in the literature. Babbie (1998) suggests that a 50% response rate is adequate, a 60% response is considered good while a 70% response rate is considered very well.

The following descriptive statistics for the sample (N=181) provide a profile of the respondents in terms of number of years in the organisation, gender and age. This is represented in table 1.

**TABLE 1: Frequency distribution: Number of years in the organisation**

Number of years	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	35	20%
3-5	32	18%
6-10	44	25%
11-15	28	16%
15-20	22	12%
20+	17	9%
TOTAL	181	100

Table 1 illustrates that the highest number of employees in the sample fall within the 6 to 10 year category, with little variation in the other categories. Generally speaking, employees seem to be loyal when looking at the length of time they have been employed, with 62% having worked at the company for more than 6 years.

Table 2 represents the demographic split of the sample according to gender.

**TABLE 2: Frequency distribution: gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	80	44%
Male	101	56%
TOTAL	181	100%

Table 2 illustrates that males and females are fairly evenly represented in the study with slightly more males in the sample (56% males vs. 44% females). Table 3 gives a split of the sample according to the different age categories.

**TABLE 3: Frequency distribution: age**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-29	21	11.6%
30-39	67	37%
40-49	70	38.7%
50-59	20	11%
60-70	3	1.7%
TOTAL	181	100%

Table 3 illustrates that there is a spread in terms of age in the sample, ranging from 20-29 to 60-70 years. Most individuals falling within the age categories 30-39 and 40-49 (37% and 39% respectively) and the category with the lowest number of individuals is the 60-70 year olds (2%).

## **4.2 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS**

### **4.2.1 Organisational Commitment**

The independent variable in this study is Organisational Commitment which is measured using Allen and Meyer's (1990) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire. As stated in chapter one, the Affective Commitment Scale Items will be used for the purposes of this study, and this is due to the organisation's long term strategy towards being an employer of choice. The organisation had recently launched a new people strategy, which was aimed at enhancing all people processes and focussing on employee engagement. A new pledge as well as new competencies were designed and communicated to all employees, aimed at facilitating employee identification with the organisation. These new dimensions and pledge aim to motivate the employee to spontaneously commit to the organisation on a deeper level. This affective element is encouraged to enhance emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation. The following discussion explores the rationale, purpose, administration, interpretation, validity, reliability and motivation for the OCS.

#### **4.2.1.1 Rationale and purpose**

Organisational Commitment Scale was developed with the aim of measuring organisational commitment as a tri-dimensional construct (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Meyer and Allen (1997) highlight that the scale is intended to measure three components of organisational commitment: affective, continuance and normative commitment.

The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire consists of 24 structured statements or items, measuring affective, continuance and normative dimensions of organisational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This scale has 24 structured questions or items, 8 items per dimension.

The following is a detailed description of the dimensions, as discussed in chapter 2: (Allen & Meyer, 1997).

- Affective commitment dimension (8 items)

This dimension measures organisational member's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organisation. The affective dimension means that members stay in the organisation because they want to do so.

- Continuance commitment dimension (8 items)

The continuance dimension measures organisational member's commitment to the organisation based on the costs that are associated with leaving the organisation. In other words, members whose primary link to the organisation is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so.

- Normative commitment dimension (8 items)

This dimension measures organisational member's feelings of obligation to remain with the organisation. Normative commitment implies that members remain in the organisation because they ought to.

#### 4.2.1.2 Interpretation

A seven-point Likert-type scale is used for respondents to rate their responses. The ratings are defined as follows (Allen & Meyer, 1997):

- |   |   |                     |
|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | = | strongly disagree   |
| 2 | = | moderately disagree |
| 3 | = | slightly disagree   |

- 4 = neither agree or disagree
- 5 = slightly agree
- 6 = moderately agree
- 7 = strongly agree

#### 4.2.1.3 Administration

The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire is self-explanatory and is completed individually by respondents. Supervision is not necessary. The questionnaire was loaded on the organisation's intranet site, and employees could complete it during their own spare time. Employees could complete the questionnaire on-line and a record of the number of respondents was always readily available.

#### 4.2.1.4 Reliability and validity of the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire

The reliability estimates of this scale are found by Meyer and Allen (1997) to be internal consistencies of the dimensions varying between 0.85 for affective, 0.79 for continuance and 0.73 for normative. The overall reliability estimates exceed 0.79 (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Construct validity of the dimensions of the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire is based on the fact that they correlate as predicted with the proposed antecedents variables (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This provides preliminary evidence that this questionnaire is a valid measure for organisational commitment.

According to Allen and Meyer (1996), the median reliability estimate for the affective commitment scale from more than 40 samples representing more than 16,000 employees from various employment groups was 0.85.

The reliability estimate (Chronbach's alpha coefficient) for the affective commitment scale for respondents in Hawkin's (1997) study was 0.78.

The table below illustrates the factor loading found in this study for the affective commitment scale.

**TABLE 4: Factor Loading for current study**

Item	Factor Loading
1	0.7
2	0.8
3	0.7
4	0.7
5	0.8
6	0.8
7	0.8
8	0.7

---

Cronbach Alpha=0.7

All the items show factor loading of above 0.7. The Cronbach Alpha scores for this scale of organisational commitment indicate that it can be considered as reliable. According to Johari and RashidMurali (2003), the cronbach alpha scores for the three organisational commitment types, namely, the affective, continuance and normative commitment were 0.9, 0.9 and 0.7 respectively. According to Allen and Meyer (1990), the affective commitment scale correlates strongly with the widely used 15-item organisational commitment questionnaire

(Mowday, 1979), and reliability estimates reported for several samples have ranged from 0.74 to 0.88 (Allen & Meyer, 1990; McGee & Ford, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1984; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jackson, 1989).

According to Buckley (2001), Meyer and Allen's (1994) questionnaire is adopted for a study amongst MBA graduates as it is widely employed and the validity and reliability evidence from both the UK and USA and international samples abound (e.g. Yousef, 2000; Coleman, Irving and Cooper, 2000). Buckley's study delivered Cronbach's co-efficient alphas of 0.83 for the affective commitment scale.

According to Meyer and Allen (1997), Median reliabilities for the affective scale is 0.85. Some results from South African studies support the reliability and validity of the questionnaire (Bagraim & Hayes, 1999). In a local study of organisational commitment amongst 113 senior level educators, Van Zyl and Buitendach (2004) found the internal consistency of the normative scale to be below the guideline of 0,70 proposed by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

#### 4.2.1.5 Reliability of the Affective Scale in the present study

An item analysis for the Affective scale was calculated from the data collected by current study and this is presented in Table 4. An item analysis presents the degree to which each of the different items in the scale contributes to the reliability of the overall scale. This is determined by calculating the Cronbach Alpha for the scale without a particular item. If the overall alpha improves significantly (to be decided by the researcher) leaving the item out of the scale, leads to the item not contributing or belonging in the scale. In addition the Cronbach Alpha for the total scale was also calculated.

Before conducting the item analysis, negatively worded item responses were reversed, in order for all items to measure in the same direction and present a unified picture of the Affective Commitment Score (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

**TABLE 5: Item analysis of Affective scale**

Item number	Cronbach Alpha if item deleted
1	0.5
2	0.4
3	0.5
4	0.2
5	0.4
6	0.6
7	0.5
8	0.5
<b>Overall Cronbach Alpha</b>	<b>0.7</b>

The overall reliability of the Affective Commitment scale is satisfactorily high showing a cronbach alpha value of 0.77. The reliability of scale would drop if any of the items were left out of the scale and therefore all items are considered valuable. The numbered responses for the items were summed, after the items had been reversed to create a single score for Affective Commitment.

#### 4.2.1.6 Motivation for using the OCQ

The contents of the OCQ are applicable to this study. According to Riaz and Tayyeb (2004), to date much of the organisational commitment research has been largely restricted to samples in the USA. Relatively few studies have been conducted elsewhere in the world. Hofstede (2001) clearly demonstrated the



need to consider the cross cultural validity and applicability of the constructs developed from US samples. According to Adler (1991), comparative studies are scarce and patchy as adequate material on Africa is hard to come by. The researcher used the questionnaire in the South African context even though the company is an American company, in an effort to have findings specific to cultures other than the US.

#### **4.2.2 Work Performance**

For the purposes of this research, the development process approach (see chapter 3 section 2) will be used for measuring work performance. Both practice and research have moved away from a narrow focus on psychometric and evaluation issues to developmental performance appraisal (e.g., Fletcher, 2001; Lefkowitz, 2000; Levy & Williams, 2004; Waal, 2003), which may be defined as any effort concerned with enriching attitudes, experiences, and skills that improve the effectiveness of employees (Boswell & Boudreau, 2002).

The process followed can vary from organisation to organisation. At the specific company, the developmental process is followed in a number of stages:

- Organisational goals

The business leaders meet before the beginning of each financial year, to discuss and agree upon business goals for the forth-coming year. Priorities are then set by the different functions within the organisation to streamline all processes, and align functional outputs to the broader organisational goals.

- Functional goals

Once the organisational goals are documented for the year, functional priorities are designed and aligned to the organisational goals. The functional priorities are discussed with all employees and functional goals are formulated and documented. This process is followed by communication of functional goals to all employees in the relevant function.

- Employee goals

Employees set goals based on the goals of the function. Employee goals are categorised into two different components:

- Business goals

The first component is business goals, and they are linked to the core function of the employee and what can be done to contribute towards attainment of both business and functional goals. These would tie in with the employee's role, and reflect the role the employee would individually play in contributing towards the growth of the organisation. At Monsanto, employees are encouraged to set goals that stretch them beyond their comfort zone, and are specific, measurable and achievable.

- Personal goals

Personal goals on the other hand focus on the personal development of each individual employee. The employee's performance is analysed, performance gaps assessed, and the employee is given an opportunity to identify development interventions that can contribute towards development of critical skills, knowledge and attributes required on the job.

### ➤ Feedback

The goal setting process is done at the beginning of each year. Progress is evaluated during the middle of the year, and this is an opportunity to re-evaluate goals, monitor progress, and address any challenges. Managers are encouraged to have critical conversations with employees throughout the year, and not wait for the review periods to give feedback to employees.

### ➤ Performance Rating

At the end of the year, the final appraisal is held between managers and employees. A verbal rating scale is used which has five levels namely: superior, very strong, strong, moderate and unacceptable. Individual employee's performance is rated according to these five levels of performance. Employees are incentivised for attaining business and organisational goals, and managers differentiate between employees, based on performance.

This process is referred to as Development, Performance and Rewards, and as a result of this process, the company spends almost 3 percent of annual payroll on training. Continuous feedback is given to employees on their performance, and employees are incentivised for attaining business and personal goals.

#### 4.2.2.1 Reliability and validity of performance rating tools

Monsanto uses a performance rating tool to measure the performance of its employees. The definitions within the tool are listed below. Most performance appraisal processes and systems are characterised by errors and inconsistency. According to Hedge and Kavanagh (1988), examples of rating errors are leniency, halo (letting a positive evaluation on one performance dimension influence ratings on other performance dimensions) and range restriction (using

only one portion of the scale, for instance just the middle categories). This in turn affects rater accuracy.

In this company, all managers were trained on the new system and sensitised of the potential errors that may arise as a result of the ratings that they make. Managers are also expected to calibrate with their bosses and colleagues before allocating a final performance rating to their staff members, which enhances the objectivity of their ratings. Managers are also given examples of good, average and poor performance, as well as ongoing support from the Human Resources Department.

According to Locke and Latham (2002), this is referred to as frame of reference training and it helps raters identify and classify observed performance correctly. As a result of this training, raters develop shared performance schema for processing information. Denisi and Peters (1996) found that this type of intervention increases rater's positive reactions to the appraisal process, enhanced their ability to recall performance information and resulted in ratings that were less elevated and more discriminating between and within ratees.

#### 4.2.2.2 Interpretation

The company performance management verbal scale was used for purposes of performance rating. The item descriptions of the scale are listed below:

- Superior performance

Employees who far exceed their manager's and/or customer's expectations. Not only do they set challenging goals, they significantly exceed them in a way which enhances the company's immediate *and* long term business success and in a way which exemplifies the values of the Pledge.

- Very strong performance

Employees who exceed their manager's and/or customer's expectations. They set challenging goals and targets and exceed them in a way, which adds real value to the organization and in a way, which is sustainable, and in harmony with the values of the Pledge.

- Strong performance

Employees who solidly meet their manager's and/or customer's expectations. They set targeted goals and achieve them while applying the values of the Pledge. This type of solid performance is a key for the company's continued success and should represent the bulk of employees at any point in time.

- Moderate performance

Employees who fall short of their manager's and/or customers expectations relative to a significant portion of their stated goals; or they achieve their goals but do so in a way which is contrary to one or several values of the Pledge.

- Unacceptable performance

Someone who is on a Performance Plan or should be. It is necessary for them to significantly change their behaviour/performance in order to remain at the company.

For the purpose of the empirical study, the verbal rating scale was translated into a five point numeric scale, with 1 representing unacceptable performance and 5 representing superior performance.

### **4.3 FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESIS**

A research hypothesis has to be formulated regarding the relationship between organisational commitment and work performance in order to allow the empirical testing of the relationship between these two variables.

The following research hypotheses address the objectives of this study:

#### **Hypothesis 1**

There is a difference between the organisational commitment scores of different age groups

#### **Hypothesis 2**

There is a difference between the organisational commitment scores of different tenure groups (length of employment with the organisation)

#### **Hypothesis 3**

There is a difference between the organisational commitment scores of males and females

#### **Hypothesis 4**

There is a statistically significant relationship between organisational commitment and work performance

### **4.4 HYPOTHESIS TESTING STATISTICS**

The first research hypothesis was tested by analysing the relationship between these two concepts through means of a correlation analysis. The second and

third hypotheses were tested by means of Analysis of Variance and the fourth hypothesis by means of a t-test.

- Correlation analysis:

Correlations are relationships between two or more variables or sets of variables (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

- Analysis of variance (ANOVA):

According to Christensen (2001), analysis of variance is an extension of the t-test. It is a general statistical procedure appropriate for analysing data generated from a research design that uses more than two levels of one independent variable and/or more than one independent variable.

- T-test:

According to Christensen (2001), the t-test is a statistical test for analysing the data obtained from two different groups of participants to determine whether the group mean difference is so large that they could not reasonably be attributed to chance. The greater the t value, the greater the between-group mean difference compared with the average within the group variability and the greater the probability that the group differences are real and not due to chance.

## **SUMMARY**

This chapter's main focus was discussing the empirical study by specifically focussing on the sample of the study and how it was formulated, the measuring instruments with a specific emphasis on validity and suitability for the current study, data collection and the process followed as well as formulation of

hypothesis. The next chapter will focus on a discussion of the results and their interpretation thereof.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RESULTS**

In this chapter the results of the empirical study are reported and discussed. The results are also interpreted and analysed. The first part of the chapter focuses on reporting and discussing the organisational commitment results, followed on the second part by the work performance results and an analysis of the results. The relationship between affective organisational commitment and performance will also be discussed.

#### **5.1 ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT: AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT SCALE**

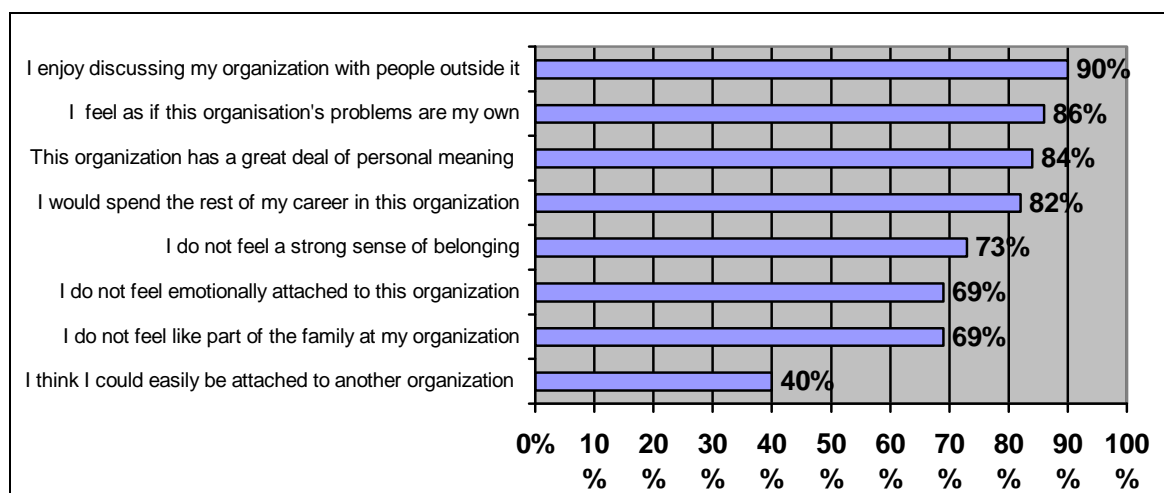
The overall scores on the individual items of the affective commitment scale are summarised through descriptive statistics. Table 5.1.1 presents the mean scores on each of the items as well as the standard deviation. Questions marked with an \* have been rescaled and should be interpreted in reverse.

**TABLE 6** Descriptive statistics of the items of the Affective scale (n = 181)

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	5.74	1.61
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	6.07	1.18
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	5.71	1.23
*I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one	4.07	1.84
*I do not feel like part of the family at my organization	5.13	1.82
*I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization	5.12	1.87
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	5.62	1.38
*I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	5.30	1.87
Overall scale	5.34	1.01

In the scores presented in table 6 above, a low score indicates disagreement (1), and a high score agreement (7). The scores on the Affective Commitment scale are high according to the data presented in table 5.1.1. Another approach used in the current study is to present data in graphical presentation of results to examine the percentage respondents who agree (5,6 and 7 on the scale) to each statement. Table 7 below indicates the percentage agreement on each statement.

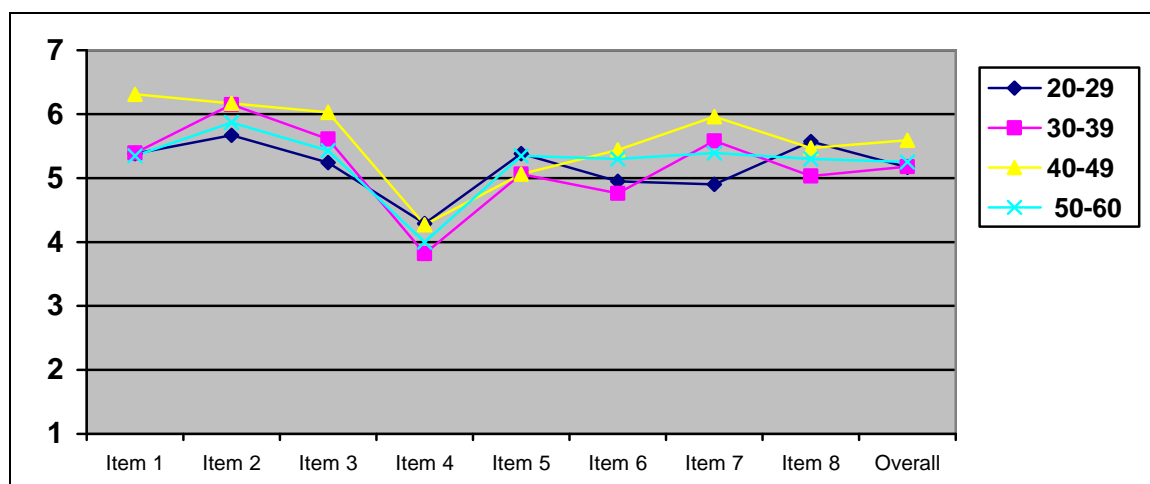
**TABLE 7      Percentage agreement to the items of the Affective scale (n = 181)**



In the data presented in table 7, nearly all respondents (90%) agree that they enjoy discussing their organisation with people outside the company and that they feel like the company's problems are their own (86%). The company has a great personal meaning to many (84%) of the respondents.

69% of respondents feel attached to the organisation and a part of the family (items were reverse scored and the interpretation is therefore also reverse). Although respondents are happy with their current organisation, only 40% feel that they would not be easily attached to another organisation.

**TABLE 8** Mean scores of different age groups on Affective organisational commitment.



- Item 1: I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization
- Item 2 I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it
- Item 3 I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own
- Item 4 I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one
- Item 5 I do not feel like part of the family at my organization
- Item 6 I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization
- Item 7 This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me
- Item 8 I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization

In table 8, the different age groups are compared with regards to their scores on the affective scale of organisational commitment. As the age group 60-70 is represented by only 1.7% of respondents, this age group was combined with the 50-59 year age group. The mean scores of each age group on the individual items as well as the total scale score were compared by using the analysis of variance test. The scores are presented graphically in Table 9 and thereafter the significance testing results are presented in Table 10 where significant findings are present, a post-hoc test was used to determine between which age groups the significant difference is present.

**TABLE 9 Mean scores of different age groups on Affective organisational commitment.**

	Age			
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-70
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	5.38	5.39	6.31*	5.35
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	5.67	6.15	6.17	5.87
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	5.24*	5.61	6.03	5.43
I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one	4.29	3.82	4.27	4.00
I do not feel like part of the family at my organization	5.38	5.06	5.06	5.35
I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization	4.95	4.76	5.44	5.30
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	4.90*	5.58	5.96	5.39
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	5.57	5.03	5.47	5.30
<b>Overall</b>	<b>5.17</b>	<b>5.18</b>	<b>5.59</b>	<b>5.25</b>

**TABLE 10 Significant differences between the age groups:  
Analysis of variance**

	F-value	p-value
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	5.15	0.002*
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	1.33	0.267
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	3.22	0.024*
I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one	0.79	0.501
I do not feel like part of the family at my organization	0.31	0.819
I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization	1.66	0.177
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	3.64	0.014*
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	0.81	0.490
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.29</b>	<b>0.080</b>

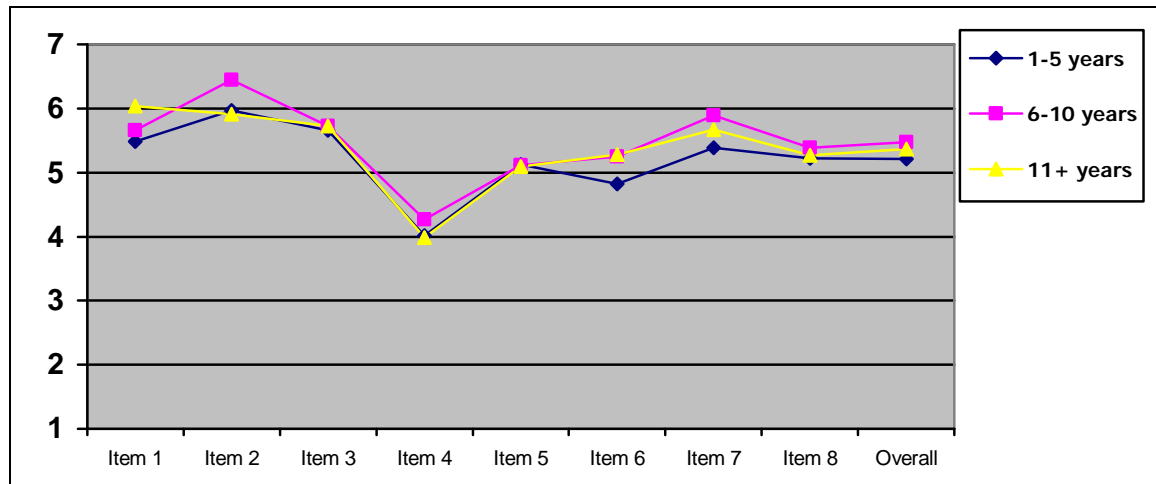
In terms of the overall score on affective organisational commitment, there is no significant difference between the different age groups as the p-value is greater

than 0.05 ( $p = 0.08$ ). There are however some differences in terms of individual items, and these include:

- I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organisation ( $p = 0.002$ ): Respondents older than 40 would be significantly more likely to be happy to spend the rest of their careers in this one organisation.
- I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own ( $p = 0.024$ ): Younger respondents aged 20-29 are least likely to associate with the company's problem.
- This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me ( $p = 0.014$ ): As with the company's problems, the younger respondents of 20-29 years do not view the organisation as having much personal meaning for them.

In table 11, a similar comparison to the age groups is presented for the tenure groups (number of years in the organisation). The mean scores are plotted graphically to present a visual picture, followed by the descriptive information. The Analysis of variance test is again performed to check for significant differences and a post hoc test helps to pin point between which tenure groups differences exist. Due to the large number of tenure groups (6 in total), some categories were combined to ease interpretation. The new categories compared in this section are: 1-5 years (38%), 6-10 years (25%), 11+ years (37%)

**TABLE 11 Mean scores of different tenure groups (number of years in the organisation) on Affective organisational commitment**



- Item 1: I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization
- Item 2 I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it
- Item 3 I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own
- Item 4\* I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one
- Item 5\* I do not feel like part of the family at my organization
- Item 6\* I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization
- Item 7 This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me
- Item 8\* I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization
- \*(Rescaled)

According to the data presented in table 11, it appears that there are very little differences in the scores of people who have been with the company for different periods of time. Certainly on an overall level there are no differences. From Table 11 it appears that there is indeed only one item in which the tenure groups differ significantly: I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it ( $p = 0.043$ ).

**TABLE 12**                      **Mean scores of different tenure groups on Affective organisational commitment.**

	Tenure groups		
	3-5	6-10	11-15
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	5.48	5.66	6.04
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	5.97	6.45	5.91
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	5.66	5.73	5.73
I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one	4.01	4.27	3.99
I do not feel like part of the family at my organization	5.12	5.11	5.09
I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization	4.82	5.25	5.28
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	5.39	5.89	5.67
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	5.22	5.39	5.27
Overall	5.21	5.47	5.37

**TABLE 13**                      **Significant differences among the tenure groups: Analysis of variance.**

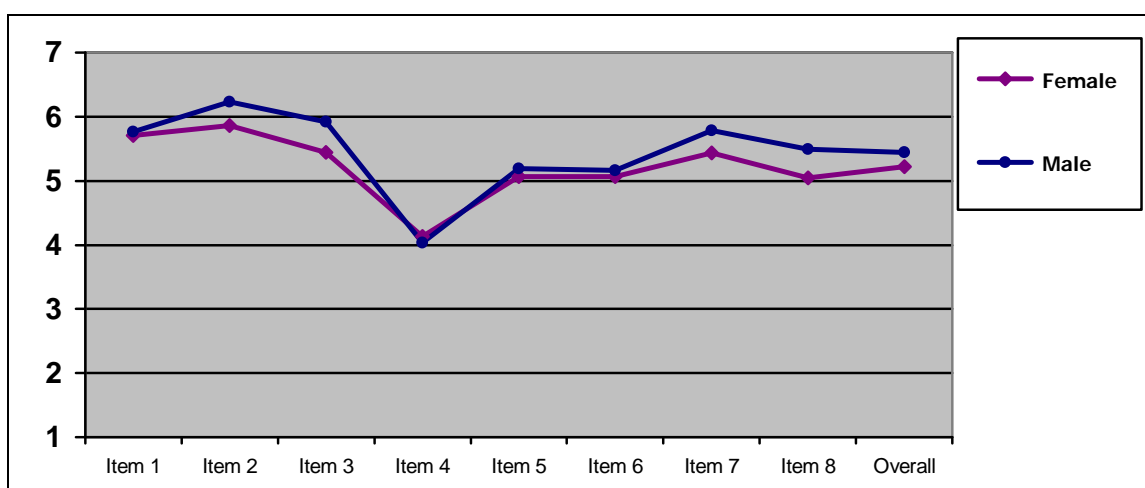
	F-value	p-value
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	2.16	0.119
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	3.26	0.041*
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	0.07	0.931
I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one	0.36	0.698
I do not feel like part of the family at my organization	0.00	0.995
I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization	1.20	0.304
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	1.82	0.164
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	0.10	0.904
Overall	0.94	0.393

A comparison of the responses to the affective commitment scale is done according to tenure (number of years in the organisation). Overall, there are no



significant differences, with only one notable difference on the question, “I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it”  $p=0.041$ . The tenure group 11-15 years is less likely to enjoy discussing the organisation with people outside it, with a score of 5.91 compared to 6.45 from the 6-10 year group and 5.97 from the 3-5 year group.

**TABLE 14**                      **Mean scores of males and females on Affective organisational commitment.**



- Item 1: I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization
- Item 2: I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it
- Item 3: I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own
- Item 4\*: I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one
- Item 5\*: I do not feel like part of the family at my organization
- Item 6\*: I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization
- Item 7: This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me
- Item 8\*: I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization

From the table above, one can see that males generally have a higher score than females. The exceptions are items 4, 5 and 6 where they score virtually the same. Males are however only significantly more likely to discuss their company ( $p = 0.038$ ) and to make the problems of the company their own ( $p = 0.008$ ).

**TABLE 15**                      **Mean scores of males and females on Affective organisational commitment.**

	Gender	
	Female	Male
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	5.71	5.76
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	5.86	6.23*
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	5.44	5.92*
I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one	4.13	4.03
I do not feel like part of the family at my organization	5.06	5.19
I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization	5.06	5.16
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	5.43	5.78
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	5.05	5.50
Overall	5.22	5.45

In table 15 above, a comparison of males and females is done on the affective organisational commitment items and total scale score. The mean scores are presented graphically and the differences tested for significance by means of a t-test for independent measures. The t-test information is presented in table 16 below.

**TABLE 16**                      **Significant differences among male and female on Affective organisational commitment: t-tests.**

	t-value	p-value
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	-0.21	0.837
I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	-2.09	0.038*
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	-2.66	0.008*
I think I could easily be attached to another organization as I am to this one	0.34	0.731
I do not feel like part of the family at my organization	-0.46	0.647
I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization	-0.34	0.733
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	-1.73	0.085
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	-1.60	0.112
Overall	-1.51	0.134

Table 16 above presents some differences between male and female responses. The significant differences are to the question “I enjoy discussing my organisation with people from outside it” where the female scores are lower ( $p=0.038$ ). It appears that females are less likely to discuss the organisation than men. The other difference is on the question “I really feel as if this organisation’s problems are my own” ( $p=0.008$ ). It also appears that women are less likely to see the organisation’s problem as their own.

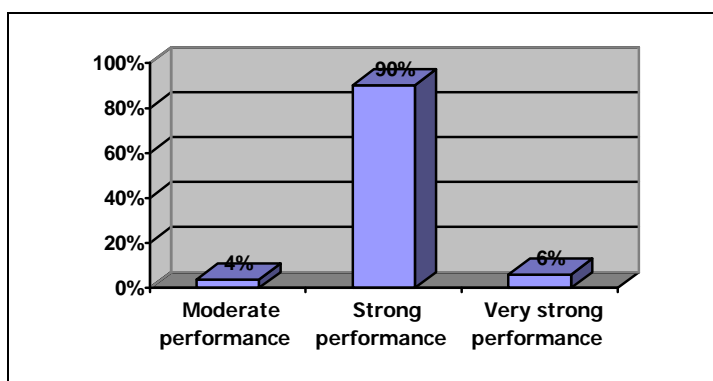
**TABLE 17: Cross-tabulation between age and gender (n = 181)**

		Age				Total
		20-29	30-39	40-49	50-60	
Gender	Female	19%*	36%	39%	6%	100
	Male	6%	38%	39%	18%	100
Total		12%	37%	39%	13%	100

From table 17 above, it appears that there is some relationship between age and gender, with significantly more females falling into the 20-29 year category. This could be due to the fact that there are more females graduating from universities in the field of Agriculture and the organisation is trying to bring in more women into the company.

## 5.2 PERFORMANCE

The performance ratings that respondents received ranged from superior performance (5) to unacceptable performance (1). The distribution of performance scores of respondents in the current sample is presented in Figure 2 below.

**FIGURE 2 Performance rating scores (n = 181)**

From the figure above it is clear that most respondents fall into the group of “Strong performance” (3 out of 5). Therefore there is little variation in the sample in terms of performance.

In Table 18, the different age groups are compared in terms of their performance scores. A cross-tabulation between the scores of the various groups is presented in Table 5.2.2 and a Chi-square test was performed to measure if the differences are significant.

**TABLE 18 Cross-tabulation between age groups and performance scores**

		Age				Total
		20-29	30-39	40-49	50-60	
Performance	Moderate performance	29%	1%	0%	0%	4%
	Strong performance	71%	90%	94%	96%	90%
	Very strong performance	0%	9%	6%	4%	6%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

A Chi-square value of 41.0 and the p-value of 0.000 were found in analysing the data and this indicates that there are some significant differences in the performance scores of respondents. As presented in the table above, respondents in the 20-29 year old group were most likely to receive a moderate score (29% of 20-29 year olds) but there are little differences between the scores of the older respondent groups.

A cross-tabulation was also performed between the different tenure groups and performance and the results given in Table 19.

**TABLE 19**                      **Cross-tabulation between tenure groups and performance scores**

		Tenure			Total
		1-5	6-10	11-15	
Performance	Moderate performance	7%	2%	0%	3%
	Strong performance	87%	93%	93%	90%
	Very strong performance	6%	5%	7%	6%
	Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

A Chi-square value of 6.298 and p value equal to 0.179 were found. Therefore no significant difference can be seen in the performance rating scores of different tenure groups.

### 5.2.1 Comparison of male and female scores on performance

The performance of males and females is presented in Table 20.

**TABLE 20**                    **Cross-tabulation between males and females on performance scores**

		Gender		Total
		Females	Males	
Performance	Moderate performance	5%	3%	3%
	Strong performance	85%	94%	90%
	Very strong performance	10%	3%	6%
	Total	100%	100%	100%

The Chi-square value of 4.512 with a corresponding p-value of 0.107 indicates that there is no real difference between males and females with regards to their performance.

## 5.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AFFECTIVE ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND PERFORMANCE

To examine the relationship between organisational performance and organisational commitment, the total score of the affective organisational scale is correlated with the performance score. Table 21 presents the correlation results.

**TABLE 21**                    **Correlation between performance and affective organisational commitment**

		Affective organisational commitment
Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.11
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.139
	N	181

According to the data presented in table 21, the correlation is positive, indicating that the greater the commitment the greater the performance score, however an  $r$  value of 0.11 is small and the  $p$ -value is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). While the correlation is not significant overall, there are some indications that the relationship is stronger within certain demographic groups. Age shows no significant correlation, but Table 22 below indicates that within males there is a slightly stronger correlation between performance and commitment, likewise with respondents who have been employed for only 1-5 years.

**TABLE 22**                      **Correlation between performance and affective organisational commitment according to gender and tenure (number of years in the organisation)**

				<b>Affective organisational commitment</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female	Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.06
			Sig. (2-tailed)	0.582
			N	80
	Male	Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.20
			Sig. (2-tailed)	0.047*
			N	101
<b>Tenure</b>	1-5	Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.27
			Sig. (2-tailed)	0.027*
			N	67
	6-10	Performance	Pearson Correlation	-0.04
			Sig. (2-tailed)	0.789
			N	44
	11-15	Performance	Pearson Correlation	-0.04
			Sig. (2-tailed)	0.731
			N	67

There were a few hypothesis set for the study, some were met and some were not. A summary according to each hypothesis is captured below:

Hypothesis 1: There is a difference between the organisational commitment scores of different age groups. This hypothesis can be rejected as the results of the study show no significant difference between the different age groups as the p value is greater than 0.05 ( $p = 0.08$ ). There are however slight differences in terms of these individual items.

Hypothesis 2: There is a difference between the organisational commitment scores of the different tenure groups. This hypothesis can be rejected as on an overall level there are no differences. There are however little differences with the exception of one item "I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it" which has a significant difference among the different tenure groups ( $p = 0.043$ ).

Hypothesis 3: There is a difference between the organisational commitment scores of males and females. This hypothesis can be accepted as there are differences between the scores of men and women. Women are less likely to discuss the organisation than men and less likely to see the organisation's problem as their own.

Hypothesis 4: There is a statistically significant relationship between organisational commitment and work performance. This hypothesis can be rejected as the results of the study do not show a significant correlation between the two concepts. Only a weak positive relationship could be established.

## **SUMMARY**

In chapter 5 the results of the empirical study were reported and discussed. The results were also interpreted. The first part of the chapter focused on reporting and discussing the organisational commitment results, followed on the second



part by the work performance results. Chapter 6 will focus on the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the research.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The aim of this chapter is to present conclusions according to the aims provided in chapter 1, to discuss limitations and provide recommendations.

#### **6.1 CONCLUSIONS**

The dissertation focused on the relationship between affective organisational commitment and work performance. Conclusions are formulated below regarding the theoretical and empirical objectives.

##### **6.1.1 Literature Review**

The conclusions regarding the theoretical aims of the research are captured below:

The first aim of the literature study was to conceptualise organisational commitment. The various definitions of organisational commitment were presented and a definition specific to the study was formulated as “organisational commitment is defined as a psychological bond individuals have towards their organisation, characterised by a strong identification with the organisation and desire to contribute towards attainment of organisational goals. The various approaches and models of organisational commitment were discussed, with a specific emphasis on Meyer and Allen’s (Allen & Meyer, 1990) three component model of organisational commitment. The affective commitment component, which is the basis for the study was also discussed. According to Meyer and Allen (1977) affective commitment is the employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation.

The second aim of the literature study was to conceptualise work performance. The various definitions of work performance were presented and a definition

specific to the study was formulated as “performance is the output required from employees, measured against specific set standards which contribute towards attainment of organisational goals. The different approaches and dimensions of work performance were discussed as well as the different methods for conducting performance appraisal. There was specific reference to the Developmental performance appraisal which is the process followed at the company.

The last aim of the literature study was to integrate the concepts of organisational commitment and work performance. This was achieved by presenting the literature discussions on the relationship between the two concepts. Some research studies show a significant positive relationship between organisational commitment and work performance. The theoretical objectives of the study were met.

### **6.1.2 Empirical Study Review**

The general aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between affective organisational commitment and work performance. The overall finding of the study is no significant correlation between affective organisational commitment and work performance, with only a weak positive relationship between the two concepts.

In terms of the empirical study, the aims of the research were to investigate the statistical nature of the relationship between affective organisational commitment and work performance and to investigate differences in affective organisational commitment according to age, gender and number of years in the organisation. According to the results of the study, the relationship between affective organisational commitment and work performance is not statistically significant. There are however some differences according to age and gender. Age and

length of service appear to demonstrate positive relationships with organisational commitment (Oberholster & Taylor, 1999; Rivera, 1994; Suliman & Iles, 2000)

The one finding is that there are more women in the age category 20-30 years of age and in this category, respondents are least likely to associate with the company's problem and do not view the organisation as having much personal meaning for them. Overall, the ratings of men are higher than those of female respondents. This contradicts Mowday et al (1982) which states that gender shows a fairly consistent relationship to organisational commitment, with women as a group being more committed than men. Most women in the organisation are in administrative roles and are not involved in decision making. It is also possible that women might not see career opportunities in the organisation as there are few role models who are women in key roles. With Monsanto being an agricultural organisation, and White Afrikaans males dominating the senior positions, women hold mostly administrative positions with only a few in technical and management positions.

Respondents in this age category, mostly women are also more likely to receive a moderate performance rating than men. According to Allen and Meyer (2001); Suliman and Iles, (2000) and Wong and Wong (2002), organisational commitment has also been shown to be positively correlated with certain outcome variables like job performance. If there is a positive correlation between organisational commitment and work performance and women are less likely to be committed to the organisation, it can be speculated that women are more likely to get a moderate performance rating.

According to the responses from the questionnaire, most respondents indicated that they would be committed to another organisation as well, even though they are committed to the case study organisation. It could be true that the employees of the organisation have a general culture of commitment. The

organisation does however invest on being an employer of choice and has “creating a great place to work” as one of its core values.

There were no significant differences according to the number of years in the organisation. There are some studies which confirmed similar findings. De Cieri, Donohue and Pettit (2004) also found no significant difference in organisational commitment in terms of employment tenure. Du Buisson-Narsai (2005) also found no significant relationship between tenure and any of the organisational commitment scales.

## **6.2 LIMITATIONS**

The research was conducted in one organisation and thus the findings of the study cannot be generalised for Industry. A sub-scale of the Organisational Commitment Scale was used (Affective Commitment Scale) and not the whole questionnaire, which led to the other dimensions of commitment not being investigated during the current study. As the organisation has mostly male employees and a few female employees in administrative functions, a comparison between male and female was difficult to make. Most employees in the organisation (90%) fall within the strong performance category, making it difficult to compile a correlation study. A further limitation is that the results can only be used for this particular sample and not for the broader population within Monsanto, or males and females in the organisation.

## **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

A recommendation would be a larger study with respondents from different companies and organisational cultures as well as a fair balance between the different demographic categories e.g. race and gender. A further recommendation would be a bigger sample. It is also recommended that focus groups be held with all demographic groups, especially women to validate the

findings of the study qualitatively and to make recommendations to the management of Monsanto. Some recommendations could be integration of women into the organisation and fast tracking their growth into key roles as well as understanding the needs of women and what the organisation can do to improve the affective commitment of women.

The conclusion of the study is that there is a weak positive correlation between organisational commitment (the affective component) and work performance, but no significant correlation between the two concepts. There are some significant relationships found in the analysis as discussed for example, male ratings are higher than female one's. With the limitations discussed in section 6.2, limited value is added to the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology. More in depth research with all the scales of the questionnaire being used is therefore recommended.

## **SUMMARY**

Chapter 6 focused on the conclusions of the study with a specific reference to the theoretical and empirical conclusions, the limitations of the study as well as the recommendations.

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