

Organizational Commitment: The Roles of Emotional and Practical Intellect within the Leader/Follower Dyad

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This research reports results from a study that examined the relationship between leader behavior, follower commitment, and the emotional and practical intelligence of each. Data analyses indicated no significant relationship between leaders' behavior or intelligence measures and their followers' organizational commitment. Those followers who were judged to be highly committed, however, rated their leaders as more transformational than their lesser-committed cohorts. These findings suggest the relationship between leader attributes and follower outcomes might not be as unidirectional as often described. Moreover, individual emotional and practical intellect did exhibit a positive correlation with individual commitment to the organization, indicating follower commitment might be reasonably predicted. The ability to forecast potential employee commitment could have profound organizational implications.

Those interested in the leader/follower dyad have long searched for the various behavioral and attitudinal factors that influence this complex bond. Many of the early studies focused upon individual leader traits, as leadership was thought to be a specific attribute of personality. Trait theory, however, fell out of favor during the mid 1960s as findings indicated there was limited support for the notion that personality measures could consistently predict performance and/or effectiveness (Guion & Gottier, 1965). In recent years, though, there has been renewed interest in various aspects of personality and the influence of individual personality within the leader/follower relationship (Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson, & Spangler, 1995; Ross & Offerman, 1997). Although questions remain, many organizational researchers now acknowledge that individual personality is clearly important (Church & Waclawski, 1998; Mumford, Zaccaro, Johnson, Diana, Gilbert, & Threlfall, 2000), stable across adulthood (Costa & McCrae, 1988; Hogan & Roberts, 1996), and predictive in nature for both leaders (Atwater, 1992; Judge & Bono, 2000) and followers (Hogan, 1998; Wofford, Whittington, & Goodwin, 2001). This stability and consistency has led to the rise of numerous personality inventories. Recently, measures of nonintellective intelligence have emerged at the forefront of the personality debate and have been examined in various contexts, including the leader/follower dyad. This is appropriate as "personality represents an integration of one's multiple intelligences" (Bass, 2002, p. 106). In particular, transformational leadership has been shown to be associated with both emotional intelligence (Gardner & Avolio, 1998) and practical intelligence (Atwater & Yammarino, 1993).

The relationship between leader behavior, emotional and practical intellect, and follower outcome variables, however, requires additional research. In today's organizational climate, it seems particularly important to examine these constructs in terms of follower organizational

commitment. There is much agreement that personnel must be effectively managed for organizational success (Ross, Beath, & Goodhue, 1996) and a growing consensus that in the new world of work, human capital may well be the preeminent strategic capability (Stewart, 1997) and the primary asset by which organizational effectiveness can be enhanced (Roepke, 2000). Some would suggest that in an environment of readily available capital and emerging technology, employee commitment might be the only real sustainable competitive advantage (Woolridge, 2000). Unfortunately, committed employees are not the norm in many firms (Leonard, 2000). It is also clear that individual organizational commitment is related both to aspects of personality and the superior/subordinate relationship (Gopinath & Becker, 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Specifically, transformational leaders are thought to enhance the commitment of their followers (Bass, 1990; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). A better understanding of how transforming leader behavior and emotional and practical intellect influence the leader/follower dyad with respect to organizational commitment could enhance the identification, selection, development, and supervision of employees at all levels and, therefore, warrants investigation.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

There is a considerable body of literature relating to the concept of organizational commitment (see Meyer & Allen, 1997). Although a variety of definitions have been offered (i.e., Becker, 1960; Buchannan, 1974; Grusky, 1966; Porter & Lawler, 1968; Salancik, 1977; Sheldon, 1971; Wing, 1985), the common theme is the notion that commitment is the bond or linking of the employee to the organization (Lee, Ashford, Walsh, & Mowday, 1992).

Some authors have argued that organizational commitment, as a construct, is too broad for effective organizational analyses (Benkhoff, 1997). In response, Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed a distinction between the dimensions of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. "This reflects a difference between a preference to stay with the present organization arising out of a sense of attachment, compared to one rooted in a sense of economic necessity or of moral obligation" (Gallie, Felstead, & Green, 2001, p. 1085). For the past two decades, though, most studies examining the concept of organizational commitment have used the definition and measures developed by Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979). They defined organizational commitment as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 226). This attitudinal commitment develops from some combination of personal characteristics, leader/follower experience, and organizational perceptions (Brown, 1996) and relates favorably to Meyer and Allen's (1991) dimension of affective commitment and was used in the current study.

The majority of research surrounding organizational commitment has attempted to identify the various consequences and antecedents of employee commitment. Organizational commitment has been positively correlated to employee performance and attendance (Lowe & Barnes, 2002) and negatively correlated to behavioral events such as tardiness and intent to turnover (Cooke, 1997). A meta-analysis of the commitment literature confirmed that individual personal characteristics and leader/follower relations were significant antecedents of commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). There is also considerable evidence supporting the relationship between supervisory conduct and perceived organizational support and

subsequent commitment (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002). In addition, Lowe and Barnes (2002) have reported findings supporting the correlation between effective leader behaviors and follower commitment. Moreover, transformational leadership has been directly and positively associated with follower organizational commitment (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Viator, 2001).

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Although Downton (1973) was the first to introduce transformational leadership as a concept, Burns (1978) is credited with coining the terms transactional and transformational leadership. Although his interest was the history of political leadership, those examining organizational leadership have adopted the verbiage.

The key to a transactional style of leadership is the exchange between leader and follower. An active transactional leader typically employs a style of contingent reward (e.g., reward for performance) whereas a passive transactional leader tends to practice the avoidance of corrective actions (managing-by-exception) as long as goals are met. Passive transactional leadership should not, however, be confused with laissez-faire leadership. Bass (1985) included non-leadership (laissez-faire) in his conceptualization to complete the continuum or “full range” of leader behaviors (Avolio & Bass, 1991).

In contrast, transformational leader behavior does not depend upon an exchange of commodities between leader and follower (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders operate out of deeply held personal value systems that cannot be exchanged between individuals. By expressing these personal standards, transformational leaders create a unifying force by altering their followers’ goals and beliefs. Because of Bass’ influence, it is commonly assumed that transformational leaders achieve this by demonstrating behaviors consistent with: 1) individual consideration—transformational leaders accurately diagnose the needs of individual followers to optimize each follower’s individual potential, 2) intellectual stimulation—transformational leaders promote logic and rational problem solving, 3) inspirational motivation—transformational leaders express important purposes in simple ways by using symbols to focus efforts, and 4) charisma—transformational leaders provide a sense of mission, instilling pride and trust in and among the group.

There is a preponderance of literature indicating that transformational leadership can lead to substantial organizational rewards (Bass, 1990; Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993). Transformational leadership has been positively correlated to leader effectiveness ratings, leader and follower satisfaction, follower efforts, technological innovation, employee commitment, trust in leader, positive organizational citizenship behaviors, and overall organizational performance (Avolio, Waldman, & Einstein, 1988; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Hater & Bass, 1988; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996; Podsakoff et al., 1990; Waldman, Bass, & Einstein, 1987).

In addition, research has indicated that certain personality structures do influence leader behavior (Church & Waclawski, 1998; Judge & Bono, 2000; Roush & Atwater, 1992) and many consider these underlying personality structures to be stable (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Bass asserts that, “we are seeing a swing back to personality ... in leadership studies ...”

(Hooijberg & Choi, 2000, p. 291). Of course, organizational performance cannot be solely attributed to leadership (Kelley, 1998). Unfortunately, research is often focused only on the leadership side of the leader/follower dyad (Barbuto, 2000). Clearly, the follower aspect of the equation must be included as well.

There have been empirical and theoretical attempts to examine leadership from the perspective of follower motives and values. Algattan (1985) found that follower growth need dictated the type of leader behaviors that would be motivating. Yukl (1998) theorized participative leader behaviors might enhance effort, by way of increasing intrinsic value of a task, and satisfaction for followers with high needs for achievement and autonomy. Further, Wofford, Whittington, and Goodwin (2001, p. 203) have presented findings that transforming leadership may be more effective in certain situations because "some followers are more susceptible to the efforts of a transformational leader than are other followers."

More recently, Ehrhart and Klein (2001) offered findings that indicated follower values and personality could be useful predictors of motivating leader behaviors. In essence, they assert leader behaviors deemed motivating by individual followers are very much driven by a follower's characteristics and values. Wofford et al. (2001) agree and argue that individual personality traits of both leaders and followers should be examined more closely. The movement back to the importance of personality within the leader/follower dyad has begun and those investigating multiple intelligences are leading the resurgence.

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

The multiple intelligences movement, however, is not a return to trait theory. Riggio, Murphy, and Pirozzolo (2002, p. 3) argue that, "... rather than focusing on narrow conceptualizations of leader characteristics, ... social, emotional, or practical intelligence represent complex constellations of abilities. These multiple forms of intelligence are not only possessed by effective leaders, but they are types of characteristics that may make leaders effective in a range of situations because they involve abilities to adapt to a variety of ... interpersonal situations." Although multiple intelligence theorists list many forms of intellect (see Riggio, Murphy, & Pirozzolo, 2002), emotional and practical intelligence are of particular interest when examining the leader/follower relationship.

Emotional Intelligence

Arguably, the construct of emotional intelligence has had the greatest influence upon intellect being more broadly conceptualized. In fact, Bass (2002) suggests that emotional intelligence is of great importance because it contributes to the transformational leader's ability to inspire and build rapport with followers.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) are often credited with first defining emotional intelligence. They suggested "emotional intelligence reflects not a single trait or ability but, rather, a composite of distinct emotional reasoning abilities: perceiving, understanding, and regulating emotions" (Lam & Kirby, 2002, p. 134). In essence, Salovey and Mayer (1990, p. 189) viewed emotional intelligence as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions."

Although Salovey and Mayer developed the concept, Goleman (1995) must be acknowledged for popularizing the construct of emotional intelligence. “He simply defines emotional intelligence or EI as the capacity for recognizing one’s own emotions and those of others” (Luthans, 2002, p. 69) and suggests that EI is made up of five general components—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill (Goleman, 1998). Thus, “an emotionally intelligent individual is able to recognize and use his or her own and others’ emotional states to solve problems and regulate behavior” (Huy, 1999, p. 326). EI proponents have touted the construct as a means to reduce turnover, create more effective teams, enhance person-organization fit, stimulate creativity, and identify transformational leaders (Huy, 1999). That being said, empirical data supporting these assertions have been rather limited (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002; Lam & Kirby, 2002). There is a modicum of evidence to support the notion that emotional intelligence may be a better predictor of performance and general life success than is traditional IQ (Lam & Kirby, 2002). Much of the academic debate surrounding emotional intelligence, however, has begun to focus on EI and leadership (Luthans, 2002).

Although various authors have proposed the linkage between EI and leadership, attempts to confirm this relationship have been rather anemic. There is limited support for the idea that aspects of leader emotional intellect are related to transforming leader behaviors (Sosik & Megerian, 1999). Further, Gardner and Avolio (1998) have suggested that emotionally intelligent transformational leaders may enhance follower motivation and commitment by using their self-monitoring ability to regulate their behavior within the leader/follower relationship. Ashkanasy and Daus (2002, p. 81) assert:

The connection between emotional intelligence and leadership is intuitive. Contemporary theories of leadership are based on the ideas of charismatic or transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Transformational leaders project a vision that their followers accept and believe in, inspire and motivate their followers, stimulate their followers intellectually, yet at the same time provide individual consideration and succor to their followers (Bass, 1998). Transformational leaders must first identify and communicate the vision, and then rally the followers around it. Clearly, transformational leaders who can recognize their own and others’ emotions and manage them will be more adept at the second aspect of ‘rallying the troops.’ Further, a leader who is able to read employees well will be better equipped to intervene in emotionally challenging situations to provide individualized support and appropriate modeling. Thus, parallel to the emotional intelligence concept of emotional self-understanding, transformational leaders must also be in touch with their own feelings (Bass, 1998). They must be empathetic toward their followers. In particular, when followers experience negative events, transformational leaders need to understand how their followers feel. In essence, transformational leaders need to have the ability to inspire and arouse their followers emotionally. Followers, thus inspired, become committed to the leader’s vision and, ultimately, to the organization.

Clearly, the literature proposes that emotional intelligence contributes to effective leadership in general and transformational leadership in particular (Bass, 1998; Goleman, 1998; Sosik & Megerian, 1999). Further, Bass (2002) has suggested that many types of intellect (e.g.,

cognitive, social, emotional) may actually predispose leaders to develop transformational characteristics and exhibit transformational behaviors.

How leader behavior develops and emerges has been the subject of much debate (Kegan, 1982; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987; Wofford & Goodwin, 1994). Much of this research suggests an important relationship between the development and exhibition of specific leader behaviors and some experiential conceptual system based on accumulated life experiences (Avolio, 1994; Popper, Mayseless, & Castelnovo, 2000; Zacharatos, Barling, & Kelloway, 2000). This experiential system is an integral component of a relatively recent theory of personality known as Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory (CEST).

Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory

One thing that most personality psychologists agree on is the notion that everyone constructs a personal theory of reality based upon our life experiences. As human beings, we have a need to build and maintain this model of reality as a means of coping with life (Epstein, 1991). This is the point of departure for many of the various psychological disciplines. Psychoanalysts would suggest that the primary motive in human behavior is seeking pleasure and avoiding pain (Maddi, 1989). Learning theorists would agree. Allport (1961) would disagree and offer that self-esteem is the primary driver. The phenomenological camp (Rogers, 1951) would assign preeminence to maintaining the assimilation system. Epstein (1993), however, incorporated all of these functions into an eclectic theory of personality that he calls Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory (CEST). CEST is a constructionist/cognitive theory that assumes that cognitions are emotionally and experientially driven (Epstein, 1998). The following is a synopsis of Epstein's description of CEST and his concept of constructive thinking (Epstein, 1990):

The impetus behind Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory (CEST) was the question, "why do intelligent people often behave so persistently in a self-defeating manner?" Most of us can picture the individual with high IQ who has led a rather unsuccessful life. "Examples abound of people with high intellectual ability who live their lives very foolishly and of people of ordinary intelligence who live their lives very well" (Epstein & Meier, 1989, p. 332). Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory attempts to answer this question by offering an eclectic theory that contains the best of many established personality theories (Epstein, 1998).

CEST asserts there are four basic motives (Epstein, 1990). These functions are: 1) to maximize pleasure and minimize pain over the foreseeable future; 2) to maintain the model of reality; 3) to maintain relatedness to others; and 4) to enhance self-esteem. Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory explains behavior as the compromise between these four motives (Epstein, 1980).

In order to assess the status of these four motives, CEST further contends there are four basic assumptions to determine to what degree each motive is fulfilled (Epstein, 1990). Every individual, within his or her personal theory of reality, has an intuitive interpretation to the degree to which: 1) the world is benign, that is, a source of pleasure versus misery; 2) the world is meaningful (predictable, controllable, and just versus chaotic and uncontrollable); 3) people are considered to be worth relating to (a source of support and affection versus

threat and hostility); and 4) the self is perceived as worthy (competent, moral, and lovable versus incompetent, bad, and unlovable).

In addition, CEST assumes there are three conceptual systems: 1) a rational conceptual system that operates at the conscious level; 2) an experiential conceptual system that operates at the preconscious level; and 3) an associationistic conceptual system that operates primarily at the unconscious level. CEST grants the central role to the preconscious level as the experiential system automatically interprets reality and directs behavior in typical daily scenarios.

Epstein (1990) suggests that people falsely assume that their behavior is primarily directed by reason. He attributes this belief to our conscious awareness and ability to rationalize. CEST assumes that all behavior is the product of the joint input of the experiential and rational systems. The experiential system automatically operates rapidly and efficiently and supports immediate action from a holistic perspective. In contrast, the rational system is analytical and deliberative, operating primarily through language. Their relative importance is primarily determined by emotional and situational variables (Epstein, 1998). The experiential system's integral role in determining behavior has led to the construct of constructive thinking.

Constructive Thinking

Epstein (1991, p. 101) describes the logic behind constructive thinking as follows:

If emotions and, to a large extent, behavior, are determined automatically by the functioning of the experiential conceptual system, as CEST maintains, then the effectiveness with which the experiential system operates should play an important role in determining a person's success in everyday living. This raises an interesting question. Is it possible that one could obtain a measure of the overall effectiveness of the experiential system in a manner analogous to the use of intelligence tests to measure the effectiveness of the rational system? If so, what is it that would have to be measured? The answer is that one would have to sample a person's typical automatic thinking.

Epstein (1990) believes there are two dimensions within constructive thinking: content and process. Content refers to specific components of an individual's personal theory of reality (i.e., people are either generally trustworthy or not). Process refers to how the system actually operates. Epstein (1991) illustrates these two variables with the following examples. The statement, "When I fail a test, I feel that I'm a total failure and that I will never amount to anything," is a poor response to both content and process. The content is overly pessimistic and the process is one of gross overgeneralization. When the response is more like, "When I do well on a test, I feel I'm a success and that I will succeed in any endeavor," the content is positive but the process is again an extreme overgeneralization. A constructive response for both dimensions could be, "When I fail a test, I realize it's only one test, and I learn from the experience without getting upset." This statement demonstrates positive content and process. In reality though, even very intelligent people often think destructively, even recognize that they do so, but often have difficulty in changing their thought patterns.

Constructive thinking ability is often defined as the ability to solve everyday problems at a *minimal cost in stress* (Epstein, 1993). As a *construct*, this assumes that there are individual differences in automatic thinking that exist along a continuum from very constructive to very destructive. Epstein (1990, p. 174) differentiates the poles by explaining:

Good constructive thinking is defined as automatic thinking that facilitates coping with problems in living in a manner that maximizes the likelihood of an effective solution at a minimum cost in stress to oneself and distress to others. Poor constructive thinking consists of preconscious, automatic thinking that results in a relatively high cost in stress to oneself and distress to others, relative to the adequacy of the solutions achieved.

Since the intelligence of the experiential system determines an individual's place along this automatic thinking continuum, constructive thinking is often referred to as practical intelligence (Atwater, 1992).

Practical Intelligence

Practical intelligence has been investigated in many environments with various populations. Several studies have shown significant relationships between practical intellect and physical and mental health (Epstein, 1992; Epstein & Katz, 1992; Hoyer, Averbek, Heidenreich, Stangier, Pohlmann, & Rossler, 1998; Katz & Epstein, 1991; Park, Moore, Turner, & Adler, 1997; Scheuer & Epstein, 1997) and success in social relations and the workplace (Epstein, 1990, 1991; Katz & Epstein, 1991; Epstein & Meier, 1989). In a study of school administrators, those with high practical intellect were more likely to handle larger workloads (Green, 1988). Although they were more productive, these administrators also reported less stress and greater job satisfaction than did their counterparts with lesser practical intelligence (Epstein, 1990). More recently, Atwater (1992) examined practical intelligence in relation to leadership ability of aspiring naval officers. She has presented findings that at least one aspect of practical intelligence may predict performance better than intellectual or personality tests. She suggests that practical intelligence may be a more useful predictor of performance than are specific traits (Atwater, 1992). In addition, early research has indicated a relationship between transformational leader behavior and practical intelligence as well (Humphreys, 2001).

SUMMARY AND HYPOTHESES

As firms evolve during today's turbulent times, follower commitment is emerging as a central construct for optimizing organizational effectiveness (Mathieu, Bruvold, & Ritchey, 2000). In addition, Bass (1985) proposed that the effectiveness of transforming leader behavior would be enhanced during such periods of organizational change and measures of transformational leadership have been correlated with organizational commitment (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Further, recent research has indicated a relationship between transformational leadership and emotional (Sosik & Megerian, 1999) and practical (Humphreys, 2001) intelligence. Moreover, multiple intelligence proponents are calling for an examination of these concepts with outcomes such as organizational commitment (Lam & Kirby, 2002). The relationship between leadership, follower commitment, and multiple intellects, however, remains unclear.

Based upon previous research, and the conceptualization of these various constructs, we postulated that transformational leadership and contingent reward leader behavior would exhibit a positive relationship with follower organizational commitment. Such a relationship was not expected with passive transactional or laissez-faire leadership. In addition, we anticipated that leader emotional and practical intelligence would also show an affirmative relationship with follower organizational commitment and, very likely, with each other. Further, we expected that followers whose practical and/or emotional intellect matched that of their leaders would display greater organizational commitment than those dyadic relationships that were incongruent. Beyond this, we were curious as to how followers' emotional and practical intellect might influence both their individual organizational commitment levels and their perceptions of the leader/follower relationship. To investigate these expectations, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1: Transformational and contingent reward leader behavior will exhibit a significant positive relationship with average follower organizational commitment.

H2: Passive transactional and laissez-faire leader behavior will exhibit a significant negative relationship with average follower organizational commitment.

H3: Leader emotional and practical intelligence will exhibit a significant positive relationship with average follower organizational commitment.

H4: Leader emotional and practical intelligence will exhibit a significant positive relationship with transformational leader behavior.

H5: Follower emotional and practical intelligence will exhibit a significant positive relationship with individual organizational commitment.

H6: Leader/follower dyads with congruent emotional and practical intellects will exhibit significantly greater follower commitment than those with intellectual incongruence.

H7: Individual follower organizational commitment will exhibit a significant positive relationship with transformational and contingent reward leader behavior ratings.

H8: Individual follower organizational commitment will exhibit a significant negative relationship with passive transactional and laissez-faire leader behavior ratings.

H9: Followers with higher emotional and practical intelligence will rate their leaders as significantly more transformational than followers with lower emotional and practical intellect.

H10: Followers with higher organizational commitment will rate their leaders as significantly more transformational than followers with lower organizational commitment.

METHOD

Subjects and Data Collection

Data were obtained in the fourth quarter, 2001, from the employees of a small regional medical center located in the Southwestern United States. Of the approximately 500 employees available, 220 completed the requested questionnaires and placed them in the secured onsite receptacle for a 44% response rate. Of these, however, seven lacked the appropriate leader information needed to match those followers to the corresponding supervisor. Therefore, 213 surveys were used for analysis. The overall sample included 23 department heads and 190 of their direct reports. Based upon self-reported demographic data, managers ranged in age from 28 to 63 with a mean age of 50.6 years. The management sample was 40% male, 60% female, and 100% Caucasian. 75% reported having at least a bachelor's degree with mean tenure of greater than 10 years with the organization. The followers ranged in age from 19 to 64 with a mean age of 42.04 years. The subordinate sample was 15.7% male and 84.3% female, 78.6% Caucasian, 15.3% Hispanic, 3.8% African American, and less than 1% reporting to be either Native American, Asian, or mixed race. 64.1% reported having at least some college, with an additional 21.6% holding a college degree or beyond. This respondent group exhibited mean organizational tenure of greater than 5 years.

Instruments and Measures

Organizational Commitment. An individual's identification with the organization, characterized by acceptance of organizational goals, willingness to exert extra effort, and the desire to maintain membership, was measured using the 15-question Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979). The OCQ is a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Typical items were: "I really care about the fate of this organization" and "I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization." Responses were summed and averaged to obtain an individual organizational commitment score. Initially based upon a series of studies within nine organizations, the OCQ has demonstrated satisfactory reliability (Cooke, 1997) and validity (Beck & Wilson, 2000) with numerous samples. The alpha coefficient for this sample was 0.88.

Transformational, Transactional, and Laissez-faire Leader Behavior. Typical leader behaviors were measured using Bass and Avolio's (1995) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X – short form). The MLQ 5X short form is a 45-question instrument, in Likert-like format, that identifies the factors associated with transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of behaviors exhibited by their leader on a scale ranging from 0 = not at all to 4 = frequently, if not always. Typical items ranged from: "My leader treats each of us as individuals with different needs, abilities, and aspirations" (transformational/individual consideration) to "My leader provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts" (transactional/contingent reward) to "My leader fails to interfere until problems become serious" (passive management-by-exception) to "My leader is absent when needed" (laissez-faire). For each leadership scale, the corresponding items were summed and divided by the number of items to form a scale range from 0.0 to 4.0 with a magnitude estimation based ratio to each other of 4:3:2:1:0 (Bass, Cascio, & O'Connor, 1974). For the purpose of the current study, the transformational

leader behaviors were subsumed (Avolio & Bass, 1999) into one heading of transformational leadership (alpha coefficient of 0.96). In addition, the leadership dimensions of contingent reward (alpha coefficient of 0.83), passive transactional management-by-exception (alpha coefficient of 0.82), and laissez-faire behavior (alpha coefficient of 0.83), were included to complete the leader behavior continuum.

Emotional Intelligence. Carson, Carson, and Birkenmeier's (2000) Emotional Intelligence Survey was used to determine relative emotional intelligence. Although the idea of emotional intellect has been widely publicized, until recently there was no "robustly validated, non-proprietary measure of emotional intelligence in the public domain" (Carson et al., 2000, p. 33). To remedy this, Carson et al. (2000) have introduced an instrument to quantify the construct. They developed their emotional intelligence measure by initially administering 269 positively and negatively worded items to represent the five EI components, derived from Goleman's (1995) work, to 339 undergraduate and MBA students. Next, the individual items were assessed to determine which best represented the dimensions of emotional intelligence. These items were then examined using "principal-axes factor analysis with an orthogonal rotation to a varimax criterion" (Carson et al., 2000, p 36). This resulted in a five-factor solution – empathetic response, mood regulation, interpersonal skills, internal motivation, and self-awareness. Those items with the six highest loadings on these components were retained for the EI instrument—a 30-item self-report questionnaire that measures an individual's ability to comprehend the emotions of both others and self, and to use this understanding to guide thought and behavior. Respondents rated these items on a 5-point scale to indicate their degree of agreement. The results produced a summary indicator of individual emotional intellect. Typical items were: "I am keenly aware of the feelings of other people" and "I can regulate my moods so that they don't overwhelm me." The current sample produced an overall internal reliability coefficient of 0.72.

Practical Intelligence. Practical intelligence was established using the Global scale of Epstein's (1993) Constructive Thinking Inventory (CTI). The CTI is a 108-item self-report that measures automatic constructive and destructive thinking. Respondents rate these items on a 5-point scale to indicate the degree to which they believe them to be true or false (Epstein, 1993). The Global scale items were combined to provide a general measure of individual practical intellect. People with high Global scale scores are flexible thinkers who can alter their ways of thinking as appropriate for the situation presented. They can be both optimistic and pessimistic as determined by the situation. They attempt to control things when it is reasonable but they also have no difficulty in dealing with uncertainty. Typical items were: "I am the kind of person who takes action rather than just thinks or complains about a situation" and "I am tolerant of my mistakes as I feel they are a necessary part of learning." The current version of the CTI is based on factor analysis of 1500 college students. The construct validity of the Constructive Thinking Inventory (CTI) is based upon several studies, many of which assessed the relation of the CTI scales to other self-report instruments (Interested readers should see Epstein & Meier, 1989). The patterns of correlations provide support for the discriminant and convergent validity of the CTI scales, particularly the Global scale. The current sample exhibited an internal reliability coefficient of 0.84.

Results

Hypotheses one through four were tested by Pearson product moment correlation. The interrelationships among the leader variables are reported in Table 1. As expected, transformational leadership and contingent reward leader behavior were significantly correlated, as were the passive leader behaviors of management-by-exception and laissez-faire. Also, as expected, the active and passive forms of leadership exhibited a significant negative relationship. Further, the measures of emotional and practical intelligence were highly correlated as well.

TABLE 1

Correlations among Average Observed Leader Behaviors, Leader Emotional and Practical Intelligence, and Average Follower Organizational Commitment

	TF	CR	MBE	LF	EI	PI	FOC
TF	-						
CR	.891**	-					
MBE	-.523*	-.697**	-				
LF	-.641**	-.739**	.726**	-			
EI	.128	-.137	.199	.307	-		
PI	.130	-.142	.062	.117	.670**	-	
FOC	.072	.174	-.346	-.401*	-.268	-.347	-

TF	Transformational Leadership (Mean Score)
CR	Contingent Reward Leadership (Mean Score)
MBE	Management-by-Exception Leadership (Mean Score)
LF	Laissez-faire or Non-Leadership (Mean Score)
EI	Leader Emotional Intelligence
PI	Leader Practical Intelligence
FOC	Follower Organizational Commitment (Mean Score)
*	Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)
**	Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Our first hypothesis proposed that transformational and contingent reward leader behavior would be significantly correlated with follower organizational commitment. This was not supported. Although the relationship was forecast in the right direction, the positive correlation with follower commitment did not approach statistical significance. Therefore, hypothesis one was rejected.

Hypothesis two supposed that passive leadership, both management-by-exception and laissez-faire leader behavior, would be negatively related to follower commitment to the organization. This conjecture was partially supported. Although both passive forms of leadership exhibited a negative correlation with follower commitment, only laissez-faire leader behavior produced a significant relationship. This finding adds to the growing body of literature supporting the distinction between passive management-by-exception leadership and the abdication of one's

leadership responsibilities (laissez-faire) as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

Hypothesis three proposed a positive relationship between leaders' emotional and practical intelligence and their followers' organizational commitment. The data clearly offered no support for our speculation. Not only was there no significant correlation, the data indicated an inverse relationship. Thus, hypothesis three was rejected.

In our fourth hypothesis we suggested that leader emotional and practical intellect would be positively correlated with transformational leader behavior. Our supposition was not confirmed. Again, the predicted relationship was in the right direction but failed to reach significance. Therefore, hypothesis four was rejected.

Hypotheses five through ten introduced the follower perspective into the leader/follower dyad. The fifth, seventh, and eight hypotheses were tested using Pearson product moment correlation. The remaining assumptions were examined by independent samples T tests. The interrelationships of the follower variables are shown in Table 2. Once again, the correlations among the perceived leadership and thinking styles were as expected and consistent with the leader group.

TABLE 2
Correlations Among Follower Perceived Leader Behaviors, Follower Emotional and Practical Intelligence, and Individual Follower Organizational Commitment

	TFR	CRR	MBER	LFR	FEI	FPI	IFOC
TFR	-						
CRR	.858**	-					
MBER	-.513**	-.444**	-				
LFR	-.604**	-.534**	.812**	-			
FEI	.035	.055	-.046	-.014	-		
FPI	-.038	.029	-.088	-.040	.504**	-	
IFOC	.283**	.342**	-.265**	-.326**	.183**	.184**	-

- TFR Transformational Leadership Ratings of Individual Followers
- CRR Contingent Reward Leadership Ratings of Individual Followers
- MBER Management-by-Exception Leadership Ratings of Individual Followers
- LFR Laissez-faire or Non-Leadership Ratings of Individual Followers
- FEI Follower Emotional Intelligence
- FPI Follower Practical Intelligence
- IFOC Individual Follower Organizational Commitment

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Hypothesis five proposed that individual followers' emotional and practical intellect would be positively related to their degree of personal organizational commitment. The data clearly supported this presumption, as both intelligence measures demonstrated statistical significance. As such, hypothesis five was accepted.

The sixth hypothesis predicted that intellectual congruence would also impact follower commitment. We proposed that leader/follower dyads that exhibited equivalent emotional and practical thinking scores would exhibit greater follower commitment than those dyads where emotional and practical intellect was dissimilar. High and low groups were established around the means for both emotional and practical intelligence of both leaders and followers. Those followers who were compatible with their leader on each thinking dimension were assigned to a congruent emotional and/or practical thinking group. Those who were not congruent with their leader were placed in the incongruent emotional and/or practical intelligence set. Those in the congruent EI group exhibited a mean organizational commitment score of 4.92. The incongruent EI group reported mean commitment of 5.02. An independent samples T test ($t = -.616$; $sig. = .539$) confirmed the group means were not significantly different. The congruent PI group produced a mean commitment score of 4.91 while the incongruent group produced a score of 5.05. Again, the PI group means were not significantly different ($t = -.882$; $sig. = .379$). Thus, hypothesis six was rejected.

Hypotheses seven and eight were designed to examine perceived leader behavior from the individual follower viewpoint. Whereas the first two research questions tested average leader behavior and mean follower commitment of subordinates, these hypotheses looked at individual followers' organizational commitment and their individual behavioral ratings of leaders. We postulated that individual follower commitment would be positively related to transformational and contingent reward leader ratings and negatively correlated to management-by-exception and laissez-faire scores. The data supported our assumptions with each leadership-rating category reaching statistical significance in the required direction. Therefore, hypotheses seven and eight were accepted.

Hypotheses nine and ten further explored the issues raised by the dyadic nature of the leader/follower relationship. The data indicated that individuals' organizational commitment levels were related to the ratings given to their particular leaders. In the attempt to gain further clarity, we proposed (H9) that those followers with high emotional and practical intellect would rate the same leader as more transformational than those followers with lower emotional and practical intellect. The individual followers scoring above the mean on emotional and practical intelligence were assigned to the high EI and PI groups. Likewise, those falling below the mean were incorporated into the low EI and PI groups. The high EI group exhibited a mean transformational leader rating of 13.13, as compared to the low EI group rating of 12.85. An independent samples T test failed to confirm the significance of our premise ($t = .346$; $sig. = .730$). The high PI group offered a mean transformational rating of 13.03, whereas the low PI group produced an average rating of 12.92. Again, an independent samples T test ($t = .129$; $sig. = .898$) indicated no support for our position. Followers deemed good emotional and practical thinkers did not rate their leaders as significantly more transformational than their poorer emotional and practical thinking cohorts. Thus, hypothesis nine was rejected.

The same procedure was used to examine the tenth hypothesis. We suggested that highly committed followers would also rate their leaders as more transformational than followers who did not exhibit the same degree of organizational commitment. Again, the subgroups were determined around the mean and assigned to either the high commitment or low commitment group. Highly committed followers gave their leaders a transformational rating of 13.98. Those followers demonstrating lesser commitment produced a mean rating of 11.48. An independent samples T test corroborated our postulation ($t = 3.146$; $sig. = .002$), so hypothesis ten was accepted.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In general, the findings of this study did not support the notion that leader behavior and/or emotional and practical intellect influenced follower commitment to any significant degree. This is not consistent with the findings of prior studies. Although these results do add to the plethora of literature affirming the negative relationship between laissez-faire leader behavior and various follower outcomes, none of the other leader behaviors, or the leader intelligence attributes, was related to follower commitment. On the one hand, these results could simply be an aberration associated with this particular sample. On the other, the current study does provide additional support to the individual leadership ideas advanced by Dansereau and Yammarino (1998). It may well be that this dyadic level is the appropriate level of analysis when investigating leader/follower relationships instead of the more normative practice of focusing on the average leadership style presented to a follower group. At the very least, these findings affirm the importance of including the follower perspective in future studies that examine the leader/follower relationship.

More important, though, is the finding that individual followers' emotional and practical intellect was significantly correlated to their level of commitment to the organization. Although further research will be necessary before definitive inferences can be drawn, it appears these measures might be incorporated into a predictive instrument to determine potential employee commitment to the organization. The ability to forecast potential employee commitment could certainly have profound implications. Although human resources managers might welcome such an instrument for employee selection, development, and promotion, such ability could also present considerable legal ramifications. When using a test to make employment decisions, including advancement and retention, organizations must take steps to ensure that use of the test does not result in discriminatory behavior. The authors doubt, at present, that such an instrument would be deemed job related and many firms would likely find it difficult to establish how such an assessment would serve the organization's legitimate business interest, as employment type tests must measure the person for the job and not the person in abstract (Griggs vs. Duke Power Co., 1971). Clearly, for this type of instrument to be developed for organizational use, professional validation studies would be necessary.

Another area of interest is the finding that committed employees rated their leaders as more transformational than followers of lesser commitment. It is certainly possible that these leaders developed significantly different relationships with individual followers and, therefore, exhibited different leader behaviors toward them. Of course, it could also be that followers who are highly committed to the organization are simply more satisfied with the firm and

this offers a sort of halo effect that envelope their superior. Clearly, further exploration into this area is required.

We see the primary area of future research, however, to be the interrelationship between followers' emotional and practical intellect, their commitment to the organization, and how they perceive and rate their leader's typical behavior. Although purely speculation at this point, we believe it probable that individual followers' emotional and practical intelligence impacts the degree to which they will be committed to the firm. In turn, those followers who exhibit this enhanced level of commitment will recognize their leaders as more effective and rate them as more transformational. Although we propose such a causal link, the current study cannot confirm our conjecture. A larger sample and more sophisticated design (i.e., path analysis, structural equation modeling) are obviously needed to adequately assess these variables for causation.

CONCLUSION

In the current environment, where flattened organizations and empowered employees are needed for enhanced performance, follower commitment is simply a business imperative (Dessler, 1993). The findings of this exploratory study indicate there is a relationship between employees' emotional and practical intelligence abilities and their level of commitment to their organization. Further, those followers who described themselves as highly committed tended to view their leaders as more effective and inspirational (transformational). If the causal links between these variables can be confirmed, firms could develop instruments to predict the degree of organizational commitment potential of job applicants. Although many would welcome this ability, there could be considerable consequences. Clearly, many questions are yet to be answered.

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