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ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, JOB SATISFACTION, AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS: A STUDY OF LEBANESE NURSES

Key Words

Organizational Commitment; Job Satisfaction; Job Involvement; Turnover Intentions; Western Theories; Employee Demography.

Abstract

Whilst acknowledging the increased attention given to the study of organizational commitment and its correlates in western and non-western settings, there is no prior research, to date, testing the potential application of western-based organizational behavior theories in a Lebanese setting. Using a sample of 180 Lebanese nurses, this study finds that U.S.-based theories linking job involvement, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intention are generally applicable to Lebanese employees. Results suggest that nurses' job involvement is positively associated with their job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and that nurses' job involvement and job satisfaction are positively associated with their organizational commitment. The results also suggest that both job satisfaction and organizational commitment reduce nurses' turnover intention. The implications of these findings are especially relevant to cross-cultural research testing western management theories on Lebanese employees as well as to multinational corporations operating in Lebanon and in similar Middle Eastern countries.

Introduction

A growing body of management literature has renewed interest in the study of organizational commitment and its relationship to organiza-

tional performance, turnover, employee satisfaction (Miller & Lee, 2001; Russ & McNeilly, 1995; Chen & Francesco, 2000) and organizational politics (Witt

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et al., 2002). Such interest is justified on the assumption that committed employees attach themselves, perform better, and remain with their organizations longer than uncommitted ones. Moreover, increasing international competition and the rapid pace of technological change are placing unprecedented pressure on organizations to alter their internal administrative and management structures (Osterman, 1988), adopt effective human resource strategies and processes (Tsui *et al.*, 1997), and, more importantly, maximize employees' commitment and contribution (Ulrich, 1998).

An obvious impact of organizational commitment is its effect on employee behavior. However, this effect is somewhat unexplored and often misunderstood in the decision-making process of organizations operating in small developing countries like Lebanon. Moreover, almost no empirical study has examined the relationship between organizational commitment and employee behavior in a Lebanese setting, even though multinational organizations from around the world operate in this fascinating country and most of the country's successful organizations have long adopted western management techniques. Acknowledging the increase in attention given to the study of organizational commitment and its correlates in western and non-western settings, there

still appears to be considerable opportunity for researchers to test the applicability of western management theories in new cross-cultural studies. A review of the literature reveals that no prior research, to date, has tested the potential application of western-based organizational behavior theories in a Lebanese setting. Thus, the purpose of this study is to test the applicability of the western-based theories in the Lebanese context. Examining the antecedents and correlates of organizational commitment in the Lebanese cultural context may be relevant to comparative cross-cultural research, since cultural diversity has become a dominant feature of the Lebanese workforce. Additionally, cross-cultural research testing western theories on Lebanese employees may provide benefits to multinational corporations operating in Lebanon and in similar Middle Eastern countries.

Considering the above-mentioned gap in the literature, this study is designed to investigate the antecedents of organizational commitment and the nature of the interrelationship among four important variables of employee behavior: job involvement, commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions in a non-western setting. Two major issues were addressed: (1) What are the main determinants of organizational commitment that exist in health care organizations? And (2)

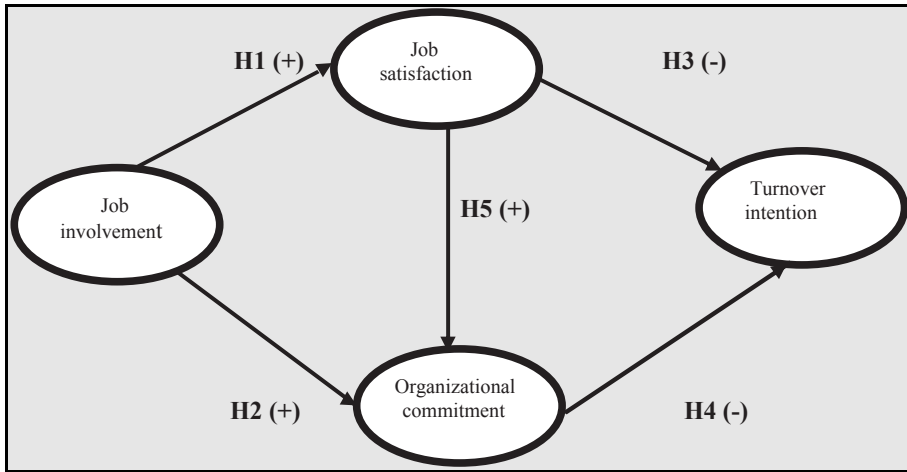


Fig. 1. Hypothesized model of the relationship between job involvement, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

what relationships exist between job involvement, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions?

Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses

The study begins with a discussion of the theoretical background, followed by a development of a set of hypotheses, then a description of the research methods and results. Subsequently, results are discussed in light of the current theoretical framework. Finally, study limitations and conclusions are addressed. The model in Fig. 1 proposes that job involvement is positively related to nurses' job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and that nurses' job satisfaction is positively related to organizational commitment but negatively related to

their turnover intention. Furthermore, the model proposes that nurses' commitment and their turnover intention are inversely related.

Many researchers have investigated various aspects of organizational commitment. Bhagat and Chassie (1981) studied the determinants and implications of commitment, grouping the influence on commitment into three categories: Work satisfaction characteristics, sex-role-related characteristics, and personal characteristics. Similarly, Steers and Porter (1983) examined the antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment and grouped them into three general categories: Personal, job, and organizational. Allen and Meyer (1990) first examined the measurement and antecedents of various dimensions of organizational commitment and later

linked commitment to employee behavior. Other researchers have included employees' nonwork obligations (Mellor *et al.*, 2001), employee demography and turnover intentions (Chen and Francesco, 2000), human resource practices (Arthur, 1994), culture and cohesion (Odom *et al.*, 1990), and job satisfaction and job characteristics (Bhuiyan *et al.*, 1996) in their work. Researchers have also linked job satisfaction to job performance (Judge *et al.*, 1998), life satisfaction (Rode, 2004), organizational culture (Lund, 2003), and organizational commitment (Lok and Crawford, 2001; Russ and McNeilly, 1995).

Accordingly, organizational commitment has occupied a prominent place in organizational behavior research due to its significant impact on organizational effectiveness and employee work attitudes. Most studies on this topic were conducted in western settings, especially in North America. However, a stream of research has recently began to examine the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of organizational commitment in other cultural contexts (Silverthorne, 2004; Yousef, 2002; Lok and Crawford, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2001). To further investigate the effects of cultural context on the antecedents and correlates of organizational commitment, this exploratory study was conducted using samples from Lebanon.

In their review of the organizational commitment literature, Meyer and Allen (1991) identified three types of organizational commitment: affective, continuance, and normative. Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment of employees to organizations involving components of pride and loyalty. Continuance commitment refers to employees' awareness of costs associated with leaving or rewards for staying. Normative commitment reflects employees' feelings of obligation to remain members in organizations. The three forms of commitment are depicted to be psychological states which employees experience to differing degrees. Despite the various components and measurements of organizational commitment, the concept shares a common theme in that organizational commitment is considered to be a bond or linking of the individual to the organization (Mathieu and Zazac, 1990). Allen and Meyer (1996) defined organizational commitment as a psychological link between the employee and his or her employer and Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) defined it as a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets. Meyer and Herscovitch argued that the bases of commitment are the same regardless of its target. Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian's (1974) definition is probably

the most frequently used in the literature. They defined organizational commitment as the relative strength of the identification of the individual and his involvement with his particular organization. They stated that organizational commitment can be characterized by three basic components: a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals, a willingness to exert a considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain organizational membership. Thus, several researchers believed that organizational commitment binds an employee to his or her organization, and thereby reduces the likelihood of his or her turnover (Meyer and Allen, 1991; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990).

In the context of Lebanese organizations, affective and normative commitment are more likely to be related to an individual's likelihood of remaining in an organization; that is a person is affectively (desire to remain) and normatively (felt obligation to remain) committed to the organization since he or she is culturally bound to its managerial ideology, consisting of paternalism and personalism. Paternalism is an important value pattern that implies the general expectation that the organization should provide for the welfare of the employee and his/her family, and that the employee should reciprocate loyalty and devotion to the

organization. More specifically, employers and/or supervisors are expected to assume responsibility for the overall well-being and learning and development of their employees in order to retain their commitment and valuable contributions to the success of both the in-group and the organization as a whole. Three characteristics of paternalism might be identified: company familism, supervisory paternalism, and personalized loyalty. Within an organization, paternalism attracts organizational members to belong to an in-group and to be protected and secured by the in-group. Corporate familism, groupism, and personal ties with and loyalty to supervisors are distinctive features of Lebanese organizations. For instance, in return for their protection, subordinates are expected to stay dependent on their superiors and to take personal interest in promoting goals that are shared with their leaders. As for personalism, it is connoted with interpersonal trust, gracious relations, avoidance of conflict, and interpersonal networking. As Harris and Moran (1991: 503) put it "connections in the Middle East are vital to gain access to public and private decision makers, and to maintain good relations... Establishing a personal rapport, mutual trust, and respect are essentially the most important factors leading to a successful business relationship."

It appears that organizational commitment suggests not only commitment to an institution and its goals but also commitment to people who are in control or in charge (i.e., supervisors). Moreover, the organizational commitment literature viewed commitment as having multiple foci and bases (Becker et. al., 1996). Several researchers have suggested that individuals can be differentially committed to occupations, supervisors, top management, co-workers, and customers (Meyer, Allen, and Smith, 1993).

Building on Hofstede's framework (1984), Lebanon has been measured as more collectivist than individualistic. A collectivism society is characterized by a tight social framework in which people expect others in groups of which they are a part, to look after them. According to Hofstede (1984:152) "collectivist societies call for greater emotional dependence of members on their organizations... the organizations should in return assume a broad responsibility for their members." Hofstede claimed that individuals in highly individualistic societies tend to display a calculative form of commitment while those in collectivistic societies are more likely to display a moral form of commitment. Hence, employee commitment to an organization is a natural control mechanism for a collective behavior pattern, where the emphasis is

on belonging to an organization that fosters collective sharing of responsibility as well as a congruence of goals among employees and management. In this regard, Lebanese organizations that possess strong values and collective cultures are perceived to produce a moral-based or paternalistic bond with their employees. However, the Lebanese culture embodies strong individualistic elements alongside a generally collectivistic orientation. In the organizational setting, one can find a mixed and not altogether consistent set of values to involvement and commitment. Some employees see themselves as having moral involvement to the values of their bosses and their organizations, whereas other employees may believe that involvement with organizations and commitment to superiors have a calculative basis. In sum, in either case, commitment appears to play a crucial role in establishing high-quality exchange relationships between employers and employees. Needless to mention that among the three well known dimensions of organizational commitment (moral, calculative and alienative), moral commitment is predominant in Lebanese culture. This type of commitment is characterized by the acceptance of and identification with organizational goals and values. By definition, it represents the strength of an employee's emotional attachment to an organization (Brett et. al., 1995).

Whereas attitudinal commitment reflects an affective form of alignment of the employees' personal value systems and desires toward their organizations, calculative or continuance commitment reflects an exchange or transactional form of the employees' behavior for specific rewards. In this study, the focus is on affective commitment since calculative, or continuous, commitment is viewed as a consequence rather than a constituent of organizational commitment.

Job Involvement and Job Satisfaction

Job involvement differs from job satisfaction in that job involvement refers to an employee's attachment to his/her job, whereas job satisfaction refers to an employee's affective work attitudes toward present job and/or employer (Lawler, 1983). However, the two constructs are empirically related. Job satisfaction has been defined as the positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction results from individuals' perceptions of their jobs and the degree to which they feel positively or negatively about their employment by their organizations. Organizations are often concerned about employees' satisfaction with specific facets of the job, as well as about overall reactions of employees to the jobs. Individual

components or dimensions of job satisfaction that have been identified as measures of this construct include: pay, promotion, supervisors, co-workers and the work itself (Porter et.al., 1974). This implies that the satisfaction derived from various facets may influence employees' satisfaction with conditions of work and immersion in their jobs. Based on these job satisfaction dimensions, it appears that job involvement can have a significant impact on one's job satisfaction. In part, satisfaction is determined by the social structure of the work and participation in decision making, both factors influencing an employee's job involvement and performance (feeling of accomplishment and self-efficacy). The interactions with supervisors and co-workers and enjoyment in participation are likely to increase employees' perceptions of influence and competence. As a result, greater satisfaction may arise because high job involvement and autonomy allow individuals to adjust better to their work situations and to increase their intrinsic motivation. Because involvement in one's work is of central importance to Lebanese nurses and because job-involved nurses believe in the work ethic and enjoy their nursing profession, one would expect a positive link between their perceptions of job involvement and their job satisfaction. Therefore, the first hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1:

"There is a positive relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction."

Job Involvement and Organizational Commitment

Job involvement has to do with the degree of importance people assign to work involvement (Adams *et al.*, 1996). It represents the degree to which a person's job is central to his/her self-esteem or sense of identity (Kanungo, 1982). Job involvement provides individuals with meaning, self-worth, and purpose and has direct effect on their psychological involvement or well-being (Martire *et al.*, 2000). Although job involvement was reported to lead to a sense of competence and higher levels of job satisfaction (Sekaran, 1989), it may also lead to commitment. Researchers have found positive correlations between job satisfaction and organizational commitment and between job involvement and organizational commitment. Numerous studies have reported that employee involvement in decision-making was positively associated with attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. For example, Mathieu and Zajac (1990:182) reported a positive correlation between job involvement and organizational commitment given "the two variables [should] be correlated to the extent that an organiza-

tion provides employees with jobs that they desire." Of course, job involvement influences the energy and time devoted to the work role, thus enabling employees to make significant investments in their work or career roles (Judge *et al.*, 1995). Employees who are provided with jobs that meet their expectations are more likely to identify with and be involved in their organizations. As such, they are likely to develop "a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values" (Mowday *et al.*, 1979: 226). Based on the above considerations, the second hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 2:

"There is a positive relationship between job involvement and organizational commitment."

Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

The relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction has attracted many researchers. For example, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found positive correlation between the dimensions of job satisfaction and the different forms of organizational commitment. Similarly, Fields and Thacker (1992) found that job satisfaction is positively correlated with organizational commitment.

Russ and McNeilly (1995) reported that experience and performance moderate the relationship between job satisfaction dimensions and organizational commitment. Irving *et al.*, (1997) found positive correlation between job satisfaction and both affective and normative commitment. Schwepker *et al.*, (2001) also reported that job satisfaction has a significant effect on organizational commitment.

Williams and Hazer (1986) reviewed the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction and commitment in turnover models using a causal modeling approach. They affirmed that job satisfaction is a causal antecedent of organizational commitment and that commitment, in turn, was predicative of turnover intentions.

It has been shown that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are positively correlated (Bhuiyan *et al.*, 1996; Yousef, 2002). Job satisfaction can enhance organizational commitment and reduce employee turnover and intentions to leave. Employees who are satisfied with what they are doing should exhibit more commitment to the goals and values of their organizations than those who are less satisfied. Conceiving job satisfaction to be related to organizational commitment allows us to test the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3:

"There is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment."

Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intentions

Turnover intention has been used as an antecedent to actually quitting. Porter and Steers (1973) pointed out that expressed "intention to leave" appears to be the immediate logical step after experienced dissatisfaction in the withdrawal process. Mobley *et al.* (1979) claimed that various aspects of the work environment affect employees' job satisfaction and commitment and that such environmental factors (e.g., supervision practices and job content factors) in turn may initiate withdrawal cognitions and decision processes that are then directly related to employees' likelihood of quitting. Mobley (1977) proposed a model of an employee's turnover decision process which contains a number of possible mediating linkages in the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover. In his view, intention to leave, the last step prior to actual quitting, can be used as a predictor of employee turnover. Some other steps that mediate the linkages between dissatisfaction and actual quitting included in the model are: thinking of quitting, evaluation of the expected utility of search and of the cost of quitting, search for and evaluation of alternatives and comparison of

the present job to alternatives. When employees become dissatisfied with their jobs, they might begin to think about quitting their jobs and search for available job alternatives. Although employees may decide to leave for reasons other than attitudinal (Lee *et al.*, 1999), job satisfaction still remains one contributing factor to employee propensity to stay in or leave their jobs. Consequently, employees who experience dissatisfaction with their jobs should be more likely to intend to leave their employers.

Albeit limited evidence exists to indicate that job satisfaction is related to turnover intention. Researchers have found significant negative relationships between turnover and job satisfaction (Trevor, 2001). Ostroff (1992) demonstrated the clear effect that job satisfaction had on turnover intentions of an engineering staff. Given the above, this research predicts Lebanese employees to exhibit the negative causal relationship found in job satisfaction-turnover model of organizational behavior literature.

Hypothesis 4:

"There is an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention."

Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention

Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job alternatives are

important factors for understanding turnover (Maertz and Campion, 1998). Turnover has been widely recognized as a contributing factor to understanding organizational commitment, and both variables have an important effect on employees' behavior. By definition, turnover occurs when people quit their jobs; but highly committed employees wish to remain with their organizations (Mowday, Porter, and Steers, 1982) and be less likely to quit. There is empirical evidence that job satisfaction and organizational commitment have negative relationships with turnover intentions. Researchers hypothesized commitment to lead to several behavioral outcomes, and reduced turnover is one of the strongest or most predictable behavioral outcomes of employees' commitment (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Researchers have found turnover intentions to negatively correlate with different forms of commitment as well as across organizational and occupational domains. For example, Meyer *et. al.*, (1993) found that affective and normative commitment were negatively correlated with turnover intentions. Irving *et. al.*, (1997) also found that turnover intentions were negatively related to continuance commitment.

Schwepker (2001) investigated the relationship between the organization's ethical climate, job satisfaction,

organizational commitment, and turnover intentions in a sales setting. He found support for the hypothesized negative relationship between commitment and salespeople intentions to leave the organization. Interestingly, the results of over 200 meta-analysis commitment studies supported the prediction of Mowday *et al.* (1982) that low turnover is the consequence of employee behavioral commitment (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990) and several researchers have found that organizational commitment is inversely related to intentions to leave an organization and to actual turnover as well (Somers, 1995). Although previous research has linked intent to leave and turnover to various aspects of job embeddedness (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001), recent research supports the relationship between measures of intention to leave and different conceptualizations of organizational commitment of professional accounting employees (Stallworth, 2004).

In the context of the Lebanese work setting, sustaining commitment to an employer is most often perceived as a culturally driven obligation to the in-group cohesiveness. That is, the values held by members are congruent with the goals of the organization as a whole, or with common values of the group. Organizational members have a commitment to the organization or

the group, since they are attracted and later socialized to stay in the organization or the group they belong to. The assumption is that an increase in organizational members commitment to their organizations will somehow result in decreased levels of turnover. Put differently, employees who identify with and are committed to their organizations are less likely to intend to leave.

Hypothesis 5:

"There is an inverse relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention."

Organizational Commitment and Employee Demography

A number of employee demographic variables, frequently included in previous commitment studies, are also included in this study. Variables such as years in organization, age, and level of education were hypothesized to have significant impact on commitment (Lok and Crawford 2001; Chen and Francesco, 2000; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Lok and Crawford (2001) found that age and tenure were significantly related to employee commitment for Australian nurses. Similarly, Sommer *et al.* (1996) discovered that tenure and age were significantly related to employee commitment for Korean subjects. Similar western results were reported by Mathieu and

Zazac (1990) and Allen and Meyer (1990). The assumption is that the longer an employee's stay in the same job and the older he/she is the greater his/her levels of organizational commitment. Although previous research reported an inverse relationship between educational level and employee commitment (Mathieu and Zazac, 1990; Mowday *et al.*, 1982), this research would expect a positive correlation between the level of education and employee commitment. This is because education in Lebanese culture is highly valued and has a significant impact on one's life and employment. An individual who invests heavily in education is likely to have accumulated a substantial number of investments or skills resulting in a calculated organizational commitment when joining a committed work group.

Hypothesis 6:

"Demographic variables, including age, gender, tenure, and level of education are each positively related to organizational commitment."

Background of Work Setting

Unlike most middle eastern oil producing countries, Lebanon's natural wealth is limited. However, the country is rich in the quality of its people since it has one of the highest educational levels in the world (people speak at least two or three languages).

With over 17 million expatriates all over the world added to its four million population, Lebanon's high proportion of professional, skilled and versatile human resources constitute the major asset of the nation (Business Lebanon, 1998). Due to its skilled and multicultural national personnel, Lebanon exports a significant number of its workforce to middle eastern countries, especially oil-producing and wealthy countries, as well as to western countries in Europe and North and South America. It is estimated that more than 75 percent of Lebanon's overall population live and work abroad. Such a position has helped most Lebanese residents to balance economic and social imperatives that are affecting their organizational and personal goals and priorities.

Moreover, Lebanese are well attached to organizations they work for as they are well-connected to the world. Even during the difficult war years, Lebanese employees have exhibited strong commitment and loyalty to their work organizations, including those jobs where the quality of performance is less tangible and more difficult to quantify. This strong employee-organization linkage is particularly valuable when the employees have knowledge that such linkage is instrumental to the success of their organizations.

Because most of the country's economy relies on the private sector, there is a great tendency among Lebanese employees to work responsibly and intelligently, so that social exchange and mutual trust are often considered the bedrock of the culture. In a social exchange relationship, the inducements go beyond short-term monetary rewards. They include an extended care and concern for an employee's well-being and satisfaction. In exchange, an employee devotes his heart and his mind to the employing organization and develops strong moral obligation to its success. A paternalistic employer/employee relationship can be found in some Lebanese organizations due to certain motivational processes of social exchange, as well as to certain institutional sub-cultural practices prevailing within the social system.

Sample and Data

The sample for this study was drawn from nurses who are currently working in a number of hospitals located in five Lebanese cities. The cities of Beirut, Tripoli, Tyre, Sidon and Zahlah were selected to provide a representative cross-section of major Lebanese health care institutions. The selection of hospitals was aimed to reflect the broad range of hospital environments and nursing staff practices and behaviors in these health care organizations. A random sample of 20 private hospitals was se-

lected from a local directory of hospitals, then a random sample of the nurses in each hospital of the of 20 hospitals was chosen. This procedure has been adopted because of the absence of any listing that can serve as sampling frames for drawing random samples. The health care industry was selected for two reasons. First, it has a strong social and economic impact on the performance of the overall Lebanese economy. Indeed, the health care sector provides the social and economic welfare for the people of Lebanon. Second, the health care sector is culturally diversified. One could, therefore, expect a combination of paternalistic and subcultural orientation in its managerial practices. These reasons are appealing for studying the nature and interrelationship of different behavioral facets of job involvement, commitment, satisfaction, and attitudes toward turnover among employees.

A self-administered questionnaire was administered by members of the research team, who met regularly with respondents and informed them about the general purpose of the study and emphasized that participation was voluntary and confidential. All respondents were instructed to seal the completed questionnaires in envelopes provided and to return them to the members of the research team.

In total, 500 questionnaires were distributed, and 220 questionnaires

Table 1
The Main Characteristics of the Sample

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	87	48.3
	Female	93	51.7
Age	Less than 35 years	131	72.8
	35-45 years	40	22.2
	More than 45 years	9	5
Educational level	Less than high-school	11	6.1
	High school diploma	45	25
	Some college	29	16.1
	Bachelor's degree	71	39.4
	Masters	24	13.3
Tenure in present organization	Less than 5 years	70	38.9
	5-10 years	73	40.5
	More than 10 years	37	20.5
Marital status	Married	92	51.1
	Unmarried	88	48.9

were returned, representing a response rate of 44 percent. A total of 180 questionnaires remained after deleting incomplete questionnaires. Background characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1. The average age of respondents was 30.55 years (*s.d.* = 7.55); 51.7 percent were women, and 48.3 were men. They had worked in their current positions for an average 6.96 years (*s.d.* = 5.43). Slightly over half (51.1%) are married. Just over half (52.7%) has at least a college degree.

The Measurement of Variables

Organizational Commitment. Organizational commitment was measured using the nine-item version of the Organizational Commitment

Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). This short version of the OCQ measures the strength of an individual's identification with and emotional attachment to an organization (Tsui *et al.*, 1997). Responses to the nine-item OCQ are measured on a five-point Likert-like scale which ranges from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree." The OCQ is the most frequently used measure of organizational commitment (Meyer *et al.*, 1990) and has achieved acceptable levels of reliability and validity (Brett *et al.*, 1995; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). The organizational commitment score was calculated by taking the average score across the nine-items such that higher scores indicate greater organizational commitment.

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured by a six-item index (Schriesheim and Tsui, 1980), a scale that assesses employees' satisfaction with their work, supervisor, fellow workers or peers, promotion and advancement, and the current job satisfaction. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree" was used. The scale has been shown to have reliability and validity. Responses were averaged such that higher scores indicate greater job satisfaction.

Job Involvement. This variable was measured using a 5-item index developed by Kanungo (1982) to reflect the extent to which the work role occupies a position of centrality of the respondent's life. The reliability and validity of this measure have been demonstrated (Kanungo, 1982). Responses were averaged such as higher score indicates greater job involvement.

Turnover Intentions. This variable was measured by a four-item index (Farh et. al., 1998). Using a five-point scale, responses were averaged, and higher scores indicate greater intention to turnover. This measure has been used in previous studies and has had good reliability as indicated by coefficient alpha levels above 0.81 (Chen and Francesco, 2000).

Demographic Variables. Three demographic variables were measured and used as control variables in this study. Age, education, and organizational tenure were measured by the number of years. Gender was coded 1 = female; 0 = male.

Results of the Study

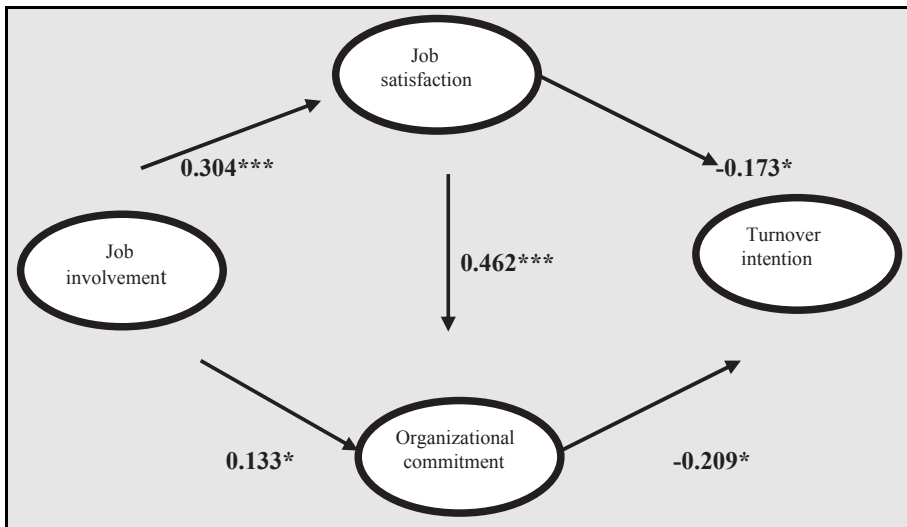
Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the study variables. Among the demographic variables thought to be antecedents of organizational com-

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations (N = 180)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	30.55	7.55	-	-					
2. Gender	0.66	0.47	-0.075	-0.221**					
3. Education	3.28	1.16	0.162*	-0.25	-				
4. Tenure	6.96	5.43	0.845**	-0.076	0.145	-			
5. Job involvement	3.38	0.61	-0.068	-0.146	0.046	-0.103	-		
6. Job satisfaction	3.64	0.46	0.48	0.10	0.177*	0.082	0.405**	-	
7. Turnover intentions	1.83	0.63	-0.047	-0.085	-0.104	-0.52	-0.151*	-0.252**	-
8. Org. commitment	3.84	0.53	0.062		0.265**	0.07	0.302**	0.412**	-0.273**

* P < 0.05

** P < 0.01



Standardized coefficients (betas) are reported

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Fig2. Significant relationships between job involvement, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

mitment, only the correlation for education (0.265) was significant ($P < 0.01$). For the employee behavior variables that are correlates of commitment, all three were significant ($P < 0.001$). The strongest correlations were found for job satisfaction (0.412) and job involvement (0.302). The correlation between turnover intention and organizational commitment was negative (-0.273) and significant ($P < 0.01$). Subsequent analysis was performed to examine the relationship between the two variables when controlling for job satisfaction and job involvement. The partial correlation between turnover intention and orga-

nizational commitment remained significant (-0.143, $P < 0.05$).

Although correlation coefficients (as reported in Fig. 2 below) do not suggest causality, Fig. 2 shows the relationships found among the four employee behavior variables. In general, the results support the hypotheses.

Regression results are shown in Table 3. First, the control variables appear to provide mixed signals in predicting the outcomes variables as shown in model 1. While none of the three first control variables is related to job satisfaction, education is significantly and positively related to both job satisfaction and organiza-

Table 3
Regression analysis results^a

Independent variables	Dependent variables		
	Job satisfaction	Organizational commitment	Turnover intentions
Model 1 (control variables only)			
Age	0.179	0.324**	0.069
Gender	-0.033	-0.012	0.158*
Tenure	-0.078	-0.298*	-0.214
Education	0.174*	0.232**	-0.056
Adjusted R ²	0.036	0.091	0.044
F	2.663*	5.475***	3.061*
Model 2 (add job involvement)			
Age	0.123		
Gender	-0.038		
Tenure	-0.044		
Education	0.166*		
Job involvement	0.304***		
Adjusted R ²	0.124		
F	6.054***		
Δ in $\tilde{R}^2$	0.088		
F	3.391		
Model 3 (add job satisfaction)			
Age		0.217*	
Gender		0.001	
Tenure		-0.246*	
Education		0.148*	
Job involvement		0.133*	
Job satisfaction		0.462***	
Adjusted R ²		0.345	
F		16.715***	
Δ in $\tilde{R}^2$		0.221	
F		10.661	
Model 4 (add commitment)			
Age			0.171
Gender			0.150*
Tenure			-0.292*
Education			0.023
Job involvement			-0.019
Job satisfaction.			-0.173*
Organizational commitment			-0.209*
Adjusted R ²			0.138
F			5.077***
Δ in $\tilde{R}^2$			0.207
F			1.638

a- Standardized Beta Coefficients are shown * P < 0.05 ** P < 0.01 *** P < 0.000

Table 4
Varimax rotation of four factor solution for JI, JS, OC, and TI items

Item	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4
JI1	0.63			
JI2	0.78			
JI3	0.87			
JI4	0.73			
JI5	0.84			
JS1		0.78		
JS2		0.80		
JS3		0.75		
JS4		0.60		
JS5		0.76		
JS6		0.72		
OC1			0.66	
OC2			0.82	
OC3			0.78	
OC4			0.83	
OC5			0.88	
OC6			0.53	
OC7			0.68	
OC8			0.81	
OC9			0.75	
TI1				0.64
TI2				-0.80
TI3				0.74
TI4				0.72

Notes: All loadings are greater than 0.5; JI = Job involvement; JS = Job satisfaction; OC = Organizational commitment; TI = Turnover intention.

tional commitment but not to turnover intention. However, tenure is significantly and inversely related to organizational commitment, but gender is positively and significantly related to turnover intention. Therefore, as a block by itself, the demographic variables explained 9.1% of variance, but, individually, three of them were significant predictors of organiza-

tional commitment. Job involvement and job satisfaction together accounted for 18.3% variance in organizational commitment ($F=21$, $R^2=0.183$). While none of the demographic variables of age, tenure, and education has effect on turnover intention, gender is barely significant and accounted for 4% of the variation ($F=2$, $R^2=0.04$).

In order to verify the discriminant validity between the constructs, factor analysis by the principal factor solution was performed. Four factors were extracted with an eigenvalue of 1.0 or more, and the cumulative contribution was 88.71 percent. As a result of the oblique promax rotation, each factor was interpreted by 0.4 or more factors loading. The first factor was job involvement; the second, job satisfaction; the third, organizational commitment, and the fourth, turnover intention. Therefore, the discriminant validity between measures was verified.

To test Hypothesis 1, job involvement was added to the control variables as an independent variable (model 2, Table 3). As stated in Hypothesis 1, the relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction is positive (change in adjusted $R^2 = 0.088$, $F = 3.391$, $P < 0.001$). The more nurses perceive themselves to be involved in their nursing profession, the higher their reported levels of satisfaction. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is fully supported.

To test Hypotheses 2, 3 and 6, organizational commitment was regressed on the control variables, job involvement and job satisfaction (model 3, Table 3). As suggested in Hypothesis 2, there is a positive relationship between job involvement and organizational commitment (change in adjusted $R^2 = 0.221$, $F = 10.66$, $P < 0.001$). The

more nurses perceive themselves to be immersed in their nursing profession, the higher their reported levels of organizational commitment. Likewise, as proposed by Hypothesis 3, greater job satisfaction is associated with stronger organizational commitment ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.462$, $P < 0.000$), suggesting that nurses who are more satisfied with their jobs are likely to be more committed to their organizations. Regarding the demographic variables, there is a statistically significant positive effect of age on commitment ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.217$, $P < 0.05$) and of education on commitment ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.148$, $P < 0.05$). This contrasts with the significant negative effect of tenure on organizational commitment ($\hat{\alpha} = -0.246$, $P < 0.05$). Gender was not statistically related to organizational commitment. Thus, Hypotheses 2 and 3 are fully supported but Hypothesis 6 is partially supported.

To test Hypotheses 4 and 5, turnover intention was regressed on the control variables, job involvement, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (model 4, Table 3). As suggested in Hypothesis 4, there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention ($\hat{\alpha} = -0.173$, $P < 0.05$), suggesting that nurses who are more satisfied with their jobs are less likely to leave their hospitals. Likewise, as proposed by Hypothesis 5, greater organizational commitment is associated with lesser

intention to leave, suggesting that the more committed nurses are to their hospitals, the less they intend to leave the hospitals ($\beta = -0.209$, $P < 0.05$). Both job satisfaction and organizational commitment were significant predictors of turnover intention, whereas job involvement had no significant impact.

Discussion and Conclusion

The main finding of this study was that the four employee behavior variables are interrelated. This study finds that high-involved employees report greater job satisfaction and stronger organizational commitment, and that the more satisfied high-involved employee are, the greater their organizational commitment and subsequently the lower their turnover. Previous literature has studied extensively the relationships between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and organizational commitment and turnover intention. This study's findings provide additional support for the relationships and suggest that job involvement is another important variable that directly affects both job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Another important finding from the results of this study was that organizational tenure had the strongest negative effect on commitment,

while age and education had a positive effect on commitment. This finding is compatible with previous results that suggest that demographic variables such as age, tenure and education levels have their effects on commitment. However, the negative effect between nurses' tenure and commitment suggests that commitment decreases with tenure. An explanation for this unexpected sign is that longer tenured nurses may have less commitment out of necessity since they may have developed much greater relationship with their bosses. Another explanation is that the inverse relationship could be attributable to the fact that more tenured nurses have higher expectations. They are therefore more likely to feel that they are not being rewarded fairly by their employers and so the level of their commitment is diminished. Moreover, longer tenured nurses, especially those who are experiencing emotional exhaustion or job burnout, may decrease their commitment if they see themselves as fixed in the same position with minimal chance for engaging in challenging learning activities that offer them opportunities to grow in their career paths.

The results of this study confirm previous findings on the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of organizational commitment (Mathieu and Zazac, 1990), supporting the applica-

tion of western organizational commitment theory to a sample of Lebanese employees. The study showed also support for the hypotheses. However, variables such as organizational tenure and education may not be consistent with western findings. Therefore, effects of cultural and social differences should be considered when adopting western-based management theories. Various cultural characteristics in different nations can affect the commitment outcome of employees (Hofstede *et al.*, 1990).

This study has certain limitations. One limitation is the nature of the sample. The majority of the sample were relatively young and were lower level employees. Thus, it is possible that the study is not capturing the different effects of tenure and organizational position on commitment. The junior nature of the sample may restrict the generalizability of the results. Caution must be exercised in applying the results of this study to other cultures or sectors. Prospective research should be directed to validate and generalize these results to different cultural and organizational settings. Future studies may be benefited from an exploration of a wider range of local and expatriate employees at different organizational levels. Although the results are generally context specific, they have special significance for hospitals which pursue flexibility and adaptability in their

management practices and are seeking ways to generate greater employee involvement and commitment. It has been reported that bureaucratic practices often result in negative employee commitment while a supportive work hospital environment could result in greater commitment and involvement among nurses (Brewer, 1994). Another limitation has to do with the absence of inclusion of other commitment variables (i.e., commitment to profession or occupation, commitment to supervisor) and other job satisfaction variables (i.e., satisfaction with company policies, satisfaction with customers) in our study. Future research may be needed to examine other elements of commitment and job satisfaction in private sector Lebanese organizations as well as in public organizations.

To conclude, this study is an active attempt to investigate the relationship between job involvement, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention in a less studied society (Lebanon). The study confirms that the relationships among employees' attitudes and organizational commitment exhibited by Lebanese employees were consistent with U.S.-based theories of organizational commitment. However, the main contribution is that the findings are important for managerial practices at both the national and the international levels. From a practical

standpoint, our findings suggest that management specialists must pay closer attention to the power of commitment and its relationship with other organizational variables in a borderless world. In an environment of increasing globalization, cultural diversity, and competition, there is an enormous pressure on local and multinational organizations to increase their employees' organizational commitment and improve retention rates in order to enjoy greater productivity and enduring long-term competitive advantage. More cross-cultural studies like this may add primary knowledge to expatriates' career motivation from the perspective of global human resource development. Additionally, it may provide benefits to multinational corporations operating in Lebanon and in similar Middle

Eastern countries. In particular, multinational corporations supporting career strategies that promote and value commitment and career involvement and satisfaction reap substantial benefits from their committed employees. Commitment enables employees to engage in specific behaviors and cognitions such as solving business problems creatively, teaming up with successful and collaborative co-workers or colleagues, and achieving targeted goals and work performance.

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الملخص

الولاء الوظيفي، والرضا الوظيفي ونوايا ترك الوظيفة: دراسة عن الممرضين والممرضات اللبنانيين

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على الرغم من الأخذ بعين الاعتبار تزايد اهتمام الباحثين بدراسة الولاء الوظيفي والمتغيرات المرتبطة به في البيئة الغربية وغير الغربية، فإن الباحثين لم يتناولوا تطبيق نظريات العلوم السلوكية الغربية في بيئة عمل المؤسسات اللبنانية. وقد تناولت هذه الدراسة عينة شملت ١٨٠ ممرضا وممرضة، وكشفت أن النظريات الغربية التي ربطت بين متغيرات الارتباط الوظيفي، والولاء الوظيفي، والرضا الوظيفي والنية بترك الوظيفة تنطبق على العاملين اللبنانيين. وبينت الدراسة أن ارتباط الممرضين والممرضات بوظائفهم له تأثير إيجابي على رضاهم وولائهم الوظيفي، وأن الارتباط والرضا الوظيفي يؤثران إيجاباً على ولائهم الوظيفي. كذلك بينت الدراسة أن الرضا والولاء الوظيفي يقللان من نوايا هؤلاء لترك وظائفهم.

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