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22. Organizational leadership and employee commitment

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Organizational leadership has been the subject of systematic theoretical and empirical research ever since World War II, with hundreds of new studies now appearing annually (Barling, 2014). Most of this research has focused on the outcomes of leadership, and the possible effects of organizational leadership on employee commitment have not escaped attention, both in itself, and in terms of the extent to which any proximal effects on commitment help us to understand why leadership has such widespread and distal consequences.

Our goal in this chapter is to explain how different types of leadership influence different facets of employee commitment. To do so, we first review what is known about the effects of positive leadership on employee commitment. Second, we review the possible influence of negative forms of leadership on employee commitment. Third, we investigate the outcomes of high-quality leadership in alternative organizations, specifically labor organizations. Finally, we offer some research questions that will help advance our understanding of the nature and effects of the construct of commitment, before drawing conclusions.

POSITIVE LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT TO THE ORGANIZATION

As is apparent throughout this *Handbook*, it is widely accepted that there are meaningfully different forms of organizational commitment (that is, affective, normative, continuance). Similarly, a reading of the leadership literature shows that a range of differing leadership theories have been the focus of empirical investigation. In this section, we discuss what has been learned from research about the relationship between various positive leadership theories (namely, transformational, charismatic, ethical, leader-member exchange, servant, and authentic leadership) and the different facets of organizational commitment.

Transformational Leadership

As the most frequently studied leadership theory (Barling, 2014), transformational leadership posits that leaders exhibit four separate behaviors (Bass and Riggio, 2006). First, idealized influence reflects the ethical component of transformational leadership. Leaders high in idealized influence go beyond self-interest; they are guided by their moral commitments and responsibilities and want what is best for the organization and its members. These leaders serve as role models, act with integrity and humility, and show a

deep respect for others. Second, inspirational motivation involves behaviors that encourage and inspire others to achieve their goals. Leaders high in inspirational motivation set high but realistic standards through interpersonal interactions, and help others believe that they can overcome obstacles or psychological setbacks, thereby enhancing follower self-efficacy. Third, intellectual stimulation reflects behaviors that encourage followers to think for themselves, question their commonly held ideas and beliefs, restructure the way they think about and approach problems, and foster creativity. Finally, individualized consideration involves behaviors that recognize and respond to followers' needs and capabilities; the compassion, care, and empathy involved promote follower well-being and development. Through individualized consideration, high-quality leader–follower relationships reflected in mutual trust are established (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

Despite the conceptually distinct nature of the four aspects of transformational leadership, research has failed to adequately document their construct validity (e.g., Bycio et al., 1995). As a result, transformational leadership is most frequently investigated as a unidimensional construct; and we follow that tradition in our discussion of transformational leadership and employee commitment to the organization.

While the effects of transformational leadership on employees' organizational commitment are well documented (Walumbwa et al., 2005), the direction of this association differs across the components of commitment. For example, Jackson et al.'s (2013) recent meta-analysis showed that transformational leadership was positively associated with affective and normative commitment. Importantly, these relationships held true outside of the North American and European contexts; for example, transformational leadership predicted affective and normative commitment in the Malaysian manufacturing industry (Lo et al., 2010), while in China, pride in being a follower of the leader mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and affective and normative commitment (Chan and Mak, 2014).

In contrast, mixed findings have emerged regarding transformational leadership and continuance commitment. Some studies established positive relationships (Bučiūnienė and Škudienė, 2008; Felfe et al., 2008) while others reported negative correlations (Mendelson et al., 2011; Rafferty and Griffin, 2004). One possible reason for these inconsistent findings is the lack of clarity or consistency in the way continuance commitment is conceptualized and operationalized (Viator, 2001). While there is some support for the notion that there are two components to continuance commitment (namely, personal sacrifice associated with leaving the organization, and lack of employment alternatives; McGee and Ford, 1987), most research has used a unidimensional measure of continuance commitment. Yet when the relationship between transformational leadership and the components of commitment were examined separately, Gillet and Vandenberghe (2014) showed that transformational leadership was positively associated with perceived sacrifice commitment, and negatively associated with commitment based on the perceived lack of employment alternatives.

The effects of transformational leadership on employees' commitment to the organization are not always direct; and the indirect effects of transformational leadership on employees' organizational commitment have been investigated. Followers' compliance with their leader's power (Pierro et al., 2013), trust (Goodwin et al., 2011), psychological empowerment (Castro et al., 2008), and collective efficacy (Walumbwa et al., 2004) all mediate the link between transformational leadership and affective commitment. These

findings are strengthened as the indirect effects of transformational leadership on organizational commitment (through procedural justice; Pillai et al., 1999; and job satisfaction; Nguni et al., 2006) emerge across different measures (for example, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire; Mowday et al., 1979) of organizational commitment.

Charismatic Leadership

The two most prominent interpretations of charismatic leadership theory suggest that charismatic leadership emphasizes either the behavior and personality of the individual leader (House, 1977), or attributions that followers make about the leader (Conger and Kanungo, 1998). The behavioral approach suggests that charismatic leaders behave in ways that support and reinforce their belief that followers can accomplish and surpass performance expectations, highlight ideological aspects of work, display self-confidence, and emphasize a collective identity (House and Howell, 1992). Moving away from leadership behaviors, the attributional approach suggests that charisma is more a function of followers' attributions about their leaders' behaviors; in this sense, charisma rests 'in the eye of the beholder' (Conger and Kanungo, 1998).

Based on the attributional approach, one study of 235 employees showed that charismatic leadership was positively related to organizational commitment (Rowden, 2000). Furthermore, Michaelis et al. (2009) examined whether affective commitment – specifically, affective commitment to change – mediated the relationship between charismatic leadership and followers' innovation implementation behavior. Data from 194 employees in research and development (R&D) teams of a multinational automotive company demonstrated that charismatic leadership positively associated to subordinates' affective commitment to change; in turn, affective commitment to change positively related to innovation implementation behavior. This study gains in importance as it shows that affective commitment to change can be an end in itself, but also accounts for subsequent employee behaviors.

Despite these findings, the relative lack of research on charismatic leadership and employees' organizational commitment is curious, given that charismatic leadership is the second most frequently researched leadership theory (Barling, 2014). Clearly more research is needed, and because both studies discussed took an attributional approach, any such research should differentiate between behavioral and attributional conceptualizations, and investigate other conceptualizations of charismatic leadership (that is personalized versus socialized; Howell, 1988).

Ethical Leadership

Recent government corruption and corporate scandals have exacted enormous organizational and societal costs. Anecdotally at least, much blame for these ethical lapses has been attributed to the leaders of these organizations (for example, Enron and Tyco; Hansen et al., 2013). Perhaps not surprisingly, there has been a marked increase in research on ethical leadership.

Although many different approaches to understanding ethical leadership exist (for example, moral reasoning; Turner et al., 2002; and ethic of care; Simola et al., 2010), Brown et al. (2005) provide an overall encompassing definition: 'the demonstration of

normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making' (p. 120). To date, this would appear to be the framework within which most ethical leadership is conceptualized in research, and the one we follow in this discussion.

Using a longitudinal design, data from 108 employees in an Israeli regional council showed that perceived ethical leadership predicted later organizational commitment (Beeri et al., 2013). Neubert et al. (2009) help to explain why this effect emerges. Based on survey data from 250 employees, their results demonstrated an indirect relationship between ethical leadership and affective commitment, and ethical climate served as the mediator. Because these studies used different scales to measure organizational commitment, the conclusion is that the ethical leadership–commitment link exists irrespective of commitment scales used.

However, the information provided by these studies remains somewhat limited as they assumed a unidimensional approach to commitment. Studying ethical leadership at different levels of management, Hansen et al. (2013) examined the relationship between ethical leadership and multiple foci of employee commitment. Based on data from 201 employees from a large waste management corporation in the United States (US), followers' relationships with their organizations partially mediated the relationship between organizational ethical leadership and employees' affective commitment to the organization. Followers' relationship with their supervisor also partially mediated the link between supervisory ethical leadership and employee affective commitment to the supervisor (Hansen et al., 2013). These findings suggest that all levels of management can benefit from behaving ethically; senior organizational leaders and supervisors must recognize that building positive relationships with their followers is crucial for employee commitment to the organization and supervisor, respectively.

To shed more light on how ethical leadership fosters employee commitment, Kottke and Pelletier (2013) extended the focus on the effects of top managers' and immediate supervisors' ethical leadership to include normative and continuance commitment. Data obtained from 371 employees revealed that perceptions of both top managers' and supervisors' ethical leadership predicted subordinates' affective and normative commitment to the organization. In contrast, irrespective of the level at which it was enacted, ethical leadership did not predict continuous commitment (Kottke and Pelletier, 2013). These findings show that the benefits of ethical leadership extend to both affective and normative commitment, and are informative as the antecedents of employees' normative commitment generally receive less attention.

Leader–Member Exchange

While transformational, charismatic, and ethical leadership focus primarily on the behavior of the leader, leader–member exchange (LMX) theory takes a relational perspective to leadership and emphasizes the quality of the leader–member dyad. LMX theory posits that leaders develop different-quality relationships with each of their followers, and that mutual influence occurs within each dyadic relationship (Graen and Cashman, 1975). Thus, rather than assume a unidirectional and downward influence from leader to follower as is the case in most other leadership theories, LMX highlights the reciprocal

nature of leader–follower relationships, and that higher-quality relationships yield more positive organizational outcomes than lower-quality relationships. High-quality LMX relationships are defined by autonomy, understanding, support, trust, opportunities for involvement in decision-making, provision of information, and role latitude. In contrast, poor-quality LMX relationships are characterized by aspects such as contractual obligations, one-way communication and downward influence, role distinctions, formal transactions based on distrust, and social distance (Schriesheim et al., 1999).

Numerous studies have also been conducted on the relationship between LMX and organizational commitment. One typical field investigation of 337 employees showed that LMX was positively related to affective commitment (Liden et al., 2000). Similarly, using a sample of 220 R&D employees from Singapore, Lee (2005) demonstrated that LMX predicted followers' affective and normative commitment. Moving beyond direct relationships, Cheung and Wu (2012) demonstrated that LMX indirectly predicted employees' organizational commitment through employees' job satisfaction among 196 Chinese employees in the manufacturing industry. Data collected from 1283 nurses in Australia showed that employees' psychological empowerment mediated the association between LMX and employees' affective commitment to the organization (Brunetto et al., 2012). These findings are notable in that they are drawn from several different countries (Australia, China, Singapore, and the US), pointing to the cross-national validity of the link between LMX and employee commitment to the organization.

Examining LMX as a moderator, Hung et al. (2004) investigated the association between fairness perceptions of human resource management practices and affective commitment among 224 managers in nine Malaysian manufacturing companies. As predicted, LMX moderated the relationship such that members who perceived their employee relations and compensation as fair were more likely to demonstrate affective commitment when LMX was high (Hung et al., 2004). Similarly, based on data from 162 Chinese employees, perceived organizational support was more likely to influence employees' affective commitment with higher LMX (Liu and Ipe, 2010). By treating LMX as a moderator, these findings indicate not just whether LMX predicts organizational commitment, but when or under what conditions affective commitment may be enhanced.

Servant Leadership

First described by Robert Greenleaf in the 1970s (Greenleaf, 1970), current research would suggest that servant leadership is best viewed as comprising seven separate but related dimensions: putting subordinates first, empowering, conceptual skills, behaving ethically, helping subordinates to grow and succeed, emotional healing, and creating value for the community (Liden et al., 2008). Although servant leadership may seem similar to behaviors included in other leadership theories (for example, transformational, LMX), proponents of servant leadership highlight two critical differences. First, servant leadership emphasizes employee development not just for the sake of the organization but also for personal growth and advancement, and the good of the community. Second, servant leadership may be most appropriate for contexts that are stable and include an abundance of resources (Schaubroeck et al., 2011).

To test these differences, Schneider and George (2011) diverged from most research

on organizational leadership and employee commitment, which has invariably focused only on a single leadership theory within each study, by directly comparing the effects of servant and transformational leadership on organizational commitment. Based on 110 participants in a US national voluntary service organization, servant leadership predicted organizational commitment through followers' empowerment. Surprisingly, no significant relationship was found between transformational leadership and organizational commitment after taking the effects of servant leadership into account. Although this seems to contradict research showing a link between transformational leadership and employee commitment that was discussed earlier in this chapter, one reason for these findings could be the study context: Schneider and George's research was conducted within voluntary organizations, which we have already seen may be uniquely suited for the effects of servant leadership. Nevertheless, these results provide empirical support for the influence of servant leadership on employee commitment; and begin to raise the question of the relative importance of the different leadership theories in explaining employee commitment.

To further compare the effects of servant and transformational leadership, van Dierendonck et al. (2014) examined two mechanisms through which servant and transformational leadership might differentially influence organizational commitment. Across two experimental studies and one field study, both servant and transformational leadership predicted organizational commitment. Importantly, however, the way in which they influenced organizational commitment differed. Servant leadership functioned mainly through follower need satisfaction, whereas transformational leadership functioned primarily through perceived leadership effectiveness (van Dierendonck et al., 2014). These findings provide some understanding of different processes that may underlie servant and transformational leadership; future research should now contrast the processes through which servant and transformational leadership affect the three components of employee commitment differently.

One remaining question is whether the different aspects of servant leadership differentially predict the three components of employee commitment (Bobbio et al., 2012). Bobbio et al.'s study in a sample of over 800 employees in profit and non-profit organizations in Italy showed that empowerment, accountability, standing back, and stewardship enhanced affective commitment; and that empowerment, standing back, courage, and stewardship improved normative commitment. In contrast, both humility and forgiveness were negatively associated with normative commitment. Last, authenticity positively related with continuance commitment, and empowerment negatively correlated with continuance commitment (Bobbio et al., 2012).

While this study sheds light on how servant leadership influences the different facets of employee commitment, the puzzling nature of the latter two findings warrants discussion. One explanation may be the use of different conceptualizations and operationalizations of servant leadership and organizational commitment. For example, as discussed previously, different results were found when the components of continuance commitment were examined separately (Gillet and Vandenberghe, 2014). Furthermore, like the other research we have discussed linking servant leadership and employee commitment, Bobbio et al. used a cross-sectional design; and the potential effects of servant leadership on employee commitment remain to be investigated.

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership is the most recent leadership theory subjected to a reasonable level of empirical scrutiny (Avolio and Luthans, 2006), and includes four components: self-awareness, unbiased processing of external information, relational transparency, and an internalized moral perspective.

Early findings already point to a link between authentic leadership and organizational commitment. Based on survey data from 157 employees, Peus et al. (2012) showed that perceived predictability of the leader, a facet of trust, partially mediated the relationship between authentic leadership and subordinates' affective commitment. Similarly, Leroy et al. (2012) showed an indirect effect of authentic leadership on organizational commitment through behavioral integrity ('practice what you preach'; Simons, 2002) using a sample of 49 teams in the service industry. Leaders who were perceived as authentic were more likely to be perceived as aligning their thoughts and actions, and in turn influenced followers to be more affectively committed to the organization. Not surprisingly, given its relative recency, these would appear to be the only two studies investigating authentic leadership and employee commitment. More research is needed to extend this focus by investigating whether and how authentic leadership relates to normative and continuance commitment.

Taken together, a review of the positive leadership literature demonstrates the beneficial consequences on employees' organizational commitment. Specifically, there is widespread agreement among the leadership theories showing a positive relationship with affective commitment; positive leadership is also consistently related to normative commitment, although there is less research focusing on this commitment facet. In contrast, the evidence is mixed regarding continuance commitment: both positive and negative relationships between positive leadership and continuance commitment have emerged.

NEGATIVE LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT TO THE ORGANIZATION

So far, our discussion has focused on the links between positive, or high-quality, leadership and organizational commitment. Missing from this discussion is any concern for the role of negative, or poor-quality, leadership on employee commitment. In this section, we review what has been learned from research about the role of negative leadership (abusive supervision and laissez-faire leadership) on employees' commitment to the organization. In the discussion that follows, we address how abusive supervision and laissez-faire leadership are associated with different components of organizational commitment.

Abusive Supervision

As one of the most widely studied approaches to negative leadership (Martinko et al., 2013), abusive supervision is defined as 'subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact' (Tepper, 2000, p. 178). Examples of behaviors include yelling at, lying to, and belittling subordinates; criticizing subordinates in front of others; and

unjustifiably blaming subordinates for mistakes. While studies show that abusive supervision results in a multitude of negative outcomes, including turnover, diminished psychological health, follower deviance, poor performance, and lower work–family functioning (for a review, see Tepper, 2007), our question is whether abusive supervision has any meaningful negative effects on organizational commitment.

Tepper et al. (2008) developed and tested a model of the relationships between abusive supervision, affective commitment, and organizational deviance. They hypothesized that affective commitment would mediate the relationship between abusive supervision and organizational deviance. Across two studies, targets of abusive supervision experienced lower levels of affective commitment, which led to greater deviance toward the organization (Tepper et al., 2008). These findings draw attention to the critical role that abusive supervisors play in influencing subordinates' organizational detachment, which could result in potentially detrimental and costly organizational behaviors.

Examining how abusive supervision influences the different facets of commitment, Tepper (2000) demonstrated that abusive supervision was negatively related to affective and normative commitment, and positively related to continuance commitment. Tepper's research went further, however, showing that these relationships were mediated by overall perceptions of organizational justice. Building on these results, Aryee et al. (2007) examined the separate mediating roles of interactional and procedural justice on the link between abusive supervision and affective commitment. Their data from leader–member dyads in a Chinese telecommunication company revealed that subordinates' perceptions of interactional but not procedural justice mediated the abusive supervision–affective organizational commitment relationship. In other words, abusive supervision resulted in lower interactional justice which, in turn, reduced subordinates' affective commitment to the organization (Aryee et al., 2007). Extending these findings, Gabler et al. (2014) showed that perceptions of sales managers' abusive supervision negatively associated to employees' affective commitment through employees' job satisfaction.

The effects of abusive supervision on organizational commitment have also received attention at the team level. Rousseau and Aubé (2014) investigated the moderating role of abusive supervision on the relationship between team-based reward leadership (conceptualized as administering positive reinforcements in the form of acknowledgements, commendation, and praise, contingent on fulfilling requirements delivered by the group as a whole) and team commitment. Data collected from 101 work teams in a public safety organization showed that abusive supervision weakened the relationship between team-based reward leadership and team commitment when abusive supervision was high (Rousseau and Aubé, 2014).

Taken together, we conclude that abusive supervision compromises employees' commitment to the organization. However, because most of the studies were cross-sectional in nature, future research should examine whether abusive supervision has long-term consequences on organizational commitment. Furthermore, affective commitment was the most commonly studied outcome of abusive supervision. More research is necessary to investigate how abusive supervision relates to normative and continuance commitment.

Laissez-Faire Leadership

Reflecting the absence of leadership, laissez-faire behaviors include the failure to provide direction, avoiding and denying responsibility, and neglecting to intervene even in dire situations (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Laissez-faire leadership has received little empirical attention in general (Barling, 2014), and this is true of the link between laissez-faire leadership and employee commitment. In one of the few studies on this topic, Nguni et al. (2006) found a negative association between laissez-faire leadership and organizational commitment in a sample of 545 Tanzanian elementary school teachers. In a separate study, Bučiūnienė and Škudienė (2008) showed that laissez-faire leadership negatively correlated with affective and normative commitment among 191 middle-level managers from five Lithuanian manufacturing companies. Findings from both studies provide initial evidence for the negative effects of laissez-faire leadership on employee commitment, and also suggest that these effects generalize across countries. Additionally, meta-analytic results by Jackson et al. (2013) demonstrated a negative correlation between laissez-faire leadership and affective and normative commitment. In contrast, laissez-faire leadership positively associated to continuance commitment (Jackson et al., 2013).

The indirect effects of laissez-faire on employees' commitment to the organization have also been investigated. Bernhard and O'Driscoll (2011) showed that psychological ownership of the organization mediated the relationship between laissez-faire leadership and affective commitment, using data obtained from 229 non-family employees from 52 small family-owned German businesses. These findings suggest that employees are less likely to connect with their organizations in the absence of leadership. Taken together with findings regarding positive or high-quality leadership, we infer that it is through high-quality relationships with their leaders that employees experience commitment to their employing organizations.

In summary, a review of the limited literature available shows that poor-quality leadership is negatively associated with employees' organizational commitment. Still, more research is needed to examine how other negative forms of leadership (for example, unethical leadership) affect the different facets of employees' commitment to the organization.

LEADERSHIP AND UNION COMMITMENT

While our discussion thus far has focused on leadership and employee commitment in traditional work settings, context matters, and leadership is also central within other types of organizations. One particular context is labor unions. Unions are 'fascinating organizations' (Klandermans, 1986, p. 199). Unlike traditional organizations, union leaders are elected based on votes from those they will represent, and exercise very little formal authority or power. Moreover, contrary to popular stereotypes, people are more likely to become union leaders out of a sense of obligation to the organization than any underlying ideological beliefs (Barling, 2014). In this section, we discuss the link between union leadership and members' commitment to the union, defined as an attitude of loyalty and feeling of responsibility toward the union, a willingness to exert effort on behalf of the union, as well as a belief in union goals (Fullagar and Barling, 1987).

Kelloway and Barling (1993) investigated the influence of shop stewards' transformational leadership on union members' commitment and voluntary participation in union-related activities. Data were obtained from two different samples in a large government union in Canada; the first consisted of 202 clerical and maintenance employees, and the second comprised of 147 guards and rehabilitation staff in a correctional institution. Perceptions of shop stewards' transformational leadership predicted different aspects of union commitment – namely, loyalty and responsibility to the union, and a willingness to work for the union – which in turn influenced members' union participation (Kelloway and Barling, 1993). Similarly, Fullagar et al. (1992) found that two components of union leaders' transformational leadership – namely, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration – positively related to members' attitudes toward the union and, in turn, positively associated to members' loyalty toward the union.

Focusing on union presidents, Hammer et al. (2009) examined the effects of internal leadership (for example, solving problems for, consulting with, and informing union members) and external leadership (for example, developing external political support for teachers and education) on members' commitment. Based on data from 3871 union members in 248 local teachers' unions, perceptions of union instrumentality and justice partially mediated the link between union presidents' internal leadership and members' loyalty and willingness to work for the union. Furthermore, perceptions of union instrumentality and justice fully mediated the association between union presidents' external leadership and union loyalty (Hammer et al., 2009). Thus, taking the literature on union leadership and commitment as one example, we suggest that the effects of leadership on commitment extend beyond traditional work organizations.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

To end our discussion, we propose various opportunities to help further our understanding of the relationship between organizational leadership and employee commitment. In particular, we suggest that future research might focus on: (1) project teams; (2) leaders' rather than employees' commitment; and (3) methodological refinements that will allow for sturdier inferences to be made from the findings of the many studies that are conducted on the topic of leadership and commitment each year.

First, greater exploration of the effects of leadership on employee commitment other than to their employing organization is warranted, and we suggest that one such opportunity exists in exploring commitment in project teams. Being a member of a team, and a project team in particular, may sometimes be more relevant than being a member of an organization; project teams have specific characteristics that distinguish them from traditional work groups, such as their need to clarify goals and produce unique products, and function in complex organizational contexts, their greater levels of diversity, and their temporal nature, thus providing unique opportunities to study leadership in alternative settings (Byrne and Barling, 2015).

Keegan and Den Hartog's (2004) research on government employees showed that while subordinates did not perceive project and line managers' transformational leadership differently, only line managers' transformational leadership predicted line

members' affective commitment. Refining this finding, de Poel et al. (2014) found that private sector project leaders' transformational leadership positively influenced team members' organizational commitment when organizational tenure diversity was high. These contradictory findings suggest that the characteristics unique to project teams may limit or enhance the effectiveness of project managers' leadership on employees' commitment, and more research is necessary to understand commitment within this context.

Second, while we have suggested throughout this chapter that more research is needed to examine how leadership influences the different facets of commitment, we also encourage scholars to shift their focus to leaders' organizational commitment. For example, while leadership seems to influence employee commitment, might leaders' own organizational commitment predict better-quality leadership? Following findings on employee commitment (e.g., Meyer et al., 1989), might leaders' affective and normative commitment translate into more positive leadership performance? And could continuance commitment predict negative leadership performance?

Finally, methodological and statistical improvements will place inferences about the causal effects of organizational leadership on employee commitment on more solid ground. There is considerable room in future research for greater reliance on longitudinal designs and multisource and/or mixed-methods approaches (Hunter et al., 2007). Similarly, causal inferences will be enhanced from laboratory studies using experimental designs. For example, an experimental field study by Barling et al. (1996) showed that transformational leadership training positively affected employees' organizational commitment.

CONCLUSION

Organizational scholars have long been interested in the nature and effects of organizational leadership; and interest in the nature, antecedents and consequences of organizational commitment can be traced back at least to the emergence of Meyer and Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment (e.g., Allen and Meyer, 1990). What we have learnt since then is that leadership quality remains one of the major antecedents of organizational commitment. Leaders serve as representatives of their organizations to their employees; faced with positive leadership, employees reciprocate with their affective, normative, and some aspects of continuance commitment to the organization. In contrast, exposed to negative leadership, employees are likely to withhold any commitment to their organizations.

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23. Employee empowerment and organizational commitment

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Structural and psychological empowerment are related forms of empowerment that have both been recognized as important drivers of employee commitment across a range of industries, including the public sector, hospitality services, and healthcare (Ahmad and Oranye, 2010; Joo and Shim, 2010; Laschinger et al., 2009a; Namasivayam et al., 2014; Raub and Robert, 2013; Spreitzer, 1995). Structural empowerment refers to socio-cultural conditions in the workplace that enable employees to accomplish their work in meaningful ways (Kanter, 1977). Psychological empowerment, on the other hand, refers to employees' cognitive responses to working in environments structured in this way (Kraimer et al., 1999). Thus, managers wishing to create a psychologically empowered workforce can use structurally empowering management practices to achieve this goal. Research has supported the proposition that structural empowerment is an important contextual antecedent of psychological empowerment (Faulkner and Laschinger, 2008; Laschinger et al., 2001; Stewart et al., 2010) and that both forms of empowerment are associated with higher employee commitment to their organization (Cho et al., 2006; DeCicco et al., 2006; Laschinger et al., 2001; Najafi et al., 2011). Although both forms of empowerment are important, most of the studies linking structural empowerment to commitment have been conducted within the realm of healthcare, and nursing in particular. Therefore, this chapter will focus on summarizing research linking workplace empowerment and organizational commitment in nursing and healthcare settings.

EMPOWERMENT AND COMMITMENT IN HEALTHCARE

Healthcare delivery systems depend on a healthy committed workforce to ensure high-quality patient care. Nurses represent the largest occupational group in the healthcare workforce and understanding factors that contribute to their work effectiveness and workplace well-being are important to sustaining stable healthcare delivery systems around the world. Workplaces that empower nurses to practise according to their professional standards have been shown to be important for nurses' responses to their work (Laschinger et al., 2004). Nurses' sense of empowerment in their workplace is related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Laschinger et al., 2009a), which in turn discourage organizational turnover. Nursing turnover is costly for healthcare organizations, both financially and in terms of poor patient outcomes (Hayes et al., 2006). Therefore, it behoves nursing management to make every effort to create empowering nursing work environments that foster higher levels of organizational commitment among nurses in order to sustain stable work environments that support high-quality care.