AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND ABSENTEEISM AT A PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTION IN THE WESTERN CAPE

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Mini – thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Commercii in the Department of Industrial Psychology, Faculty of Economic and Management Science, University of the Western Cape.

Supervisor: Mr. Karl Heslop

NOVEMBER 2006
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that "An investigation into the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst employees at a public health institution in the Western Cape" is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other institution of higher learning, and that all references have, to the best of my knowledge been indicated and acknowledged as complete references. It is being submitted for the degree of Magister Commercii at the University of the Western Cape.

Full Name: Misha Morar

Date: 15 November 2006

Signed: ………………………
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

CONTENT

1.1 Introduction 1
1.2 Motivation for the study 4
1.3 Research questions 8
1.4 Research objectives 10
1.5 Research hypotheses 12
1.6 Delimitations of the study 15
1.7 Summary of the chapter 15
1.8 Overview of the study 16

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction 18

2.2 Definition of Organizational Commitment 20
2.2.1 Affective Commitment
2.2.2 Continuance Commitment
2.2.3 Normative Commitment

2.3 The antecedents of organizational commitment

2.3.1 Personal Determinants
  2.3.1.1 Age
  2.3.1.2 Tenure
  2.3.1.3 Educational Level
  2.3.1.4 Gender
  2.3.1.5 Marital Status
  2.3.1.6 Personality
  2.3.1.7 Race

2.3.2 Role – Related Determinants
  2.3.2.1 Organizational dependability
  2.3.2.2 Role conflict
  2.3.2.3 Role ambiguity
  2.3.2.4 Job scope
  2.3.2.5 Job level
  2.3.2.6 Job security
  2.3.2.7 Promotion opportunities
  2.3.2.8 Pay
  2.3.2.9 Empowerment
2.3.3 Work Experience Determinants

2.3.3.1 Leadership style

2.3.3.2 Co–workers

2.3.3.3 Social involvement

2.3.3.4 Rewards

2.3.3.5 Personal importance to the organization

2.3.3.6 Fulfillment of expectations

2.4 The consequences of organizational commitment

2.4.1 Job performance

2.4.2 Tardiness

2.4.3 Tenure

2.4.4 Turnover

2.4.5 Absenteeism

2.5 Absenteeism

2.5.1 Definition of Absenteeism

2.5.2 Causes of Absenteeism

Employee–Related Causes

2.5.2.1 Physical condition

2.5.2.2 Lifestyle characteristics

2.5.2.3 Family responsibilities

2.5.2.4 Work, ethic, commitment, responsibility

2.5.2.5 Accident prone
2.5.3  Job – Related Causes

2.5.3.1 Nature of the job
2.5.3.2 Internal relationships
2.5.3.3 Working conditions
2.5.3.4 Health and safety hazards

2.6  Impact of biographical variables on absenteeism

2.6.1 Age
2.6.2 Tenure
2.6.3 Educational level
2.6.4 Gender
2.6.5 Marital status
2.6.6 Race
2.6.7 Job level
2.6.8 Pay

2.7  Strategies to manage absenteeism

2.7.1 Record keeping
2.7.2 Absence control policies
2.7.3 Return to work interview
2.7.4 Employee incentive programs
2.7.5 Employee assistance programs
2.8 Consequences of Absenteeism

2.8.1 Positive consequences for individuals

2.8.2 Negative consequences for individuals

2.8.3 Positive consequences for organizations

2.8.4 Negative consequences for organizations

2.9 The relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism

2.10 Summary of the chapter

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Research design

3.2.1 Population

3.2.2 Sample

3.2.3 Procedure

3.2.4 Biographical Questionnaire

3.2.5 Measuring Instrument

3.2.5.1 *Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)*
3.2.5.1.1 Nature and Composition of the OCQ 89
3.2.5.1.2 Reliability of the OCQ 90
3.2.5.1.3 Validity of the OCQ 91
3.2.5.1.4 Rationale for inclusion of the OCQ 93

3.2.6 Measure of Absence 94

3.2.7 Statistical Techniques 95
   3.2.7.1 Descriptive Statistics 95
      3.2.7.1.2 Frequencies 95
      3.2.7.1.3 Percentages 96
      3.2.7.1.4 Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion 96

   3.2.7.2 Inferential Statistics 97
      3.2.7.2.1 The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient 97
      3.2.7.2.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) 98
      3.2.7.2.3 Multiple Regression Analysis 99
      3.2.7.2.4 Scheffe's Multiple Comparison Method 100

3.3 Summary of the chapter 100
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Descriptive statistics
   4.2.1 Biographical information
   4.2.2 Absenteeism
   4.2.3 Results of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

4.3 Inferential statistics

4.4 Psychometric properties of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)
   4.4.1 Reliability
   4.4.2 Factor analysis

4.5 Summary of the chapter
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction 136

5.2 Discussion 136

5.2.1 Descriptive statistics for the dimensions of
organizational commitment 136

5.2.2 Affective commitment 137

5.2.3 Normative commitment 137

5.2.4 Continuance commitment 137

5.3 Organizational commitment 138

5.4 The relationship between organizational
commitment and absenteeism 138

5.5 Organizational commitment and biographical
variables 140

5.6 Absenteeism and biographical variables 140

5.7 Difference in organizational commitment based
on biographical variables 141
5.7.1 Gender 142
5.7.2 Nature of employment 143
5.7.3 Job level 144
5.7.4 Race 144
5.7.5 Marital status 146
5.7.6 Education 147
5.7.7 Age 151
5.7.8 Tenure 153

5.8 Differences in absenteeism based on biographical variables 156
5.8.1 Gender 157
5.8.2 Age 158
5.8.3 Tenure 159
5.8.4 Marital status 159
5.8.5 Number of dependants 160
5.8.6 Job level 160

5.9 Hypothesis 7 161

5.10 Hypothesis 8 164

5.11 Conclusions and recommendations 167
5.12 Managerial implications

Reference list

Appendices:
Appendix A  Letter of request to complete the questionnaires
Appendix B  Biographical Questionnaire
Appendix C  Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)
Appendix D  Absenteeism Questionnaire
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE NO.</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1:</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of absenteeism over the period 2003, 2004 and 2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.1:</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive statistics for the dimensions of organizational commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.2:</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercorrelations between commitment scales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.3:</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation between absenteeism and organizational commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.4:</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation between absenteeism and biographical variables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.5:</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation between organizational commitment and biographical variables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.6:</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANOVA – Biographical data and absenteeism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.7: ANOVA – Biographical data and organizational commitment

Table 4.8: Multiple Regression: Biographical variables and absenteeism

Table 4.9: Multiple Regression: Biographical variables and organizational commitment

Table 4.10: Reliability of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

Table 4.11: Factor analysis of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE NO.</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.1: The three component model of organizational commitment</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.2: Heuristic model of practices to enhance Organizational commitment and reduce absenteeism</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.1: Occupational classification</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.2: Racial classification</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.3: Gender distribution</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.4: Educational level</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.5: Length of service</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.6: Age distribution</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.7: Marital status</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.8: Income 110

Figure 4.9: Job status 111

Figure 4.10: Number of days absent 112

Figure 4.11: Number of times absent 113

Figure 5.1: Heuristic model of practices to enhance organizational commitment and reduce absenteeism 174
ABSTRACT

The relationship between organizational commitment among public health employees within South Africa is becoming a big concern as highlighted in media and studies. Organizational commitment is stated to be an increasingly popular research subject (Young, Worchel & Woehr, 1998). Mathieu and Zajac (1990) cited in Meyer and Allen (1997) maintains that reduced organizational commitment may contribute to greater absenteeism and turnover. Meyer and Allen's (1997) research corroborates that of Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) in which it was found that the higher an employee's organizational commitment, the lower is the employee's rate of voluntary absence. Tyler (1997) contends that a lack of organizational commitment consequently leads to absenteeism, lost productivity, unnecessary leave pay and overtime pay. In terms of absenteeism, with reference to sick leave absence, the Department of Health: Western Cape appears bleak.

As the ultimate goal in the public health sector is service delivery and the vision of health care 2010 "equal access to quality care", it is vital that all employees perform accordingly and maintain their commitment to the institution, hence, contributing to the vision and mission of providing health care.

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst different occupational classes within a health sector environment in the Western Cape region. For the purpose of the study a quantitative, non-probability convenience sampling method was used to
assess the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism. The sample group (N = 120) consisted of permanent and contract male and female public health employees, extending across various occupational classes inter alia: Director, Pharmacist, Pharmacist Assistant, Auxiliary Service Officer, Administrative Clerk, Administrative Officer and State Accountant. A biographical questionnaire, organizational commitment questionnaire and an absenteeism questionnaire were administered to gather data.

Statistical analyses revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism. Several biographical factors were significant in explaining the variance in both organizational commitment and absenteeism. While the results contribute to the knowledge base concerning these variables postulated to play a pivotal role in industrial and organizational psychology, these results offer tenuous explanations for the obtained findings. Based on methodological shortcomings alluded to in the research, a more rigorous methodological design, based on the method of triangulation could possibly have added meaningful qualitative information to corroborate research findings. These recommendations as well as the implications for absenteeism and organizational commitment from both an individual and organizational perspective are highlighted in a heuristic model.
Key words:

Organizational commitment
Absenteeism
Affective commitment
Continuance commitment
Normative commitment
Public health institution
Sick leave
Sick absence rate
Sick frequency rate
Gross absence rate
CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment has remained a topic of interest ever since it was introduced in the early 1950s to the field of organizational behaviour (Aryee & Heng, 1990; Baruch, 1998; Goulet & Frank, 2002; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, 1998). According to Mowday (1998), the belief is that organizational commitment if properly managed, can lead to beneficial consequences such as organizational effectiveness, improved performance, reduced turnover and reduced absenteeism.

Similarly, Yousef (1998) contends that organizational commitment is inversely related to withdrawal behaviours such as, absenteeism, tardiness and turnover. Buitendach and De Witte (2005) add that organizational commitment is linked to increased productivity and organizational effectiveness. In addition, this is postulated to have an influence on whether employees will have a favourable inclination to remain with the organization and to perform at above average levels.

According to Buitendach and De Witte (2005), South African companies are being exposed more than ever to the effects of the world economy, where tremendous emphasis is placed on service delivery and to become increasingly competitive. With reference to the South African public sector, the situation is not
dissimilar where prominence is placed on service excellence. However, public sector employees are faced with a multitude of factors that impact on effective and efficient service delivery.

In recent years the Western Cape Department of Health has been experiencing an exodus of professional employees in the sector. The exodus of employees in the health sector is attributed to a lack of resources which may have had an adverse impact on organizational commitment. Another factor that contributes to the exodus of staff is that more lucrative salary packages are being offered as incentives by competitors, both local and international. Hence, the additional burden placed on the remaining health workers ultimately impedes on service delivery (Herman, 2005).

Cullinan (2005) concurs that statistics indicated that by 2001 more than 23 000 South African-born health employees were working abroad in countries such as Britain, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The researcher states that “the Gauteng and Western Cape provinces, the two better resourced provinces, have seen substantial declines in public sector personnel, as has Kwazulu-Natal” (p. 11). Not only are poor salaries blamed for the dilemma within the public sector, but other factors such as the work environment and poor management are shown to contribute towards and exacerbate poor organizational commitment (Cullinan, 2005).
In another study conducted by Young, Worchel and Woehr (1998) among public service employees, the researchers found that leadership satisfaction, job satisfaction, extrinsic exchange, intrinsic exchange, extrinsic rewards and intrinsic rewards to be positively and significantly related to organizational commitment.

Beck and Wilson (2001) state that notwithstanding the fact that numerous research studies have been conducted in the domain of organizational commitment, there is still no clear understanding on how the factors claimed to be associated with it impacts on organizational commitment.

Another factor impacting on effective and efficient service delivery in the public sector is absenteeism. Research indicates that attitudinal factors such as job satisfaction and the country's economical state contribute to absenteeism in the workplace (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2002).

Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono and Werner (2004) contend that absenteeism is costly and has a disruptive effect on business operations resulting in lost productivity. Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2003) maintain that absenteeism is costing South Africa millions of rands per annum in decreased efficiency and increased benefit payments.

With regards to absenteeism, with specific reference to sick leave absence, the situation in the Department of Health: Western Cape appears bleak. Statistics disseminated from the Department's annual report (2004/2005) indicates that the
average number of days of sick leave taken per employee is nine (9) days per employee, resulting in an estimated salary cost of R43 399 000.

In this regard a report by Moodley (2005) indicated that the South African economy is losing an estimated R12 billion a year due to absenteeism. In another report by SAPA – IPS (2006) reveals that greater pressure on health facilities imposes a heavier financial burden on South Africa's public health care sector. The report further indicates that health workers are experiencing an increase in stress levels due to the increased workload. This is likely to prompt higher levels of absenteeism, low staff commitment and large numbers of health care workers quitting their jobs.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The public sector is perceived as inherently inefficient and ineffective. The perception is not only held by the public in general, but also by those few, who had benefited from and experienced efficient service delivery (Sekoto, 1999).

Furthermore, the shortage of health workers across the globe contributes to the lack of service delivery. A study conducted by the World Health Organization's Global Health Report indicates that a serious shortage of health workers in fifty seven (57) countries exists, thirty six (36) of them in Sub – Saharan Africa, which is impairing the provisions of essential, life – saving treatment. The situation can be attributed to a lack of resources, competitive salaries and poor working
conditions. South Africa however, is not one of the worst affected countries, but staff shortages in the health sector are prevalent with many medical professionals leaving the country in search of better opportunities and remuneration overseas. This places an extra burden on the remaining staff and therefore impacts on their organizational commitment and stress and satisfaction levels (Green, 2006).

Bishay (1996) contends that if employees are satisfied with their working conditions they will demonstrate better commitment. On the other hand, employees with negative attitudes who are dissatisfied will resort to leaving the organization.

Exacerbating the problem in the health sector is the fact that the health care delivery system in South Africa is characterized by a two tier system with a history of disparity between the two sectors. The private sector is primarily funded by medical aid schemes which covers up to 20% of the population and is responsible for 80% of the total expenditure on drugs. The public sector caters for 80% of the total population and 20% of total expenditure and 60 – 70% of total volumes of drugs. Disparities and deficiencies result in a lack of equity in access to essential drugs, with a consequent impact on the quality of health care received (Futter, 1998).

In relation to the aforementioned, the vision, mission and core values of the Department of Health: Western Cape, remains committed to its vision of continuously providing better care to the citizens in order for them to experience
better health all day and everyday. The vision of Healthcare 2010 – "Equal access to quality care" has become increasingly significant and considerations are being given to making this the vision statement for the Department as a whole. This vision statement is more consistent with the Department's central goals, namely, accessibility, appropriateness, affordability, equity, effectiveness and efficiency. The Department's mission is to improve the health of all people in the Western Cape and beyond, by ensuring the provision of a balanced health care system in partnership with stakeholders within the context of optimal socio-economic development (Annual Report, 2004/2005: Department of Health-Western Cape, p. 3).

Notwithstanding the vision, mission and core values of the Department of Health: Western Cape, Vaida (2005) reports that a study conducted by occupational care South Africa, in conjunction with the University of South Africa's Department of Quantitative Management revealed that on average 6.3 days per employee per annum are lost to unapproved absences from work. The study further found that absenteeism impacts on the sustainability of South African companies and ultimately impacts on service delivery.

It needs to be mentioned that the institution targeted for this research resides under the Department of Health in the Western Cape region. The core business objective of the institution is purchasing, warehousing and distribution of medical consumables, such as surgical, pharmaceutical and non – pharmaceutical supplies
to 881 demanders within the Western Cape region. It also manages a pharmaceutical pre-packing unit and a pharmaceutical quality control laboratory. Since 2001 the demanders increased by 57% from 483 – 881 demanders. The staff compliment remained basically the same and did not increase by the same margin. However, the institution has been experiencing a problem in terms of absenteeism over the past three years (Annual Report (2004/2005: Department of Health – Western Cape).

Figure 1 illustrates the increase in the rate of absenteeism over the period 2003, 2004 and 2005.

Table 1: Rate of absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of days absent</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>150 234,58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>205 109,64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1014</td>
<td>283 587,23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>638 931,45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Taking cognizance of the aforementioned statistics and the vision of health care 2010 “equal access to quality care” of the Department of Health: Western Cape,
warrants support for the research to be conducted amongst employees at the public health institution in the Western Cape.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Is there a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of the organizational commitment questionnaire amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape?

- Is there a significant relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape?

- Is there a significant relationship between organizational commitment and biographical variables (namely, age, race, gender, marital status, educational level, tenure, monthly income, occupational class and job status) amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape?

- Is there a significant relationship between absenteeism biographical variables (namely, age, race, gender, marital status, educational level, tenure, monthly income, occupational class and job status) amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape?
Are there differences in organizational commitment based on biographical variables (namely, age, race, gender, marital status, educational level, tenure, monthly income, occupational class and job status) amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape?

Are there differences in absenteeism based on biographical variables (namely, age, race, gender, marital status, educational level, tenure, monthly income, occupational class and job status) amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape?

Will the biographical variables of age, race, gender, marital status, educational level, tenure, monthly income, occupational class and job status explain the variance in organizational commitment amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape?

Will the biographical variables of age, race, gender, marital status, educational level, tenure, monthly income, occupational class and job status explain the variance in absenteeism amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape?
1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the above research questions stated, the research objectives of this study can be translated as follows:

- To determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between the dimensions of the organizational commitment questionnaire amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

- To determine whether a significant relationship exists between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

- To determine whether a significant relationship exists between organizational commitment and the biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

- To determine whether a significant relationship exists between absenteeism and the biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

- To determine whether a significant difference exist in organizational commitment based on the biographical variables amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.
To determine whether a significant difference exists in absenteeism based on the biographical variables amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

To determine whether the biographical variables statistically significantly explain the variance in organizational commitment amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

To determine whether the biographical variables statistically significantly explain the variance in absenteeism amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.
1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁)

There is a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of the organizational commitment questionnaire amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

Hypothesis 2

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁)

There will be a significant relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

Hypothesis 3

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁)

There will be a significant relationship between organizational commitment and biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.
Hypothesis 4

Alternative Hypothesis (H₄)

There will be a significant relationship between absenteeism and biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

Hypothesis 5

Alternative Hypothesis (H₅)

There will be a significant difference in organizational commitment based on biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape based on their biographical characteristics.

Hypothesis 6

Alternative Hypothesis (H₆)

There will be a significant difference in absenteeism based on biographical variables amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.
Hypothesis 7

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁)

The biographical variables will statistically significantly explain the variance in organizational commitment amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

Hypothesis 8

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁)

The biographical variables will statistically significantly explain the variance in absenteeism amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.
1.6 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The sample consists of public health employees within the Health Department in the Western Cape. As the sample consists of employees in only one public health institution in the Western Cape, the results of the study may not be generalized as the study cannot be inferred to other populations. Therefore the study will lack external validity.

Another factor that could impact on the generalizability of the study is the fact that only occupational classes of Director, Pharmacist, Pharmacist assistant, Auxiliary service officer, Administrative clerk, Administrative officer and State accountant are being used in this study. Hence, the results cannot be compared to other similar occupational categories and therefore the external validity of the study would be further compromised.

1.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter an overview is provided with specific reference to the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism. The rationale, the research questions, the research objectives and research hypotheses were also highlighted. The chapter concludes with the delimitations of the study. An overview of each chapter is provided below.
1.8 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 introduces the information on the independent variable, organizational commitment and on the independent variable, absenteeism. The theoretical framework and significance of this research study on organizational commitment and absenteeism within the public health sector in the Western Cape was discussed.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed literature review of organizational commitment and absenteeism. Definitions of organizational commitment and absenteeism are provided. The relationship between organizational commitment and biographical variables are explored. Thereafter the chapter concludes with an in – depth discussion pertaining to the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism.

Chapter 3 follows with a detailed outline of the research methodology used to investigate the research problem. The research design, the sample method, the manner in which the data was gathered and the statistical techniques that were used to test the research hypotheses will be covered in the chapter. The rationale for using the relevant measuring instruments in this study, namely, a biographical questionnaire, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) as well as an Absenteeism Questionnaire is explained. The statistical techniques that are used, namely, the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient, Multiple Regression Analysis,
Scheffé's Multiple Comparison Method and Factor Analysis are discussed and explained.

Chapter 4 focuses on a detailed explanation on the findings of the study and the testing of the hypotheses proposed for this study.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the results obtained in the study. Conclusions are drawn based on the obtained results as well as some practical implications of the research findings are highlighted. Finally, the chapter concludes with recommendations and suggestions that may add value for future research.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Prolific research in the area of organizational commitment has been conducted over the past few decades (Blau & Boal, 1987; Dahlke, 1996; Gautam, van Dick, Wagner, Upadhyay & Davis, 2004; Gruber, 1990; Marchiori & Henkin, 2004; Mir, Mir & Mosca, 2002; Peachey, 2002; Sirkorsa – Simmons, 2005; Steinhaus, 1993). According to Camilleri (2002), organizational commitment has received special attention and has grown in the literature of industrial, organizational psychology and organizational behaviour.

Young et al. (1998) point out that organizational commitment has become an increasingly popular research subject. The authors state the principal reasons as to why organizational commitment is so extensively researched is that it relates significantly to other important employee behaviours such as job performance and turnover.

Hence, the Volcker Commission (1989) suggests that organizational commitment is a key to increasing public service motivation and recommends more empirical studies of employee commitment. Such studies are warranted for helping understand the motivational base of public sector employees.
Mathieu and Zajac (1990) cited in Meyer and Allen (1997) argues that reduced organizational commitment may contribute to greater absenteeism and turnover. Meyer and Allen’s (1997) research corroborates that of Mathieu and Zajac’s (1990) in which it was found that the higher an employee's organizational commitment, the lower is the employee's rate of voluntary absence.

In support, Tyler (1997) contends that a lack of organizational commitment consequently leads to absenteeism, lost productivity, unnecessary sick leave pay and overtime pay. A study conducted by Goulet and Frank (2002) across three sectors, found that the public sector indicated the lowest level of organizational commitment.

Considering the aforementioned and in the light of the vision of Health care 2010 “Equal access to quality care” of the Department of Health: Western Cape, it is imperative that employees maintain acceptable organizational commitment and performance levels. Boggie (2005) postulates that in order to provide service excellence, the quality of employees is critical to ensure success. It is for this reason that commitment processes be explored with the aim of gaining a better understanding thereof.
2.2 Definition of Organizational Commitment

There are a plethora of definitions of organizational commitment, some of which are similar in nature. Numerous authors (Buchanan, 1974; Hrebinjak & Alutto, 1972; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Wiener, 1982) state that organizational commitment is becoming synonymous with Mowday, Porter and Steers’s (1982) definition. Mowday et al. (1982) defines organizational commitment as a relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. The authors emphasize that strong organizational commitment is characterized by a:

- Belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values;
- Willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and
- Desire to maintain membership in the organization.

Aven (1988) and Robbins (1998) contend that committed employees are more likely to engage in the following four behaviours more often and more consistently than non – committed employees: (1) committed employees have higher levels of participation; (2) committed employees remain with the organization for longer periods and make more contributions for achieving organizational objectives; (3) committed employees are more highly involved in their jobs, and (4) committed employees exert considerably more effort on behalf of the organization. There is a general agreement that organizational commitment by employees is a highly desirable psychological state.
Meyer et al. (1993) support this view by defining organizational commitment as a psychological state that is representative of an employee's relationship with the organization. Similarly, Moorhead and Griffen (1992) and Young et al. (1998) state that employees have a greater sense of dedication and interest in the effectiveness of the organization.

According to Riggio (2002), organizational commitment involves feelings about the work situation and as it deals specifically with workers attitudes about the organization it can be directly linked to employee attendance variables such as absenteeism and turnover. Hence, the author defines organizational commitment as the workers attitudes about the entire work organization.

Meyer, Allen and Gellatly (1990) define organizational commitment as the employee's feelings of obligation to stay with the organization: feelings resulting from the internalization of normative pressures exerted on an individual prior to entry or following entry.

Becker, Randall and Reigel (1995) argue that congruency between employee goals and values and organizational aims make the employee feel obligated to his or her organization. Wiener (1982) defines organizational commitment as the totality of internalized normative pressures to act in a way which meets organizational goals and interest. Furthermore, Meyer and Allen (1991) state that organizational commitment can take three distinct forms, namely, affective
commitment, continuance and normative commitment. Their three–component model of organizational commitment is discussed extensively below.

Figure 2.1: Organizational Commitment

Adapted from Mowday et al. (1982)

2.2.1 Affective Commitment

Allen and Meyer (1990) define affective commitment as the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement with the organization. Defined this way, affective commitment involves three aspects: (a) the formation of an emotional attachment to an organization, (b) identification with and (c) the desire to maintain organizational membership. Meyer and Allen (1991) argue that an
individual will develop emotional attachment to an organization when he or she identifies with the goals of the organization and is willing to assist the organization in achieving the goals. The authors go on to say that identification with an organization occurs when the employees' own values are congruent with that of the organization and the employee is able to internalize the values and goals of the organization.

Heery and Noon (2001) define affective commitment when an employee stays with a particular organization because he or she shares its values and objectives and feels a sense of loyalty.

According to Jaros, Jermier, Koehler and Sincich (1993), affective commitment is the most widely discussed form of psychological attachment to an organization. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) state that affective commitment has been found to correlate with a range of outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, job performance and organizational citizenship behaviour.

### 2.2.2 Continuance Commitment

Meyer and Allen (1991) refer to continuance commitment as an employee's awareness that costs are associated with leaving the organization. This then forms the employee's link to the organization as well as his or her choice to remain within the organization in an effort to retain the benefits. Meyer and Allen (1991)
summarized these two actions and events in terms of two sets of antecedent variables, namely, investment and alternatives.

Allen and Meyer (1990) further describe continuance commitment as a psychological attachment to an employing organization that shows the employees perception of the loss he or she would encounter if they were to leave the organization. This dimension of organizational commitment is based on Becker's (1960) side bet theory. The theory proposes that organizational commitment is built on the principle of consistent behaviour. According to the theory, commitments come into being when a person, by making a side bet, links extraneous interests with a consistent line of activity. In this regard side bets are defined as anything the employee would view as valuable or that he or she has made as an investment, such as time, effort, money, pension plans, work relationships, and organizational specific skills. Unlike affective commitment, which involves emotional attachment, continuance commitment affects a calculation of the risks of learning versus the benefit of remaining with the organization.

Similarly, Heery and Noon (2001) defines continuance commitment as when an employee remains with a particular organization either because there are costs to leaving that outweigh the benefits of taking a new job in a different organization, or because there is a lack of alternative employment opportunities.
2.2.3 Normative Commitment

The third dimension of organizational commitment, normative commitment, refers to an employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization, therefore employees with strong normative commitment will remain with an organization through their belief that it is the right and moral thing to do (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Wiener, 1982).

However, Wiener (1982) postulates that normative commitment to the organization develops through a collection of pressures an individual feel during their early socialization stage from family and culture as well as during their socialization as newcomers to the organization.

Normative commitment develops on the basis of a particular investment which the organization makes in the employee – specifically, investments that seem difficult for employees to reciprocate (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Scholl, 1981).

Randall and Cote (1990) support this view by referring to normative commitment as a moral obligation which the employee develops after the organization has invested in him or her. They argue that when an employee starts to feel that the organization has spent either too much time or money developing and training him or her, the employee may then feel obligated to stay with the organization.
Conversely, Meyer and Allen (1997) define and measure normative commitment in terms of values. The authors contend that congruence between an individual's values and that of the organization's values contribute to organizational commitment.

The multidimensionality of organizational commitment reflects its highly complex nature. Affective, continuance, and normative commitment are best viewed as disguisable components, rather than types of commitment; that is, employees can experience each of these psychological states to varying degrees. Some employees, for example, may feel both a strong need and a strong obligation to remain, but no desire to do so; others may feel neither a need nor obligation but a strong desire, and so forth. The 'total' or 'sum' of a person's commitment to the organization, therefore, reflects each of these separable psychological states. Meyer and Allen (1997) provide a graphical illustration of the antecedents, processes leading to the development of commitment as well as their concomitant consequences (cf Figure 2.2).
Figure 2.2: A multidimensional model of organizational commitment, its antecedents, and its consequences (Meyer & Allen, 1997, p. 106)
2.3 THE ANTECEDENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

According to Mowday et al. (1982), the factors affecting organizational commitment can be divided into three (3) main areas, namely, personal determinants, role – related determinants and work – experience determinants.

2.3.1 Personal Determinants

Studies have examined the effects of various personal characteristics on organizational commitment. Personal characteristics studied have included age, tenure, educational level, gender, marital status, various personality factors and race (Mowday et al., 1982).

2.3.1.1 Age

Various authors have found that age is positively related to an employee's level of organizational commitment (Lok & Crawford, 2001; Mowday et al., 1982; Rowden, 2000).

A study conducted by Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) found that older and longer tenured employees would tend to cognitively justify their remaining with the organization by reporting higher levels of satisfaction and commitment. Similarly, studies conducted by (Cramer, 1993; Lok & Crawford, 1999; Loscocco, 1990; Luthans, 1992; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday et al., 1982; Sekaran, 2000)
revealed that a significant relationship between organizational commitment and age exist. The aforementioned studies consistently reflected that older employees are generally more committed to the organization in comparison to younger employees.

Kalderberg, Becker and Zvonkovic (1995) suggest that younger employees are less committed than older employees, mainly due to the fact that as age increases, the employee's opportunities for alternate employment decrease and thus making their current job more attractive. Furthermore, the authors contend that older employees may have more commitment to the organization because they have a stronger investment and longer history with the organization than younger employees. This view is supported by Parasumman and Nachman (1995) cited in Rowden (2000). The authors suggest that people become more committed when they realize that it may cost those more to leave than to stay with the organization.

There have however, been researchers who have not been able to find a significant relationship between organizational commitment and age. A study conducted by Shin and Reyes (1991) cited in Lowe and Barnes (2002) amongst catholic school administrators in 162 public and private schools respectively, did not find a significant correlation between organizational commitment and age at either the .01 or the .05 confidence interval level. Colbert and Kwon (2000) could also not find a significant relationship between organizational commitment and age. Their study targeted 497 college and university internal auditors.
Various authors reached the conclusion that overall, age have a consistent, although moderate correlation with organizational commitment (Brief & Aldag, 1980; Dornstein & Matalon, 1989; Kushman, 1992; Morrow & Wirth, 1989).

2.3.1.2 Tenure

According to Oshagbemi (2003), tenure refers to the amount of years an employee has spent working in an organization.

Numerous researches have found that there is a positive correlation between organizational commitment and tenure (Kushman, 1992; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Meyer and Allen, 1997; Sheldon, 1971). A study conducted by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found that organizational commitment was positively related to tenure. The authors further assert that the years spent in the organization increases the employee's psychological attachment to the organization as well as internalization of norms.

Gerhart (1990) also found a positive relationship between organizational commitment and tenure. Similarly, Kushman (1992) conducted a study on urban elementary and middle school teachers and found that a positive relationship between organizational commitment and tenure exists. According to Sekaran (2000), there is a consensus that tenure is an element of status and prestige, and that it causes a greater commitment and loyalty to the employing organization.
In another study, Hawkins (1998) found a statistically significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and tenure amongst high school principals. Meyer and Allen (1997) suggest the results of a positive relationship between organizational commitment and tenure might be a simple reflection of the fact that uncommitted employees leave an organization and only those with a high commitment remain.

There have, however, been researchers that have reported no significant correlations exist between organizational commitment and tenure (Caldwell, Chatman, O'Reilly, 1990; Cohen & Lowenberg, 1990; Ferris & Aranya, 1983; Meyer, Paunonen, Gallatry, Goffin, Jackson, 1989).

Theses findings are supported by Liou and Nyhan (1994), who have found a negative relationship between organizational commitment and tenure. Furthermore, this view is supported by Kinnear and Sutherland's (2000) study who did not find a significant relationship between organizational commitment and tenure. These findings are also supported by (Cramer, 1993; Kinnear, 1999; Voster, 1992) who have failed to find support for the relationship between organizational commitment and tenure.

It is evident from the above – mentioned research that both a positive and a negative relationship exist between organizational commitment and tenure and further research in understanding the relationship between organizational commitment and tenure is suggested.
2.3.1.3 Educational Level

In contrast to age and tenure, many researchers have found education to be inversely related to organizational commitment (Angle & Perry, 1981; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Morris & Steers, 1980; Mowday et al., 1982). In addition Meyer and Allen (1997) also posit that educational level is inconsistently or inversely related to an employee's level of commitment.

Researchers have suggested the negative relationship between organizational commitment and education could be due to the fact that the higher educated employees may tend to be more cosmopolitan and may have high expectations than the organization is able to meet or may be more committed to their profession that is to the organization and therefore may have higher expectations or greater number of alternative work opportunities (Grau, Chandler, Burton & Kolditz, 1991; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Steers (1977) cited in Lowe and Barnes (2002) found that the level of education was negatively related organizational commitment. In a meta – analysis study conducted by Mathieu and Zajac (1990), the results yielded that the relationship was significantly stronger for attitudinal commitment than for calculative commitment. The authors attribute this negative relationship to the greater number of job options that may be available to employees with higher levels of education.
In a study conducted by Sommer, Bae and Luthans (1996) cited in Lok and Crawford (2004) no significant relationship was found between organizational commitment and educational level. Similarly, in a study conducted by Awamleh (1996) amongst civil service managers in Jordan, no significant relationship between organizational commitment and educational level was found.

However, Voster (1992) found that a positive relationship between organizational commitment and educational qualifications exist and that educational level may be a predictor of commitment, mostly for working women. Similarly Lowe and Barnes (2002) found that a positive relationship between organizational commitment and educational level exist.

Camilleri (2002) states that the lower the education standard the higher the level of organizational commitment. The author attributes the aforementioned to the fact that lower educated employees have less job options and opportunities than the more educated employees. Thus, they tend to be more committed to the organization. In contrast Camilleri (2002) contended that the more educated employees tend to have higher expectations than the organization may be able to provide. Hence, they would tend to be less committed and therefore tend to change from one organization to another in order to advance at a faster pace.

It is evident that there is no conclusive consensus about the relationship between organizational commitment and the educational level. Therefore, further research
into the relationship between organizational commitment and educational level is required to draw definitive conclusive.

2.3.1.4 Gender

Inconsistent evidence exists regarding the relationship between organizational commitment and gender.

In a meta – analytic study, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) reviewed fourteen studies involving organizational commitment and gender with 7420 participants. A mean correlation of -.089 was obtained for organizational commitment and gender. The authors indicated a weak relationship between organizational commitment and gender and suggest that gender may have an impact on employee's perception of their workplace and behaviour towards the organization.

In a meta – analysis of studies of the relationship between organizational commitment and gender conducted by Aven, Parker and McEvoy (1993), the authors researched twenty six studies with twenty samples of which included 14081 subjects. The studies yielded both positive and negative correlations. The range of correlations was -.37 to .29 and the mean correlation of all the studies was .02.
However, results from a study conducted amongst fire fighters in the United States of America by Lowe and Barnes (2002) yielded only a negative relationship between organizational commitment and gender.

Kalderberg et al. (1995) found no significant differences in the work attitudes and commitment of males and females. This view is supported by Grusky (1966) stating that women generally had to overcome more barriers to achieve their positions in the organization, thus making organizational membership more important to them. Wahn (1998) maintain that women can display higher levels of commitment than men.

Loscocco (1990) reports that women were more likely to report that they are happy to work for their organization, as their values are similar to that of their organizations and the fact that they will accept almost any job offered to them in order to remain within the organization.

Similarly, various other researchers have found no evidence to support the relationship between organizational commitment and gender (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Caruana & Calleya, 1998; Kinnear, 1999; Kinnear & Sutherland, 2000; Ngo & Tsang, 1998; Wahn, 1998). According to Ngo and Tsang (1998), the effects of gender on commitment are very subtle. Hence, it may be concluded that the vast majority of research indicates either no gender differences in organizational commitment or greater organizational commitment amongst women being experienced (Wahn, 1998).
2.3.1.5 Marital Status

Research on the effect of marital status on organizational commitment has yielded that married individuals report higher levels of commitment than unmarried because of their greater financial burdens and family responsibilities (Kacmar, Carlson & Brymer, 1999; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

In a study conducted by Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) single employees were found to be more likely positively disposed toward attractive employment alternatives than married or separated employees. The authors further assert that married or separated individuals, especially women, see greater costs attached to inter-organizational mobility. Therefore they are less likely than single or male employees to consider employment alternatives, even if they are offered or encouraged to do so.

This view is supported by a study conducted by Cetin (2006) amongst 132 academics who found married or divorced women evaluate leaving an organization more costly than ones who are single. In another study conducted by Kacmar et al. (1999) the researchers also found that married individuals reported higher levels of commitment than unmarried individuals because of their greater financial burdens and responsibilities.
2.3.1.6 Personality

Research indicates a renewed interest in personality as an explanatory variable in work processes, especially in the field of personnel selection and placement (Dishon-Berkovits & Koslowsky, 2002).

In a study conducted by Humphreys, Brunsen and Davis (2005) using a sample of 105 direct healthcare workers, results indicate a significant correlation between emotional intelligence, emotional coping ability and organizational commitment. According to the researchers, personality constructs such as emotional intelligence and coping ability could possibly be used as predictive instruments to determine who might be successful in operating in a highly emotionally charged healthcare environment.

On the other hand, Mowday et al. (1982) cited personality factors related to commitment as achievement motivation, sense of competence, employee values, work ethic and work-orientated central life ethic. The authors contend that employees with a strong individual work ethic and work-orientated central life ethic have an inclination of being more committed to an organization. According to Steers and Spencer (1977) cited in Mathieu (1991), the personality factor achievement motivation correlates specifically with organizational commitment.

However, Blau (1993) found that work-orientated locus of control was a significant predictor of organizational commitment. Blau (1993) suggested that
employees with an internal locus of control have been found to possess higher levels of organizational commitment as these employees have more influence over their work environment.

2.3.1.7 Race

Limited research has been conducted with regard to the relationship between organizational commitment and race. Research has indicated that individuals different from others in the workgroup have less job satisfaction and organizational commitment, perceive less social integration and have greater turnover intentions than do individuals demographically similar to their cohorts (Tsui & Gutek, 1999; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998).

Williams and O'Reilly (1998) postulate that individuals prefer to work in groups with other in-group (same) members and when working in groups with out-group (different) members their work experiences automatically tend to be poor. Furthermore the authors indicate individuals with dissimilar others would have less organizational commitment than persons in the same groups.

The aforementioned is proven in a study conducted by Cunningham and Sagas (2004) amongst 235 assistant basketball coaches to examine the effects of racial dissimilarity of organizational commitment. The research indicated Black coaches in staff with a relatively equal distribution of Whites and racial minorities had a lower commitment than did Black coaches on predominantly White or Black
staff’s and vice versa. The findings indicate that being different impacts various groups of individuals differently.

In another study conducted amongst 838 elementary and secondary school teachers by Mueller, Finley, Iverson and Price (1999), researching the level of commitment experienced by teachers, the results displayed there is no difference in the level of commitment amongst Black teachers in schools of different races. In contrast to the results of the research, the study indicated that White teachers in predominantly White educational environment schools displayed more commitment to their schools than when in other different racial school environments.

Hence, it is suggested that further research needs to be conducted in terms of the relationship impact between organizational commitment and race.

2.3.2 Role – Related Determinants

The role – related determinants impacting on organizational commitment include organizational dependability, role conflict, role ambiguity, job scope, job level, job security, promotion opportunities, pay, and empowerment.
2.3.2.1 Organizational Dependability

Organizational dependability is the level to which employees feel they can rely on the organization to look after their well-being (Mowday et al., 1982).

Limited research has been done in the investigation between organizational commitment and organizational dependability, however, according to Arnold and Davey (1999) and Mowday et al. (1982) the two variables are positively correlated. The authors furthermore state that interpersonal trust is closely associated to organizational dependability.

Hrebiniai and Alutto (1972) cited in Maxwell and Steele (2003) argues the higher the experience of dependability of an individual, the more positive would the impact on commitment be. In this regard they state that if the working environment is not co-operative or friendly and the relationship between employees is generally friendly, the individuals would then in turn feel uncommitted to the organization.

A study conducted by Pasewark and Strawser (1996) amongst professional accountants found that high levels of trust within an organization increased the level of commitment within the organization.
2.3.2.2 Role Conflict

Numerous studies have stated that a negative relationship between organizational commitment and role conflict exist (Futrell & Black, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday et al., 1982; Johnston, Parasuraman,).

Research indicates that law enforcement is a particularly stressful occupation due to the number of sources from within the organizational structure, such as role conflict, role ambiguity and lack of promotional opportunities (Anderson, Litzenberger, & Plecas, 2002; Gaines & Jermier, 1983).

This view is supported by a study conducted by Jaramillo, Nixon and Sams (2005) amongst police officers in the United States of America where the results yielded a negative relationship between organizational commitment and role conflict.

Magid and Tor (1993) contend that a negative relationship between organizational commitment and role conflict exist. Similarly, a study conducted by Voster (1992) could not find a relationship between organizational commitment and role conflict.

However, numerous researchers have found an inverse relationship between organizational commitment and role conflict (Boshoff & Mels, 1995; Johnston et al., 1990; Mowday et al., 1982).
From the above mentioned research it is conclusive that no positive relationship between organizational commitment and role conflict exist.

2.3.2.3 Role Ambiguity

Research demonstrates that a negative relationship exist between organizational commitment and role ambiguity (Boshoff & Mels, 1995; Mowday et al., 1982).

Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek and Rosenthal (1964) cited in Schaubroeck, Cotton, and Jennings (1989) maintain that role ambiguity is believed to increase stress as concerns about how to deal with critical tasks leads to frustration, which in turn, results in tension. The lack of role clarity reduces the employee's opportunity to improve performance and obtain rewards, thus reducing commitment and satisfaction. The authors further argue that an employee experiencing role ambiguity will act to avoid the work situation by being chronically absent or actually leaving the organization.

Indeed, Camilleri (2002) posits that the higher the degree of role ambiguity, the lower the degree of organizational commitment. The author further states that as the level of work related stress being experienced by an employee increases, the level of organizational commitment decreases. Camilleri (2002) suggests that role ambiguity increases employee's stress, leading to demotivation, less commitment and less job satisfaction.
2.3.2.4  Job Scope

Mowday et al. (1982) postulates that findings have supported the view that an increased job scope simultaneously increases an individual's challenge and responsibility to the organization which leads to an increased organizational commitment towards the organization. Allen and Meyer (1990); Steers (1977); Steers, Beyer, and Trice (1978) support this view as they contend that when employees have a wide job scope, their commitment is then higher. However, Maxwell and Steele (2003) argue that a wider range of responsibilities and duties means that the employees will experience more challenges and thus would then become more committed to the organization.

In addition, the authors state the notion of exchange is an important factor as the individual replaces their commitment for a more fulfilling or enriching work experience. Steers et al. (1978) points out that job scope is balanced in work overload which has found to have a negative impact on commitment.

In a study conducted on employee commitment by Benkhoff (1997) on the relationship between organizational commitment and job scope, the results yielded a consistently significant correlation between organizational commitment and job scope.
On the other hand, a study conducted amongst hotel managers by Maxwell and Steele (2003) revealed organizational commitment had a negative relationship on job scope.

Although job scope presents a few challenges, it does not involve work overload and is an important factor to encouraging commitment to the organization (Maxwell & Steele, 2003).

2.3.2.5 Job Level

Mixed evidence exists regarding the relationship between organizational commitment and job level.

According to Lowe and Barnes (2002), organizational commitment and job level is positively related. Luthans, Baack and Taylor (1987) states that employees operating in higher positions in organizations indicate greater levels of commitment. Aryee and Heng (1990) concur with this view as they maintain that the association between job level and commitment is due to the fact that higher level employees receive greater economic rewards.

Findings of a study conducted by Lowe and Barnes (2002) amongst fire fighters also found a positive relationship between organizational commitment and job level.
Conversely, Mowday et al. (1982) found that occupational level amongst 2 samples tested were not related to organizational commitment and that different organizations might reflect different overall levels of employee commitment, this commitment is equally strong at all levels within the organizational hierarchy.

2.3.2.6 Job Security

The concept of job security provides employees with a considerable amount of assurance that they will not be laid off, even during an economic crisis (Bansal, Mendelson & Sharma, 2001).

A number of studies have demonstrated that organizational commitment has a positive correlation with job security. Ashford, Lee and Bobko (1989) state that the perception exist that employees with low levels of job security, could experience low levels of organizational commitment. Hallier and Lyon (1996) maintain that if employees feel a sense of threat to their employment, their organizational commitment will in turn decrease. These employees, who are not assured of their position within the organizational structure, would then opt to seek alternative employment security outside their current organization. Similarly, Pfeffer (1995) posits that organizations which provide employment security will have a more committed workforce.

A study conducted by Yousef (1998) amongst four hundred and forty seven participants in various organizations across the United Arab Emirates found a
statistically significant correlation \((r = .53; \ p < .0001)\) between satisfaction with organizational commitment and job security.

Hence, it is conclusive that secured employment enhances organizational commitment whereby the employee will in all likelihood continue employment with the organization and not seek alternative job opportunities.

### 2.3.2.7 Promotion Opportunities

A number of researchers are of the opinion that organizational commitment is positively related to opportunities for promotion (Brewer & Hensher, 1998; Kallenberg & Mastekaasa, 1994; Snell & Dean, 1992).

This view is supported by a study conducted by Jaramillo et al. (2005) amongst police officers who found organizational commitment to be positively related to promotional opportunities. Similarly, studies conducted in law enforcement and military settings by (Anshel, 2000; Gaines & Jermier, 1983) also indicated a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and promotional opportunities. Results of a study conducted by Young et al. (1998) yield a high positive correlation between satisfaction with organizational commitment and promotion opportunities.

Rogers (2000) postulate that many organizations have adapted internal rules and administrative procedures that have the effect of protecting their employees from
the other various competitive organizations. These measures in turn provides for promotional opportunities for their employees.

According to Meyer and Allen (1997), policies and practices involving the movement of employees, particularly upward movement, once employees are in an organization is expected to have an impact on their commitment. Gaertner and Nollen (1989) found commitment to be higher amongst employees who had been promoted and was also related to the employee's perception that the organization had a policy for promoting from within. The authors state that such a policy may be perceived by employees that the organization is genuinely committed to them, which in turn leads them to perform in accordance with set norms and standards of the organization.

Thus it can be argued that if employees were guaranteed of progression within the organization, they would then not look for external alternative job options.

2.3.2.8 Pay

Pay satisfaction is defined as the amount of overall positive effects or feelings individuals have toward pay (Miceli & Lane, 1991 cited in Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid & Sirola, 1998). Research appears to be equivocal regarding the influence of pay on organizational commitment.

Oliver (1990) found that income demonstrated a stronger positive relationship with organizational commitment for professional than non-professional employees. The authors furthermore state that an increase in pay would lead to an increase in organizational commitment.

This view is supported by Arnolds and Boshoff (2004) and Kinnear and Sutherland (2000), stating that both financial reward and recognition has been found to have a significant influence on professional employees. Employees perceive their remuneration to be a yardstick of their value to the organization. According to Nel et al. (2004), employees compare their inputs to received outputs relevant to that of others. Lemons and Jones (2001) argue that commitment is not fostered by the absolute amount of pay, but that commitment is influenced by organizational justice, such as distributive and procedural justice.

A study conducted by Tang and Chiu (2003) amongst 211 full-time employees in Hong Kong found a statistically positive relationship between organizational commitment and pay. Similarly, in a longitudinal study conducted by Arnold and Davey (1999), a positive relationship between organizational commitment and pay benefits of the employees were also found.
In contrast, Gallie and White (1990) cited in Beukhof, de Jong and Nijhof (1998) found no relationship between commitment and pay. This view is supported by Brooks (2002) who concurs that no relationship between organizational commitment and pay exist.

2.3.2.9 Empowerment

According to Darling (1996), empowerment is defined as the transfer of decision-making and responsibility to those individuals who have the knowledge and ability to make decisions. It implies trust in other people's abilities and in one's own abilities.

Burke (1986) cited in Ugboro (2006) suggests a way to empower employees is to express confidence in them together with establishing realistic high performance expectations for them. Furthermore, the authors add that a creation of opportunities for employees to participate in decision-making, and by giving employees autonomy from bureaucratic constraints adds empowerment which help increase the employee's level of commitment.

To create greater feelings of psychological empowerment, top management should clearly articulate a vision that inspires employees to take greater responsibility for their work at all organizational levels. Goal clarification and clear specification of tasks, roles and rewards possibly at immediate supervisory level, could facilitate feelings of empowerment among employees (Avolio, Zhu,
Koh, Bhatia, 2004). Therefore, it is imperative to understand employee needs, to create a supportive atmosphere and to engage in a confidence – building practice as it would contribute to a greater feeling of psychological empowerment (Conger, 1989; Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997).

Hence, when employees are empowered, management then alters the supervisor – subordinate relationship. The empowered employees are afforded both the responsibility and authority necessary to anticipate and respond to customer – service problems (Carson, Carson, Roe, Birkenmeier, Phillips, 1999).

A study conducted by Arnold and Davey (1999) corroborates the aforementioned as results from their study yielded a significant relationship between organizational commitment and empowerment.

2.3.3 Work Experience Determinants

Mowday et al. (1982) state the following work – experience determinants of organizational commitment inter alia: leadership style, co – workers, social involvement, rewards, personal importance to the organization, and the fulfillment of expectations. The stated experiences is being perceived as a major socializing force and therefore have a significant influence on the strength of the psychological attachment the employee has with the organization.
In a study conducted by Loscocco (1989) cited in Awamleh (1996) examining the impact of personal and job characteristics on work commitment among manufacturing employees, the results displayed that the strength of people's commitment to work is determined in response to the whole configuration of their work and non-work experiences. There is some evidence that the personal scripts which are brought to the job through prior socialization have independent effects on work commitment.

2.3.3.1 Leadership Style

Leadership contributes significantly in the success and failure of an organization (Lok & Crawford, 2004). Meyer and Allen (1997) contend that numerous studies support the view that leadership experienced by employees influences the organizational commitment of employees. Johns and Moser (1989) and Horner (1997) describe leadership as an act of influence, a process and a person's trait qualities. In other words, leadership style or behaviour describes the way a leader interacts with others instead of his traits.

Stum (1999) posits that employee commitment demonstrates the quality of an organization's leadership. Therefore leadership behaviour is found to have a significant relationship with organizational commitment. Numerous researchers have concluded that a positive relationship exists between employee commitment and initiating structure (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Harrison & Hubbard, 1998; Mowday et al., 1982).
In a study conducted by Billingsley and Cross (1992), the authors found a positive relationship between organizational commitment and leader support. However, Boshoff and Mels (1995) speculate that the relationship is indirect. According to Yukl (1981), initiating structures that includes behaviours concerned with productivity, planning, coordinating, clarifying and problem solving in turn yields greater employee commitment. The author further states that leader consideration is concerned with supportiveness, consultation and recognition. Billingsley and Cross (1992); Brewer and Hensher (1998); Lok and Crawford (2004); Mathieu and Zajac (1990) and Mowday et al. (1982) found organizational commitment to be related to leader initiating structure and leader consideration.

Transformational leadership is normally associated with the desired organizational outcomes such as the willingness or eagerness of followers to expand extra effort (Bass, Waldman, Avolio & Bebb, 1987; Yammirino & Bass, 1990). In three separate studies conducted by Popper, Mayseless and Caselnovo (2000) have found that a positive correlation exist between employee attachment and transformational leadership. Similarly, Kent and Chelladurai (2001) also found positive correlations between affective commitment and normative commitment and transformational leadership.

In a study on the effect of leadership behaviours on employee outcomes, conducted by Chiok Foong Loke (2001) in Singapore, the results displayed a significant positive correlation between organizational commitment and leadership behaviours.
According to Salancik (1977), participation in decision-making increases employees' organizational commitment by increasing their felt responsibility and by influencing the extent to which they make committed preferences. Hence, many employees opt for a leadership style which involves participative decision-making, so they feel they are treated with consideration and fairness (Brewer & Hensher, 1998; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

2.3.3.2 Co-workers

A number of authors maintain that employees having friendly and supportive co-workers with a good relationship of trust would be more likely to be more committed to the organization (Aryee & Heng, 1990; Brewer, 1996; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001). However, limited research has been conducted on the impact the relationship between co-workers have on organizational commitment (Raabe & Beehr, 2003).

Findings of a survey conducted by Dunham, Grube and Castanada (1994) found the commitment of co-workers to be an antecedent for normative commitment. Another study which involved correctional workers and inmates with whom they interact displayed a limited relationship between organizational commitment and co-workers (Buitendach & De Witte, 2005). In a study conducted by Kinnear and Sutherland (2000) amongst knowledge workers, the need to be associated with individuals from similar professions, highly influenced the level of
commitment experienced by knowledge workers. In other words the results yielded that it is necessary to be associated with people from the same profession.

This is supported by Spataro (2000) who conducted a field study of 3 different organizations in three distinct industries to examine the contributors to and effects of one's informal status position relative to co–workers. Results of the study reflected that status position positively relates to individual performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction, and that an individual's status position moderates the relationship of being different in status from immediate co–workers to these outcomes. Furthermore, the study indicated that high status individuals working with lower status individuals experience lower performance, motivation and commitment.

2.3.3.3 Social Involvement

According to Mowday et al. (1982), the degree of an employee's social involvement is an important cause in facilitating commitment within the organization. In other words, the greater the social interaction between the individual and employer, the more social ties the individual would develop within the organization, and the link between the individual and employer would then just become stronger, thus leading the individual to increasing his or her commitment to the organization. Wech, Mossholder, Steel and Bennett (1998) corroborate this view found that group cohesiveness among group members lead
them to greater social involvement within the organization, which induced greater organizational commitment.

2.3.3.4 Rewards

Reward systems such as a higher salary, gain sharing, bonuses and promotions are incentives for employees to be motivated and committed to the organization (Pfeffer, 1995). Grusky (1966) cited in Maxwell and Steele (2003) states that if an employee gain a reward such as a promotion after enduring a problem, commitment from the employee would then be higher than if the rewards were automatically received. Furthermore, the authors found that higher paid employees have higher levels of commitment.

In a study conducted by Oliver (1990) amongst 250 employees in a manufacturing company, a positive correlation ($r = .56, p < .01$) between commitment and work rewards was found. Buchko (1993) found that in organizations where benefits were a higher percentage of total labour costs and benefit packages were of higher quality, lower rates of employee attrition were reported. The author suggests as the employees are satisfied with the benefits they receive, it becomes a combining investment for them which, in turn, would increase their organizational commitment.

experiences. The reward is a consistent traditional theory which explains organizational commitment in a four-step process (Buchanan, 1974; Meyer & Allen, 1998; Steers, 1977; Vandenberghge et al. 2004). Inter alia:

1. the organization meets employee needs;
2. because those needs are met, employees perceive a favourable exchange relationship with the organization;
3. the employees become favourably disposed toward the organization; and
4. the employees, therefore becomes more committed to the organization (Buchanan, 1974; Meyer & Allen, 1998; Steers, 1977; Vandenberghge, Bentein, Stinglhamber, 2004).

Similarly, Iverson and Buttigieg (1999), Meyer and Allen (1997), Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolnytsky (2002), and Vandenberghe et al. (2004) have all found support for this theory in full-time employees.

### 2.3.3.5 Personal Importance to the Organization

Limited research has been conducted on the relationship between organizational commitment and the personal importance of the employee to the organization. Mowday et al. (1982) concur that an employee's feelings of personal importance to the organization is posited to be significantly related to their level of commitment. The authors further argue that when employees feel they are needed or important to the organization's mission. Accordingly, the commitment attitude of the employee increases. Therefore, it is imperative that individual experiences
of people management and employee relations are crucial in securing and maintaining commitment (Maxwell & Steele, 2003).

Further studies on organizational commitment and importance to the organization are encouraged to reach a more concise conclusion on the relationship between organizational commitment and personal importance to the organization.

2.3.3.6 Fulfillment of Expectations

Research reflects that organizational commitment has a direct relationship with individual’s expectations that are met within the organization (Mowday et al., 1982).

Holton and Russell (1999) cited in Cockcroft (2001) maintain that early expectations of an employee leads to greater perceptions and understandings which would then have an influence on the employee's assessment of the extent to which their expectations are met. This has an impact on organizational commitment. Furthermore, if the employee's expectations are not met it could result in the employee leaving the organization or the employee's level of commitment to the organization would decrease.
2.4 THE CONSEQUENCES OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

According to Maxwell and Steele (2003), the consequence of understanding the antecedents of commitment and managing them in order to keep employee commitment, the organization should implement improved organizational performance. Katz (1964) cited in Maxwell and Steele (2003) state that in order for an organization to function properly, it needs the employees to behave in a manner that they exceed their role prescriptions. To gain organizational goals one often depend on individual committed behaviours such as co-operation and unrewarded help (Smith, Organ & Near, 1983 cited in Maxwell and Steele, 2003). Below some of the consequences of organizational commitment are discussed.

2.4.1 Job performance

Research regarding the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance has been inconsistent (Aryee & Heng, 1990; Carson et al.1999; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001; Mowday, Porter & Dubin 1974). The authors maintain that higher levels of organizational commitment create employees to increase productivity. Benkhoff (1997) states the main reason why commitment has been a popular research topic is because of its assumed impact on performance. However, the author states that researchers have not been able to provide evidence that commitment and performance are related.
In contrast to the above–mentioned, various authors testify that there is some relationship between commitment and performance (Benkhoff, 1997; Mowday et al., 1982). In this instance Mowday et al. (1982) found a rather weak relationship between commitment and job performance.

2.4.2 Tardiness

A study conducted by Angle and Perry (1981) found commitment to be strongly and inversely related to tardiness.

Mowday et al. (1982) concur that highly committed employees will partake in behaviours that are the same with their attitudes towards the organization and therefore would not be tardy towards the organization.

2.4.3 Tenure

Research has found that highly committed employees tend to remain with an organization for long periods, thus their tenure increases (Mowday et al., 1982). The authors contend that highly significant positive correlations have been found between increased commitment and increased tenure. This view is supported by many researchers who also found a positive correlation between organizational commitment and tenure (Kushman, 1992; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Sheldon, 1971). In a study that included 290 non–management employees (clerks, nurses, radiologists, secretaries, and cardiopulmonary
specialists), Gregersen (1993) also found a positive correlation between organizational commitment and the length of service in the organization.

Farkas and Tettick (1989) cited in Lowe and Barnes (2002) argues that the relationship between organizational commitment and tenure is likely to change with circumstances. For example, Igbaria and Greenhouse (1992) found committed employees are less likely to leave an organization than those who are less committed. Knoop (1995) cited in Lowe and Barnes (2002) on the other hand, conducted a study amongst one 171 nurses and found that nurses may be committed to their organization because they chose nursing as a profession, but the particular hospital where they are employed may not be important to them as their profession itself.

**2.4.4 Turnover**

Higher turnover intentions of employees in an organization are an indication that they are dissatisfied with their jobs. While lower turnover intentions of employees in an organization are indications that they are satisfied with their jobs (Popoola, 2002).

Several models have shown that the common ground lies in the constructs of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived equity (Schnake & Dumler, 2000). The authors corroborate that evidence shows that high levels of these variables are related to low levels of turnover intention.
It is therefore advisable in a downsizing program to remove those with the greatest intention to turnover, so that those remaining are the most dedicated to the organization, with the least chance of quitting their jobs.

Research has also shown that intentions to quit an organization are among the strongest predictors of staff turnover (Popoola, 2002). Ngulube (2000) reports that unsatisfactory working conditions and lack of job satisfaction have significantly contributed to the National Archives of Zimbabwe's failure to retain professionally trained staff. The study reveals that there is a significant negative correlation between organizational commitment and turnover intentions. The findings concurs with Hackett, Bycio and Hausdorf (1994) and Irving, Coleman, and Cooper (1997) who also found a negative correlation between organizational commitment and turnover intentions in their research. Popoola (2002) maintain this premise that when an employee exhibits low turnover intentions in an organization, there is a tendency for the employee to be strongly committed to the ideals and goals of that organization.

### 2.4.5 Absenteeism

Absenteeism is shown to be positively linked to turnover intention and negatively associated with job performance, organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Iverson & Deery, 2001). The authors maintain the causes of this organizational behaviour remain unknown. Despite the ambiguity in the literature, it remains possible that if those most absent in the workforce are retrenched, then
absenteeism will be lower in the remaining workforce, and the overall levels of
variables such as commitment, satisfaction and performance may increase.

Mowday et al. (1982) maintain that highly committed employees would be more
motivated to their work and would tend to be less absent from their work, and in
turn, they would contribute towards organizational goal attainment.

2.5 ABSENTEEISM

In a world moving towards total quality management, in which processes are
managed rather than individuals, absenteeism is not necessarily a factor. To
execute the work is the major objective of organizations. Organizations will pay
less for time and more for results ("Who's missing", 2004). The author maintains
that there are still large numbers of organizations where employees' have to be
present in the workplace everyday in order for the organization to function
profitably.

It has been estimated that absenteeism costs South African organizations millions
of rands a year in decreased efficiency and increased benefit payments, such as
sick leave and payroll costs (Robbins et al. 2003). The authors maintain that in
South Africa, managers consider absenteeism as their most serious discipline
problem. According to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1999, an
employee is entitled to 30 or 36 working days' sick leave in a three year period,
depending on whether it is a 5 or 6 working week for the employee (Robbins et al., 2003).

In the United States of America an estimate of $40 billion are lost a year due to absenteeism. In Canada an estimate of $12 billion is lost a year. These high figures indicate the importance to an organization of keeping absenteeism low (Gaudine & Saks, 2001). It is stated that absence behaviour continues to attract researchers' attention because of its prevalence among employees in many organizations (Steel, 2003).

### 2.5.1 Definition of Absenteeism

Similar to that of organizational commitment, absenteeism also has a plethora of definitions, which are similar in nature. According to Heery and Noon (2001), absenteeism is the practice of regular failure to turn up for work. Robbins (2001) supports this view by also referring to absenteeism as the failure of an employee to report for duty. Van der Merwe and Miller (1993) define absenteeism as an unplanned disruptive incident, but it can more specifically be seen as non-attendance when an employee is scheduled to work.

Nel et al. (2004) maintain that absenteeism is regarded as withdrawal behaviour when it is used as a means to escape an undesirable working environment. In a broader perspective, absenteeism can be viewed as part of withdrawal syndrome, where employees react to undesirable working conditions by behaviours designed
to distance them from work, which include, lateness and intent to leave (Hulin, 1991; Johns, 2003).

Cascio (2003) defines absenteeism as any failure of an employee to report to work or to remain at work as scheduled, regardless of the reason. The author expressed the fact that the term 'as scheduled' is very important as it excludes holidays such as annual leave, maternity leave or court cases.

However, people may have different views or opinions regarding employee absenteeism (Rhodes & Steers, 1990). The authors' state, to a manager absenteeism is seen as a problem which needs to be solved, while to the employee, absenteeism is seen as a feeling or perception of being unequally treated in the organization or a way to stay away from the organization due to poor working conditions.

2.5.2 Causes of Absenteeism

The causes of absenteeism can be broken down into employee – related and work – related causes (Lawrence, 1990).
Employee – Related Causes

2.5.2.1  Physical Condition

When an employee is not physically fit, the employee would more likely be off from work because of illness than the other employees. To an extent fitness is a function of age, after a certain age, individuals start to depreciate physically. Therefore, older employees would more likely be absent from work because of illness than younger employees (Lawrence, 1990).

2.5.2.2  Lifestyle Characteristics

These include excessive smoking, drinking, drugs, that can also be considered as a cause of absenteeism, either because of the health problems they cause or because those bad habits affects the employee's ability to come to work. For example, a person who has had a good partying weekend would be unfit to come to work on Monday morning (Lawrence, 1990).

2.5.2.3  Family Responsibilities

The presence of dependant children can be another employee – related cause of absenteeism, as someone in the family may have to stay off from work when the children are sick or where the babysitter did not report for duty (Lawrence, 1990).
2.5.2.4  Work, Ethic, Commitment, Responsibility

Among any group of employees doing similar work, some will have a greater sense of responsibility than others, different views, opinions and attitudes of the job are characteristics that could have an impact on the employee to stay absent (Lawrence, 1990).

2.5.2.5  Accident Prone

Some employees are more likely to become injured at work than other employees. This could be due to carelessness or maybe because they are inexperienced or it may just be their nature. This factor would cause the employee then to stay absent often (Lawrence, 1990).

2.5.3  Job – Related Causes

There has been a growing awareness that absenteeism is linked to the type of work people do and their working conditions (Lawrence, 1990).

2.5.3.1  Nature of the Job

If an employee does not like what he or she is doing, if the employee feels the organization can be successful without them or dislike the working environment, the employee may be tempted by opportunities to stay absent frequently.
However, jobs that are boring and routine are likely to be jobs over which employees has little control over work pace, work load, how the employees performs the job. All these factors can invariably lead to stress related illness (Martocchio, 1994 cited in Rosenblatt and Shirom, 2005).

2.5.3.2 Internal Relationships

Relationships between supervisors and employees, between employees and other employees, can affect the attitudes at work. Another factor could be the size of the organization and the size of the group. When employees are part of a small group, part of a team, they are more likely to feel a commitment to the job and to the organization. They are also more likely aware of the consequences of their absence on other members of the group and on the organization. Research has shown that large organizations tend to experience higher absenteeism levels than smaller organizations (Lawrence, 1990). Van der Merwe and Miller (1993) posit that employee attendance appears to be related to group size, with larger work groups having a higher rate of absenteeism.

2.5.3.3 Working Conditions

Various working conditions could have an effect on absenteeism, such as the availability of overtime opportunities, which allows absent employees to recoup lost earnings. The availability of sick pay and the amount of it could also affect their attendance to work or the hours of work. The hours of work refers to shift
work. Shift workers tend to suffer from illnesses as they are eating at different times, sleeping at different times or probably not eating or sleeping properly, which causes a disruption in their normal body functioning. Therefore, there are higher rates of absenteeism amongst shift workers (Van der Merwe & Miller, 1993).

2.5.3.4 Health and Safety Hazards

All goods – producing industries should have safety standards for their employees, such as proper uniforms, gloves, hard hats for those who work around machinery all day. However, certain industries do not have hazards attached to it in some way. Word processor operators often suffer from shoulder and musculo–skeleton problems, headaches and vision problems, repetitive motions causes these illnesses and injuries which contribute to absenteeism (Lawrence, 1990). This is supported by a study conducted amongst nurses in Toronto by Humphreys, Brunsen and Davis (2005) who found nurses have the highest absenteeism level due to musculoskeletal and stress.

2.6 IMPACT OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES ON ABSENTEEISM

The importance of biographical variables in explaining absenteeism was acknowledged with the appearance of Steers and Rhodes' 1978 model, which has become one of the most influential and cited theoretical frameworks of absenteeism (Harrison & Martocchio, 1998). According to Steers and Rhodes
(1978) cited in Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005), biographical variables such as personal and family – related characteristics indirectly affect absenteeism, through mediating effects of psychological constructs such as job satisfaction, motivation to be absent, and ability to attend work.

Hence, the biographical variables used in this research study impacting on absenteeism will be discussed, namely, age, tenure, educational level, gender, marital status, race, job level, and pay.

2.6.1 Age

Research findings on the impact of absenteeism and age have been found to be inconsistent (Rosenblatt & Shirom, 2005).

In a meta – analysis of 34 studies conducted by Martocchio (1989), it was found that a negative relationship between age and absenteeism indeed existed for men. However, no relationship between age and absenteeism was found for women. This inverse relationship between absenteeism and age are due to the fact that there is higher job commitment in older age, self selection into a better person - organization fit, and age – related injury incidence. In a study conducted by Globerson and Ben – Yshai (2002) cited in Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005) in the teaching profession in Israel, an inverse relationship between absenteeism and age was also found.
However, Johnson, Crogham and Crawford (2003) and Lau, Au and Ho (2003) found absenteeism to be negatively related to age. The authors report that absenteeism amongst younger employees is generally higher. Siu (2002) argues that younger employees also often take sick leave more than older employees, as older employees have their responsibilities at work.

In another study conducted by librarians by Lockhart (2001) the results yielded no significant relationship between absenteeism and age. A conclusive unequivocal consensus can be drawn about the relationship between absenteeism and age. Further research in this area needs to be conducted.

2.6.2 Tenure

Research findings between absenteeism and tenure have not been consistent (Robbins et al., 2003).

Kohler and Mathieu (1993) did not find a relationship between absenteeism and tenure in their study. A study conducted by Price (1995) reported a negative relationship between absenteeism and tenure.

Conversely, results of a study conducted by George (1989) amongst 210 salespeople in a large department store yielded that the tenure of the salespeople influenced the level of absenteeism experienced by the organization. Martocchio (1989) support the above – mentioned study who maintains that employees that
have been working for long periods, tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which then decreases their absenteeism levels.

2.6.3 Educational Level

Limited research has been conducted on the relationship between absenteeism and educational level (Rosenblatt & Shirom, 2005).

In a study by Rentsch and Steel (1998), the results yielded that education was found to contribute to lower absenteeism. Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005) maintain that educational attainment may elevate employee's professionalism and thus consequently would improve their level of responsibility and commitment to their work. Therefore, the authors postulate the higher educational level the lower the absenteeism.

2.6.4 Gender

In a meta-analysis study conducted by Farrell and Stamm (1988) and Steel and Rentsch (1995) it was found that women are absent from work more than men. According to VandenHeuvel and Wooden (1995), the reason for women being absent more than men is due to the traditional labour division in the family, according to which women have more than equal share in child rearing and housework.
The above-mentioned view is supported by many researchers (Fried, Melamed & Ben-David, 2002; Johnson et al., 2003; Robbins et al., 2003) who also found absenteeism to be higher amongst women than men. The authors further postulate that working women have many responsibilities and roles, such as a home maker and taking care of the children.

2.6.5 Marital Status

Research demonstrates that married employees tend to be less absent than unmarried employees (Robbins et al., 2003). Furthermore, the authors maintain that married employees have more responsibilities than unmarried employees and therefore the married employees would value their job and would be more committed and thus be less absent from work.

A study conducted among IT personnel in Taiwan by Kuo and Chen (2004) indicated that married employees experienced higher levels of satisfaction than unmarried employees, and therefore married employees were less likely to be absent from work.
2.6.6 Race

In today's working environment, the topics of race, culture, and gender are very burning issues. Prejudice persists and cultural misunderstandings compound the problem, bringing about discrimination and tension in the workplace. Many employees are comfortable and prefer working with others who look, act and think like themselves. Hence, in the workplace, tensions among employees can lower productivity and create high costs in employee absenteeism (Harisis & Kleiner, 1993).

Limited research has been conducted on the relationship between absenteeism and race. However, a study conducted by Butler (1994) amongst 238 employees that included employees, shop stewards and managers from 20 various organizations yielded a statistically significant relationship between good and poor attendees and race.

2.6.7 Job Level

Research regarding job level has been mostly related to decreased absenteeism, the higher the position the lower the absenteeism (Cooper & Bramwell, 1992; Johns, 1997).

In an Israeli study conducted by Schwarzwald, Koslowsky and Shalit (1992). Results showed that service employees increased their absenteeism due to failure
of getting a promotion, which supports the negative relationship between absenteeism and job level mentioned above.

In addition, Golberg and Waldman (2000) conducted a study amongst health – acre workers and results of the study indicated that position level proved the strongest in a long list of personal and occupational demographic variables. Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005) also found in their research that the higher the level of responsibility, the higher the attendance of employees on the job.

2.6.8 Pay

Studies have displayed that higher – salaried employees tend to be less absent (Rosenblatt & Shirom, 2005). Winkelman (1999) found in a study that pay of German employees was negatively associated with their absenteeism. In another study conducted by Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005) among teachers in Israel, it was found that absenteeism was also negatively associated with pay.

Contrary to the above – mentioned findings, results pertaining to other kinds of monetary rewards support the absenteeism and pay relationship. A study conducted by Jacobson (1988) amongst teachers proved that a pay incentive plan assisted to reduce the teachers' absenteeism level. In Browns' (1999) study, elimination of overtime pay was reported to increase absenteeism. Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005) maintain that salary level is a proxy for other powerful predictors of absenteeism such as education, job scope, and position level.
2.7 STRATEGIES TO MANAGE ABSENTEEISM

Successful absenteeism management strategies start with a belief that something can actually be done to reduce absenteeism (Johnson et al. 2003). The authors furthermore state that every organization is different and that the absenteeism reduction strategies should be done in accordance to that particular organization. Herewith follows strategies to manage absenteeism. Cognisance must be taken that these strategies are not exhausted.

2.7.1 Record Keeping

According to Fowler (1998), in many firms, line managers are the only people who know when an employee is absent, particularly when it is for short uncertified periods. The author states computerized recording systems are helpful, both for reducing the work involved in record-keeping and for producing an analyses of group and individual attendance.

Furthermore, Robinson (2002) maintains that organizations need to have a proper system in place to effectively capture and record absence data as it is the key to the success of any absence management program. In a study conducted by Bennett (2002), it was found that absence was lower when line managers actively took charge of their responsibility for absence management.
2.7.2 Absence Control Policies

Lawrence (1990) purports that it is necessary to have an appropriate absenteeism preventative policy that applies to all employees. The reason for having these policies is because preventative policies can reduce the need for corrective action, by recognizing the employer's responsibility for absenteeism. The control policies would make it easier to get employee and union acceptance for and co–operation in absenteeism control programs and as the program offers the potential for general improvement in attendance, not just improvement among those with the worst attendance records.

A policy on attendance at work is the crucial building block of attendance management. It should reflect what the organization expects in the way of attendance, the procedures regarding the use of various leave provisions, notification of absence procedures, return to work procedures, required documentation for an absence and an outline of what will be taken for unacceptable levels of absenteeism (Ward & Hirsch, 1985). Johnson et al. (2003) maintain that absence policies are merely aimed at controlling absence and have found to cause higher absence levels by undermining employee commitment.
2.7.3  Return to Work Interview

According to Fowler (1998), this is a standard return – to – work interview which require the employee to report to his or her manager after each absence, this method is the most influential element in ensuring that absences are not treated casually. The author maintain that the aim of this strategy is to enquire about the reason of absence, to decide whether the explanation is consistent with other evidence, to address any doubts of the employee and to identify work – related causes that could be corrected. Furthermore, if the absence is caused by difficult personal circumstances, the manager would then use his or her discretion and the employee would be referred to the Human Resources Department, occupational health advisor or other sources of welfare information. According to Hodgkiss (2004), this approach might discourage employees from taking unnecessary sick leave if they know they will be having an interview about their reason of absence when they return to work.

2.7.4  Employee Incentive Programs

Fowler (1998) indicates that good attendance can be encouraged by financial rewards. The author maintains many organizations that give attendance bonuses believe that this strategy reduces the absence rate of employees. Furthermore, bonuses promote group commitment to high levels of attendance.
Recognition for perfect as well as very good and improved attendance should be formally recognized. Many forms of recognition can be used such as tangible rewards, intangible rewards, formal presentations, letters of recognition and the most powerful is usually a genuine praise from the immediate supervisor. It is important to let the employees know their attendance matters to the organization and to the entire work team (Sandwith, 1987). Rhodes and Steers (1990) support this view by stating that different methods of incentives could be used by employers to reward the employees for good attendance.

Conversely, Park (2006) outlines some advantages and disadvantages of attendance rewards, namely:

Advantages

- The rewards may work in the short term, especially when used in conjunction with support for genuinely ill people.

- They generate awareness of absenteeism.

Disadvantages

- There could be legal ramifications, giving rise to disability or gender discrimination claims.

- They do not have long – term impact, as underlying problems reoccur.

- They may encourage people to attend work while sick.
• They can lead to resentment from those who attend work anyway without extra reward.

• They can be expensive.

2.7.5 Employee Assistance Programs (EAP's)

An EAP is a worksite – based program designed to assist employees and their families in ameliorating a variety of difficulties before it begin to affect their work performance. The personal problems the employees could suffer from include inter alia: marital problems, alcohol, substance abuse, legal, career, emotional stress or financial concerns (Zipes, 1987). The author maintains if these problems are left untreated it may adversely impact on the employee's productivity or ability to function on the job. This could lead to increased absenteeism, medical leaves, or an increase in the usage of medical or mental health benefits offered by the organization.

Sandwith (1987) contends that EAP's have an obvious part to play in the dealing with absenteeism as personal problems often affect employee attendance at work. Therefore, trained immediate supervisors will assist employees with problems to avert early attendance problems.
2.8 CONSEQUENCES OF ABSENTEEISM

This section will identify the potential consequences of absenteeism for individuals and for organizations.

2.8.1 Positive Consequences for Individuals

The most common consequence of absenteeism for an individual is the ability to recover from illness (Mowday et al., 1982). The authors state that absence from an organization is a way for employees to reduce stress or boredom that is associated with the job. The authors further state that absenteeism enables employees' to reduce job-related stress and thus maintain higher levels of motivation than might otherwise be possible.

2.8.2 Negative Consequences for Individuals

Depending on the absence policies of the organization, absenteeism could result in a loss of earnings for the employees, as many organizations have a paid sick leave policy, which only penalizes absences beyond a specified number of days. Despite loss of earnings, absences could also negatively influence the employees' performance evaluation with his or her supervisor. Frequent absences could result in negative performance evaluations from the employees' supervisor (Mowday et al., 1982).
2.8.3 Positive Consequences for Organizations

According to Mowday et al. (1982), at organizational level absenteeism has several consequences which influence the overall effectiveness of the organization. The authors maintain even though absenteeism is regarded as a negative consequence for organizations, at certain levels absenteeism does have its benefits. A benefit would be when a sick employee does not report for work. However, very strict absenteeism policies or incentives for attendance tend to encourage employees' that are truly very ill to attend work. Consequently they would then not be able to perform effectively and efficiently and would also spread their illness to their co-workers. Hence, resulting in many employees' being ill and possibly absenting themselves from work.

2.8.4 Negative Consequences for Organizations

The costs associated with absenteeism are the most salient and tangible negative consequence at the organizational level. The extent of the costs depends on the absence policies in the organizations. Some organizations may include administrative expenses that are needed to keep attendance records as costs of absenteeism. Furthermore some organizations may hire extra employees' to replace those employees' who are absent, this then results in higher payroll costs to the organization due to absenteeism. The costs that are likely to be associated with absenteeism is likely to influence organizational effectiveness, as high levels
of absenteeism reduce the overall productivity of employees and therefore affects the bottom line of the organization.

2.9 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND ABSENTEEISM

Theory predicts that highly committed employees should be motivated to attend to facilitate organizational goal attainment (Mowday et al., 1982). A number of studies conducted indicated that organizational commitment results in reduced levels of absenteeism (Luthans, 1992; Moorhead & Griffen, 1992; Robbins, 2001). Another study conducted by Huczynski and Fitzpatrick (1989) indicated a positive relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism. Results of the study reflected that employees with a high commitment showed fewer absences than the other way around. Angle and Lawson (1994) corroborates this view by stating that committed employees not only exhibit reduced withdrawal behaviours, but are more likely than others to work towards keeping the organization competitive.

Mowday et al. (1982) found higher commitment to be associated with lower absenteeism amongst public employees. However, numerous studies found no significant relationship between employee commitment and absenteeism (Cleg, 1983; Jamal, 1981; Morgan & Herman 1976; Parasuraman, 1982). Hence, it can be concluded that the research evidence surrounding the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism is inconclusive.
2.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter introduced the concept of organizational commitment and highlighted the three distinct forms associated with organizational commitment namely: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Furthermore, it sought to provide an overview of the literature pertaining to organizational commitment antecedents, whereby personal determinants, role-related determinants and work-experience determinants impacting on organizational commitment were discussed. In terms of the organizational commitment antecedents and organizational commitment consequences various areas where research has been conducted have been reported on.

In addition, the construct of absenteeism was discussed highlighting the causes of absenteeism, the impact of biographical variables on absenteeism, strategies to manage absenteeism and consequences of absenteeism.

It is evident from the literature that organizational commitment and absenteeism are constructs that have a major impact on organizations in terms of productivity, sustainability and profitability. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an outline on how the research methodology was used in the investigation of the proposed research problem with specific reference to the selection of the participants and the procedure of gathering the data. Thereafter an exposition of measuring instruments and the psychometric properties of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire and absenteeism will be discussed. The chapter concludes with the statistical techniques used to analyze the data.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

For this study a non-probability sampling design was used in the form of a convenience sampling method to gather the data. The reason for using this sampling method was due to the availability of the respondents. The respondents were easily accessible and the fact that it was less time consuming and inexpensive to gather the research information. Hence, all participants were solicited to partake in the study.
Sekaran (2000) contends that the advantages of the non–probability sampling method are that it is relatively uncomplicated, inexpensive, less time consuming and free from statistical complexity.

Welman and Kruger (2001) support this view by stating that non–probability samples are less complicated and more economical as opposed to probability samples. The authors' further state that a convenience sampling method involves collecting information of members of the population that is easily accessible and readily available for the research purposes.

According to Leedy (1993), convenience sampling is not always representative of the population and therefore the results are not generalizable to other populations. Hence as a non–probability sample was used in this study, external validity of the study was compromised.

A quantitative, cross–sectional design based on the questionnaires was used to assess the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism.

Hayes (2001) points out advantages in terms of using questionnaires as a method of data collection:

- The questionnaire is useful to obtain information from reasonably big groups of participants;
- Big groups of participants can be assessed at a time, costs are relatively low; and
- It is quick and efficient.
Furthermore, Hayes (2001) points out disadvantages in terms of using questionnaires as a method of data collection:

- The response rate from participants in answering the questionnaire may be low;
- Inflexible;
- Information received may not be in great depth; and
- Participants may ignore the questionnaire that is the researcher will receive incomplete questionnaires that will have to be discarded.

### 3.2.1 Population

The population assessed in this study consists of permanent and contract employees (N = 120) ranging from Director, Pharmacist, Pharmacist Assistant, Auxiliary Service Officer, Administrative Clerk, Administrative Officer and State Accountant at a public health institution residing under the Department of Health in the Western Cape.

### 3.2.2 Sample

All employees were encouraged to partake in the study, and therefore one hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires were administered out of which ninety eight (98) questionnaires were returned, thereby yielding a response rate of 82%. According to Sekaran (2000), a thirty percent (30%) response rate is regarded as acceptable for most research purposes. This response rate can be due to the fact that the
participants were well informed prior to the research being conducted about the purposes of the study, the confidentiality and that a final copy of the report would be given to the Head of the Department: Health Western Cape, so the Head can be aware of the status of organizational commitment and absenteeism at the institution.

The sample (n = 98) consisted of males and females who were permanent and contract employees ranging from the following occupational classes: Director, Pharmacist, Pharmacist Assistant, Auxiliary Service Officer, Administrative Clerk, Administrative Officer and State Accountant.

3.2.3 Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Head of the Department of Health in the Western Cape. The researcher was given the necessary departmental information required for the research.

Prior to the research being conducted all supervisors and employees were informed during an information session about the purpose and objectives of the study, when the study would be conducted, the confidentiality and anonymity of the study and that the responses of the participants would be used for research purposes only.
A total number of one hundred and twenty (120) biographical, organizational commitment as well as absenteeism questionnaires was distributed to all permanent and contract employees. A cover letter was attached to the questionnaires indicating the purpose of the research. The cover letter further highlighted that all employees' responses would be treated with the utmost of confidentiality and that their anonymity would be protected.

The researcher personally handed out the questionnaires with envelopes and requested that the questionnaires be returned within one (1) week in the enclosed envelope provided to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the employees are maintained.

3.2.4 Biographical Questionnaire

For the purpose of the study, the researcher developed a biographical questionnaire to solicit information from employees regarding their gender, age, race, marital status, educational level, tenure, monthly income, occupational class and status of employment at the public health institution in the Western Cape see (Appendix B).
3.2.5 Measuring Instrument

3.2.5.1 Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)

The OCQ was used to obtain data on organizational commitment of the employees (Appendix C).

3.2.5.1.1 Nature and Composition of the OCQ

The OCQ is a 15 statement instrument which has a seven (7) point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree, neither agree nor disagree, slightly agree, moderately agree to strongly agree". The intention is that the scale items taken together would reflect a fairly consistent indication of organizational commitment levels. In order to score, the results are added and divided by fifteen (15) to provide a summary indicator of organizational commitment. Out of the fifteen (15) items, six (6) of the items are negatively worded and reverse scored in an attempt to reduce response bias (Mowday et al., 1982).

According to Gupta, Prizinger and Messerschmidt (1998), the OCQ is the most commonly used instrument which was developed by Mowday et al. (1982). The OCQ displays acceptable psychometric properties within constraints of attitude measurement which can be used to measure organizational commitment.
only (Nunnally, 1967). This questionnaire has been shown to be reliable and valid (Mowday et al., 1982).

3.2.5.1.2 Reliability of the OCQ

The reliability of a test refers to how consistent are the scores obtained when administering on two different occasions to the same participants (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2002). Anastasi (1990) supports this view by stating that reliability refers to the consistency of scores obtained by the same persons when re-examined with the same test on different occasions or with different sets of the same items or under different conditions.

Psychometric properties of the OCQ are based on a series of studies which were assessed by administering it to 2563 participants in a wide range of jobs, including private and public organizations. Acceptable levels of internal consistency and test–re test were determined (Mowday et al., 1982). Internal consistency was calculated in three different ways, namely, coefficient alpha, item analysis and factor analysis (Mowday et al., 1982).

Mowday et al. (1982) maintain that the coefficient alpha for the OCQ is consistently high ranging from .82 to .93, with a median of .90. The item analysis results indicate each item had a positive correlation with the total score of the OCQ, with the average correlation ranging from .36 to .72 and a median correlation of .64. Therefore the results suggest that the fifteen (15) items of the
OCQ are fairly homogenous with respect to the underlying attitude they measure. The authors examined the stability of the OCQ over time by computing the test–retest reliabilities. The test–retest results displayed acceptable levels ranging from $r = .53$ to $r = .75$ over periods ranging from two (2) to four (4) months.

Based on a study conducted amongst one hundred and four (104) sales supervisors from eight (8) diverse organizations in Hong Kong by Lam (1998), the test–retest reliability of the OCQ displayed moderate results with the alpha coefficients ranging between .82 to .84.

In a study conducted by Goulet and Frank (2002) amongst two hundred and twenty eight (228) participants ranging across three sectors: public, non–profit, and for–profit, the OCQ displayed an extremely high reliability alpha of .91.

Kline and Russell (1998) conducted a study amongst eighty three (83) Mexican employees within a large division of a US manufacturing firm in Mexico. The authors computed the coefficient alpha to determine the internal consistency reliability of the OCQ with the result being acceptable at .82.

3.2.5.1.3 Validity of the OCQ

Validity refers to the extent to which the instrument actually measures what it is supposed to (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2002).
According to Mowday et al. (1982), the validity of the OCQ displays evidence of convergent, discriminant and predictive validity. To provide support that the OCQ possesses convergent validity, the authors correlated the OCQ score with the sources of Organizational Attachment Questionnaire, as it structurally differs from the OCQ and thus would reduce common methods variance problems in the analysis.

Convergent validities across six (6) diverse samples ranged from .63 to .74 with a median of .70 which provided consistent evidence of convergent validity of the OCQ (Mowday et al., 1982). The authors further examined the extent to which the OCQ was related to employees' behavioural intentions to remain. Significant correlations were found between the OCQ and intention to remain in an organization. Similarly the authors found from four (4) studies a moderate relationship exists with correlations ranging between .35 to .45 from the OCQ and employees' motivation to exert high levels of energy on behalf of the organization.

Mowday et al. (1982) further provided proof of discriminant validity of the OCQ. The authors compared the OCQ with three (3) other measures, namely, job involvement, career satisfaction and job satisfaction. The relationship between organizational commitment and job involvement ranged from $r = .30$ to $r = .56$ across four (4) samples. Correlations between organizational commitment and a three (3) item measure of career satisfaction displayed .39 and .40 for two (2) samples. Across four (4) studies correlations between organizational commitment and scales of the job descriptive index ranged from .01 to .68 with a median
correlation of .41. The above measures of job involvement, career satisfaction and job satisfaction all displayed low correlations with the scores of the OCQ.

Mowday et al. (1982) provided proof of the predictive validity of the OCQ by displaying the relatively consistent relationships in the predicted direction between commitment and measures of turnover, absenteeism, tenure and job performance. The extent of these relationships was not frequently high, yet suggested that employee behaviour in organizations is obtained by a complex set of factors and not just commitment to the organization.

Similarly, in two (2) studies, the OCQ was positively correlated with tenure ranging from .23 and .26. However, in two (2) of the three (3) studies examining the relationship between the OCQ and absenteeism, a significant weak relationship -.13 and -.28 emerged (Mowday et al., 1982).

3.2.5.1.4 Rationale for inclusion of the OCQ

The rationale for the inclusion of the OCQ in this study is that it has been proven to be a reliable and valid instrument for measuring organizational commitment (Mowday et al., 1982).
A short self-reporting absenteeism questionnaire developed by Pousette and Hanse (2002) and Goldberg and Waldman (2000) were used in this research study to elicit data on the level of sickness absence (Appendix D). Participants were asked to furnish information on the **total number** of days they had been absent due to sick leave for the last six (6) months. Furthermore, participants were requested to indicate their sickness absence **frequency**, the number of times they were absent due to sick leave during the last six (6) months. A study conducted by Pousette and Hanse (2002) reflected that the afore-mentioned variables had a bivariate correlation of $r = .77$.

In addition, studies by Rentsch and Steel 1998 as stated by Goldberg and Waldman (2000) also utilized the six (6) month period to gather data from participants. The researchers found that the six (6) month addresses the concerns associated with requesting participants to recollect their conduct relatively great in extent. Hence, information in this section of the questionnaire is not objective. Notwithstanding the afore-mentioned, the researchers is of the belief that participants narrated this data moderately honestly as the information could be supported by objective sickness absence data.
3.2.7 Statistical Techniques

The research data were statistically analyzed by means of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is an appropriate mathematical tool as it allows the researcher to draw objective conclusions. The statistical techniques enabled the researcher to analyze the raw data accurately obtained from the questionnaires. The distributions reflected the responses and percentages of each of the items in the questionnaires.

3.2.7.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics enable researchers to display the obtained data in a structured, accurate and summarized way (Huysamen, 1990).

Aron and Aron (1999) support this view by stating that researchers use descriptive statistics to summarize a set of scores and making them more comprehensible. The descriptive statistics used in this research study allowed the researcher to analyze the data which, included frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations.

3.2.7.1.2 Frequencies

According to Sekaran (2000), frequencies refer to the number of times various sub-categories of a certain phenomenon occur, from which the percentage and
cumulative of their occurrence can easily be calculated. Frequencies are used in this research study to obtain a profile of the sample.

3.2.7.1.3 Percentages

According to Cooper and Emory (1995), percentages has two (2) main purposes in data presentation. Percentages simplify by reducing all numbers to a range from 0 to 100 and it translates the data into standard form with a base for relative comparisons.

3.2.7.1.4 Measures of Central Tendency and Dispersion

According to Huysamen (1998), the measures of central tendency and dispersion allow one to describe and compare distributions more concisely and objectively. The data was analyzed using the following measures of central tendency and dispersion:

- Mean – Judd, Smith and Kidder (1991) defines mean as the average value of the variable, computed across all cases.
- Median – According to Huysamen (1998), median refers to the score which has one half of the scores on either side of it when the scores have been arranged in ascending and descending order.
- Mode – Sekeran (2000) describes the mode as the most frequently occurring phenomenon.
- Variance – Huysamen (1998) refers to the variance as the sum of the squared deviations from the mean.
- Standard deviation – The standard deviation is a commonly used measure of dispersion, and is the square root of the variance (Sekaran, 2000).

3.2.7.2  Inferential Statistics

According to Aron and Aron (1999), inferential statistics allows researchers to draw conclusions based on the scores collected in a research study (sample scores) and going beyond them (to conclusions about a population).

The following inferential statistical methods were used to test the research hypotheses.

3.2.7.2.1  The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

Sekaran (2000) states that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient technique is used to establish the linear relationship which exists between two (2) variables.

According to Rosnow and Rosenthal (1996), correlation procedures are used to measure the strength of association between two (2) variables.
Cohen and Swerdlik (2002) add that the correlation coefficient is a statistic used for obtaining an index of the relationships between two (2) variables when the relationships between the variables is linear and when the two (2) variables correlated are continuous.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient furthermore indicates the strength of the relationship between the two (2) variables. Values that are close to zero display a weak linear relationship. As the value of the coefficient ($r$), moves towards either -1.00 or +1.00, the strength of the relationship increases which indicates a positive linear correlation. A strong negative linear relationship exists when the $r$ is close to -1.00 (Ghiselli, Campbell & Zedeck, 1981).

Therefore to ascertain whether a statistically significant relationship exists between organizational commitment and absenteeism, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used.

3.2.7.2.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Aron and Aron (1999) postulate that the analysis of variance is a hypothesis – testing procedure for studies involving two (2) or more groups.

Furthermore, Murphy and Davidshofer (2001) contend that the analysis of variance provides statistical estimates of the variability in test scores with
systematic differences in the ratings assigned and differences in the ratings obtained.

The analysis of variance statistical method was used to establish whether a statistically significant relationship exists between organizational commitment and biographical variables.

3.2.7.2.3 **Multiple Regression Analysis**

Ghiselli et al. (1981) state that Multiple Regression Analysis is an extension of simple regression and includes more than one producer variable. It is also able to predict changes in the dependant variable with response to change in more than one independent variable.

Similarly, Sekaran (2000) states that in Multiple Regression Analysis more than one predictor is jointly regressed against the criterion variable. Therefore the Multiple Regression Analysis method was used to determine whether independent variables will explain the variance in organizational commitment experienced by employees at a public health institution in the Western Cape.
3.2.7.2.4  Scheffe's Multiple Comparison Method

ANOVA displays a good judgment into the differences between groups. But does not provide an accurate indication as to where the differences exactly exist.

Wiersma and Jurs (1982, p. 266) state that "when statistically significant F ratio is obtained in an ANOVA, and the null hypothesis is rejected, we can conclude that at least one population mean is different from others. The authors furthermore add that all the population means or any combinations can differ and thus has to establish which pairs of means differ, therefore it is imperative to do a follow – up analysis like the Scheffe's Multiple Comparison procedure. Hence, the Scheffe's Multiple Comparison Method was used to determine where the differences between the groups exist.

3.3  SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter addressed the research methodology of the study. An extensive explanation was given about the research design, the selection of the sample, the procedure used to gather the data, the measuring instruments used as well as the statistical techniques used to test the research hypotheses.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous section, the research methodology and design utilised during the current study were outlined. The information provided and discussed in the previous chapters will serve as a background against which the contents of this chapter will be presented and interpreted and is based on the empirical analyses conducted to test the hypotheses.

The statistical programme used for the analyses and presentation of data in this research is the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 13. The descriptive statistics computed for the study are presented first in an outline of the characteristics of the sample with regards to the variables included in the study. The descriptive statistics calculated for the sample are provided in the sections that follow. That is, the data pertaining to the variables included in the study, as collected by the three measuring instruments employed, are summarised by means of calculation of descriptive measures. In this manner, the properties of the observed data can clearly emerge and an overall picture thereof is obtained.
Thereafter, the analyses of the constructs relevant to the study, that is, absenteeism and organizational commitment, are presented with the aid of inferential statistical procedures. Conclusions are then drawn on the basis of the obtained results.

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

This section outlines the descriptive statistics calculated on the basis of the variables included in the biographical questionnaire. The demographic variables that receive attention are occupational classification, race, gender, age, educational level, tenure, marital status, income, job status, number of days absent and number of times absent. Descriptive statistics, in the form of frequencies and percentages, are subsequently presented graphically for each of the above-mentioned variables based on the characteristics of the research sample (n = 98).
4.2.1 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the occupational classification of the sample.

The majority of respondents (n = 35), that is, 36% are pharmacist assistants, followed by administrative clerks who comprised 31% of the sample (n = 30). Pharmacists and auxiliary service officers comprised an additional 12% each, with both comprising 12 respondents. A total of 7% (n = 7) were administrative officers, while directors and state accountants each comprised an additional 1% (n=1), respectively.
Figure 4.2 presents the racial classification of the sample.

Based on Figure 4.2, it can be seen that the majority of the respondents is Coloured, comprising 75% of the sample (n = 73), while Africans constituted 11% of the sample. Eight percent (n = 8) respondents were White and Asians represented the minority of respondents with only 6% (n = 6).
Figure 4.3 provides a depiction of the gender distribution of the sample.

The sample comprised of 63% (n = 62) male respondents, while females only comprised of 37% of the sample (n = 36).
Figure 4.4 provides an overview of the educational level of the respondents.

The majority of the respondents can be seen to have a matric as their highest educational level, with 42% (n = 41) having attained this level as their highest education. Twenty-five respondents (n = 25) or 26% had acquired education levels up to Std. 9, with 12% (n = 12) being comprised of those with Std. 6 as their highest educational level. Employees with Postgraduate qualifications constituted 11% (n = 11) of the respondents and the fewest respondents (n = 9) or 9% had a degree as their highest level of education.
Figure 4.5 indicates the length of service (tenure) of respondents.

From Figure 4.5 it can be seen that the majority of the respondents (n = 35, or 36%) have been with the organization for between 0 and 5 years, with a further 21 respondents (n = 21) or 21% consisting of respondents with 11-15 years’ length of service. Those in the category 16-20 years of service comprised 18% (n = 18), those with more than 20 years, comprised an additional 13% (n =13), with the fewest respondents having 6-10 years service with the organization (n = 11), or 11%.
Figure 4.6 depicts the age distribution of respondents.

Figure 4.6 indicates that the majority of the respondents (9(n = 47 or 48%)) fall in the age category 31-40 years. Respondents in the age category 20-30 years comprised an additional 29% (n = 28) of the sample, with 12% being older than 50 years, and the least number of respondents (n = 11) or 11% being between the ages of 41 and 50 years old.
Figure 4.7 illustrates the marital status of the respondents.

Figure 4.7 shows that the majority of the respondents, that is 63% \( (n = 62) \) are married, while 30 respondents \( (n = 30) \) or 31% are single. Respondents that are divorced constituted 5% \( (n = 5) \) of the sample, while only 1 respondent \( (n = 1) \) or 1% was widowed.
Figure 4.8 presents a graphical illustration of the income distribution of the sample.

Based on Figure 4.8 it can be seen that the majority of the respondents (n = 44) or 45% earn between R 5 001 to R 10 000 per month, with a further 40 respondents (n = 40) (that is 41%) earning less than R 5 000 per month. Thirteen respondents (n = 13) or 13% earn between R 10 001 and R 15 000, while only 1 respondent (n = 1) or 1% earns over R 15 000 per month.
Figure 4.9 depicts the job status of the respondents.

Figure 4.9 indicates that the majority of the respondents (n = 85 or 87%) are permanently employed, with only 13 respondents (n = 13 or 13%) being contract employees.
4.2.2 ABENTEEISM

The number of days and number of times employees remained absent are presented in graphic format.

From Figure 4.10 it may be deduced that ten (n = 10 or 10%) of the respondents did not take any days off due to sickness during the last 6 months, while 28% (n = 27) indicated that they had taken between 1-3 days sick leave during the last 6 months. Thirty eight respondents (n = 38) or 39% indicated that they had taken 4-6 days sick leave during the last six months, while a 14% (n = 14) took 7-10 days and 9 respondents (n = 9) or 9% took more than 10 days sick leave during the last 6 months.
In terms of Figure 4.11 it can be inferred that the majority of the sample \((n = 38)\) or 39% of the respondents were absent due to sick leave 1-2 times during the last six months, with 19% \((n = 19)\) indicating they were never absent during the last six months. A further 26% \((n = 25)\) indicated they were absent 3-4 times during the last six months, while 10% \((n = 10)\) employees indicated they had been absent 5-6 times during the last six months. Six respondents \((n = 6)\) or 6% indicated they had been absent more than 6 times.

Descriptive statistics which were computed for the various dimensions assessed by the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) are presented in Table 4.1.
### 4.2.3 RESULTS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Table 4.1 depicts the descriptive statistics for the organizational commitment of the sample of 98 employees.

**Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics for the dimensions of organizational commitment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affective commitment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>17.32</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative commitment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>19.27</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuance commitment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>16.79</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>-.79</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total commitment</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>51.24</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 depicts the results for the dimensions of organizational commitment as well as total organizational commitment as determined by the OCQ. The results in Table 4.1 indicate that the mean and standard deviation for total organizational commitment of the sample are 51.24 and 7.40, respectively.
Since a mean score of approximately 60 is indicative of an average level of organizational commitment, it may be concluded that the sample of employees reported below average levels of organizational commitment.

Given that the respondents’ levels of organizational commitment were lower than what constitutes an average level, it can be concluded that respondents display below average belief in the organization’s goals and values (Mean = 17.32, SD = 4.76), express below average willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization (Mean = 19.27, SD = 3.23), and have a below average desire to maintain membership of the organization (Mean = 16.79, SD = 4.16).

4.3 INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

The following section addresses the results obtained for the inferential statistics to ascertain the relationship between absenteeism and organizational commitment, the relationship between biographical characteristics and absenteeism, the relationship between biographical characteristics and organizational commitment, and to determine which factors explain the variance in both absenteeism and absenteeism among the sample of respondents.
Hypothesis 1

There is a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of the organizational commitment questionnaire.

Table 4.2 Intercorrelations between commitment scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Affective commitment</th>
<th>Normative commitment</th>
<th>Continuance commitment</th>
<th>Total commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuance</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.26*</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*  p < 0.05  
** p < 0.01

The correlation between the continuance and affective components is significant but weak (r = .21, p < 0.05). Similarly, the correlation between the normative and affective component is significant but weak (r = .23, p < 0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.
Hypothesis 2

There will be a significant relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

Table 4.3  Pearson correlation between absenteeism and organizational commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absenteeism</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective commitment</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.023*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative commitment</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.028**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuance commitment</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.008**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total commitment</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.013*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*  p < 0.05
** p < 0.01

Table 4.3 indicates the relationship between absenteeism and the dimensions of organizational commitment.

The results indicate that there is a moderate relationship between affective commitment and absenteeism amongst the sample of employees.
There was also a significant relationship between normative commitment and absenteeism \( (r = 0.46, p < 0.01) \). Moreover, there was a significant relationship between continuance commitment and absenteeism \( (r = 0.57, p < 0.01) \). Similarly, there was a significant relationship between total organizational commitment and absenteeism \( (r = 0.49, p < 0.05) \). \textit{Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.}
Hypothesis 3

There will be a significant relationship between organizational commitment and biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

Table 4.4 Pearson correlation between organizational commitment and biographical variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biographical Variables</th>
<th>Organizational Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.54**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational qualifications</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.34*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>.38*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational class</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job status</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*  p < 0.05

** p < 0.01
Table 4.4 indicates the relationship between the respondents’ biographical characteristics and organizational commitment. The results indicate that the strongest relationship exists between gender and organizational commitment ($r = 0.54, p < 0.01$).

There was no significant correlation between organizational commitment and race, educational qualifications, income, marital status and job status, respectively ($p > 0.05$). *Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.*
Hypothesis 4

There will be a significant relationship between absenteeism and biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

Table 4.5 Pearson correlation between absenteeism and biographical variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absenteeism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.73**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational qualifications</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.54**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>.48**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational class</td>
<td>.31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job status</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05  
** p < 0.01

Table 4.5 indicates the relationship between the respondents’ biographical characteristics and their absenteeism. The results indicate that the strongest
relationship exists between gender and absenteeism ($r = 0.73, p < 0.01$). There was also a significant, inverse relationship between the age of respondents and absenteeism ($r = -0.54, p < 0.01$). Respondents’ marital status ($r = .48, p < 0.01$) and tenure ($r = .40, p < 0.01$) were also shown to be statically significantly related to absenteeism.

There was a statistically significant relationship between the race of respondents and absenteeism ($r = .32, p < 0.05$) as well as between occupational class and absenteeism ($r = .31, p < 0.05$).

The remaining variables (educational qualifications, income and job status) were not shown to be statistically significantly related to absenteeism ($p > 0.05$).

**Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected**, since some of the biographical variables were shown to be significantly related to absenteeism.
Hypothesis 5

There will be a significant difference in organizational commitment amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape based on their biographical characteristics.

Table 4.6: ANOVA- Biographical data and organizational commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organizational Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>5.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>4.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>5.582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational qualifications</td>
<td>6.858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>6.854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>4.734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational class</td>
<td>.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job status</td>
<td>.623</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05

** p < 0.01
Table 4.6 indicates that there are statistically significant differences in organizational commitment based on the biographical characteristics of the respondents. There was a significant difference in organizational commitment based on gender (p < 0.01), race (p < 0.01), tenure (p < 0.01), age (p < 0.01), educational qualifications (p < 0.01), and marital status (p < 0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.
Hypothesis 6

There will be a significant difference in absenteeism amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape based on biographical variables.

Table 4.7: ANOVA- Biographical data and Absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absenteeism</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>3.432</td>
<td>0.014**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>1.347</td>
<td>0.268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>3.352</td>
<td>0.035*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational qualifications</td>
<td>2.273</td>
<td>0.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>3.349</td>
<td>0.034*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>4.328</td>
<td>0.038*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational class</td>
<td>1.021</td>
<td>0.383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job status</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05
** p < 0.01

Table 4.7 indicates that there are statistically significant differences in absenteeism based on some of the biographical characteristics of the respondents.
There was a significant difference in absenteeism based on gender (p < 0.01), tenure (p < 0.05), age (p < 0.05) and marital status (p < 0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.
Hypothesis 7

The biographical variables will statistically significantly explain the variance in organizational commitment amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

Table 4.8  Multiple Regression: Biographical variables and organizational commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.282</td>
<td>-2.768</td>
<td>0.004**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.348</td>
<td>-3.257</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of education</td>
<td>-0.091</td>
<td>-0.972</td>
<td>0.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job level</td>
<td>0.121</td>
<td>-1.204</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>-0.472</td>
<td>-4.254</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05
** p < 0.01
Table 4.8 summarises the results regressing the five biographical variables against organizational commitment. Results indicate that multiple R is 0.62392, with the R-squared being 0.38927. This indicates that approximately 39% of the variance in organizational commitment can be attributed to the independent variables entered into the regression. The F-statistic of 5.528 is significant at the 0.01 level.

*Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.*

Moreover, the highest Beta-value was for tenure, followed by gender, age and job level, all of which statistically explain the variance in organizational commitment amongst the sample of 98 employees. The negative Beta weights for tenure indicate that those employees who have been working for longer are less committed. Older employees appear also to be less committed, based on the negative Beta weight.
Hypothesis 8

The biographical variables will statistically significantly explain the variance in absenteeism amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

Table 4.9 Multiple Regression: Biographical variables and absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.227450</td>
<td>-0.254</td>
<td>0.0408*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job level</td>
<td>-0.22052</td>
<td>-1.112</td>
<td>0.0234*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of education</td>
<td>-0.146630</td>
<td>-1.325</td>
<td>0.0658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>-0.322324</td>
<td>-3.124</td>
<td>0.0032**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.276734</td>
<td>-2.372</td>
<td>0.0113*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05
** p < 0.01
Table 4.9 presents the results of the regression analysis, regressing the biographical variables against absenteeism. Results indicate that the multiple R-value is 0.59243, as indicated by Multiple R. The R-Squared value of 0.35097 indicates that approximately 35% of the variance in absenteeism can be accounted for by these five demographic variables.

The F-statistic of 5.325214 is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Hence, it may be concluded that the five demographic variables, namely age, gender, level of education, job level and tenure significantly explain 35% of the variance in absenteeism satisfaction. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

With a Beta-value of -0.322324, tenure reaches statistical significance at the 0.01 level, and is the best predictor of absenteeism. Moreover, gender, age and job level are statistically significant at the 0.05 level and are hence significant predictors of absenteeism. The negative Beta weights associated with job level, suggest that employees occupying more senior positions are less absent. Similarly, the negative Beta weight for age indicates that older employees are less absent.
4.4 PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The reliability and validity of the organizational commitment questionnaire, based on the sample of health-care employees, is reported below.

4.4.1 RELIABILITY

The reliability of a measure attests to its consistency and stability, which denote how well the items measuring a concept fit together as a set. Cronbach’s alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in an instrument correlate with each other. Cronbach’s alpha measures the extent to which a set of items measures a single construct. It provides an estimate of reliability of an instrument by determining the internal consistency of the test or the average correlation of items within the test (Sekaran, 2000). The closer Cronbach’s alpha approximates 1, the higher is the internal consistency reliability. Reliabilities less than 0.6 are considered to be poor, those in the .7 range, acceptable and those over .8, good (Sekaran, 2000).
Table 4.10  Reliability of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Cronbach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affective commitment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative commitment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuance commitment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total commitment</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha was used to assess the reliability of the scale. Table 4.10 shows that acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained for all the subscales, varying from 0.68 to 0.89. Scores on all the subscales seem to be distributed normally, because the skewness and kurtosis are within the guidelines of lower –2 or higher than +2 as required by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). As all coefficients were above 0.7, they can be regarded as acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

4.4.2 FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis is a multivariate statistical technique used to confirm whether or not the theorized dimensions emerge. This assess whether the dimensions of a construct are tapped by the items contained in the measure. It seeks to determine if the number of factors and the loadings of measured (indicator) variables on them conform to what is expected on the basis of pre-established theory. Indicator variables are selected on the basis of prior theory and factor analysis is used to see if they load as predicted on the expected number of factors. The researcher's à
priori assumption is that each factor (the number and labels of which may be specified à priori) is associated with a specified subset of indicator variables. A minimum requirement of confirmatory factor analysis is that one hypothesizes beforehand the number of factors in the model, but usually also the researcher will posit expectations about which variables will load on which factors. The researcher seeks to determine, for instance, if measures created to represent a latent variable really belong together (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).
Table 4.11  Factor Analysis of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

The validity of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire was assessed using factor analysis. Factor analysis was used on the measuring instruments to determine their unidimensionality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Affective commitment</th>
<th>Normative commitment</th>
<th>Continuance commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OC 1</td>
<td>.532</td>
<td>.170</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 2</td>
<td>.614</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>-.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 3</td>
<td>.582</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 4</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>-.164</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 5</td>
<td>.864</td>
<td>-.132</td>
<td>.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 6</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.621</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 7</td>
<td>.212</td>
<td>-.502</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 8</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>-.557</td>
<td>.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 9</td>
<td>.223</td>
<td>.631</td>
<td>.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 10</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.712</td>
<td>.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 11</td>
<td>-.126</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>.805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 12</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 13</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>.530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 14</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC 15</td>
<td>-.143</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>.719</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Confirmatory factor analysis of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire yielded three separate structure comprising of 15 items, with a reliability coefficient of .77 as reported in Table 4.11.

The results obtained in the factor analysis indicate that five factors loaded significantly on Component 1, which is referred to as affective commitment. A further five items loaded significantly on the second component, labeled normative commitment. Finally, the remaining five items loaded significantly on component 3, referred to as continuance commitment.

4.5 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has provided an overview of the most salient findings obtained based on empirical analysis of the data. Chapter five presents a discussion of the findings obtained and contextualizes the research findings based on previous research on absenteeism and organizational commitment.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter, the major findings of the study will be discussed with regard to previous findings in other studies. The discussion will include demographic information with regards to the sample, results obtained from the descriptive statistics for the dimensions of organizational commitment and absenteeism, correlations between the dimensions of organizational commitment and absenteeism, multiple regression analysis as well as significant statistical differences between biographical variables. Conclusions will be drawn based on the obtained results and recommendations for future research will be discussed.

5.2 DISCUSSION

5.2.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

The sample in the study consists of ninety eight (n = 98) participants. In terms of organizational commitment of the participants the results of the study as elucidated in Table 4.1 displays a below average level of organizational
commitment. The latter is indicative of a mean score of approximately sixty (60) which can be regarded as an average level of organizational commitment.

5.2.2 Affective Commitment

In terms of affective commitment the results of the study reflects a mean score of 17.32 with a standard deviation of 4.76. Hence, it is evident that the employees experience below average levels of affective commitment.

5.2.3 Normative Commitment

With regard to normative commitment the results of the current study indicates a mean score of 19.27 with a standard deviation of 3.23. Therefore, it can be concluded that the employees experience below average levels of normative commitment.

5.2.4 Continuance Commitment

With reference to continuance commitment the study yielded a mean score of 16.79 with a standard deviation of 4.16. Hence, it can be concluded that employees experience below average levels of continuance commitment.
5.3 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Hypothesis 1

There is a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire.

The results (cf Table 4.2) indicate that there were significant relationships between affective and normative commitment and between affective commitment and continuance commitment, respectively. The relationship between normative and continuance commitment, was a significant, albeit inverse one. There was also an inverse relationship between normative commitment and total commitment, as well as between continuance commitment and total commitment.

Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

5.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND ABSENTEEISM

Hypothesis 2

There will be a significant relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.
Significant correlations were found in Table 4.3 between affective commitment and absenteeism \( (p = 0.42, p < 0.05) \), between normative commitment and absenteeism \( (r = 0.46, p < 0.01) \), between continuance commitment and absenteeism \( (r = 0.57, p < 0.01) \) and between total organizational commitment and absenteeism \( (r = 0.49, p < 0.05) \). \textit{Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.}

Theory would predict that highly committed individuals would be more motivated to attend so that they could facilitate organizational goal attainment (Mowday et al., 1982). Studies to date have yielded evidence in support of this, and indicate that a negative relationship exists between organizational commitment and absenteeism (Luthans, 1992; Moorhead & Griffen, 1992; Robbins, 2001).

There have been a number of studies conducted that indicate that organizational commitment contributes to reduced levels of absenteeism (Luthans, 1992; Moorhead & Griffen, 1992; Robbins, 2001). Research shows a link between the organizational commitment of employees and absenteeism (Huczynski & Fitzpatrick, 1989).

This view is supported by Angle and Lawson (1994) who state that committed employees not only exhibit reduced withdrawal behaviours, but are more likely than others to work towards keeping the organization competitive. Research by Eby, Freeman, Rush and Lance (1999) did not find evidence of a relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism. Farrell and Stamm (1988) found a negative correlation between organizational commitment and
absenteeism. The higher the organizational commitment, the lower the absenteeism reported. Similar findings were obtained by Hackett (1989).

5.5 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

Hypothesis 3

There will be a significant relationship between organizational commitment and biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

Results in the study indicate that there are significant correlations between gender, tenure, marital status and age respectively, and organizational commitment (p < 0.01). However, the correlation between organizational commitment and race, educational qualifications, income and job status was not significant (p > 0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

5.6 ABSENTEEISM AND BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

Hypothesis 4

There will be a significant relationship between absenteeism and biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.
Significant correlations were found between gender and absenteeism ($r = 0.73$), age and absenteeism ($r = -0.54$), marital status and absenteeism ($r = .48$) and tenure and absenteeism ($r = .40$) ($p < 0.01$). Similarly, there was a statistically significant relationship between the race and absenteeism ($r = .32$) as well as between occupational class and absenteeism ($r = .31$) ($p < 0.05$). The relationships between educational qualifications, income and job status and absenteeism, respectively were not statistically significantly ($p > 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

5.7 DIFFERENCE IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT BASED ON BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

Hypothesis 5

There will be a significant difference in organizational commitment amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape based on their biographical characteristics.

Table 4.6 indicates that there are statistically significant differences in organizational commitment based on the biographical characteristics of the respondents. There was a significant difference in organizational commitment based on gender ($p < 0.01$), race ($p < 0.01$), tenure ($p < 0.01$), age ($p < 0.01$), educational qualifications ($p < 0.01$), and marital status ($p < 0.05$). Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected.
5.7.1 Gender

As is the case with education, the influence of gender on organizational commitment remains unclear.

The general contention appears to be that women as a group tend to be more committed to their employing organization than are their male counterparts (Cramer, 1993; Harrison & Hubbard, 1998; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). More specifically, a study by Loscocco (1990), in which commitment was measured with the aid of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), revealed that women were more likely to report that they are proud to work for their organization, that their values and the company’s values are similar, and that they would accept almost any job offered to them in order to remain with their current employer.

Several explanations have been offered to account for the greater commitment of female employees. Mowday et al. (1982) hold that women generally have to overcome more barriers to attain their positions within the organization. The extra effort required to enter the organization is, consequently, reflected in the higher commitment of female employees. Harrison and Hubbard (1998) are further of the opinion that women display greater commitment because they encounter fewer options for employment. Sekaran (2000), on the other hand, suggests that the situation may be explained by the fact that women are generally dual-income family members who would not be unduly concerned with making
more money, but are inclined to derive satisfaction by doing the best job where they are.

However, Blau and Boal (1987), cited in Voster (1992), hold that men demonstrate greater organizational commitment than women do. This contention may be explained by two factors (Ngo & Tsang, 1998). Firstly, the sexual divisions of labour may constrain and reduce a woman’s involvement and commitment at work. Secondly, men and women may develop different career strategies and may have different perceptions and responses to the same employment situation. In this sense, gender acts as a moderating variable between organizational commitment and some employment practices.

Numerous other researchers have, however, failed to find support for a relationship between gender and organizational commitment (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Ngo & Tsang, 1998; Wahn, 1998). It may, thus, be concluded that a growing body of evidence appears to support either no gender differences in organizational commitment or the greater commitment of women (Wahn, 1998).

5.7.2 Nature of Employment (Job Status)

In a study conducted by Rabson (2000) with regards to the levels of organizational commitment that exists between contract and permanent staff in the information technology arena, it was found that there is a low level of commitment for both contract and permanent staff. It is therefore important for the company to continue to ensure that the majority of its employee's are
permanently employed to help maintain the employees level of organizational commitment.

5.7.3 Job level

Mowday et al.’s (1982) research provides evidence that occupational level is not related to organizational commitment. However, researchers such as Luthans et al. (1987) maintain that individuals employed in higher positions within an organization are more committed towards the organization. This point of view is supported by Aryee and Heng (1990) and Luthans et al. (1987), who state that the association between job level and commitment is due to higher level employees being more likely receiving larger economic rewards and being more likely to perceive the system of authority as legitimate and therefore support it.

5.7.4 Race

There are a limited number of studies that take into account the impact of race on the level of commitment experienced by employees within South Africa. The levels of commitment for Black respondents are significantly lower than the level of commitment of other racial groups. These findings are unexpected since a study conducted by Laher (2001) using a sample of 124 academic staff did not find any significant difference in the level of organizational commitment experienced between different racial groups.
In another study, Mueller et al. (1999) did not find lower levels of organizational commitment for Black teachers.

Limited research has been conducted with regard to the relationship between organizational commitment and race. Research has indicated that individuals different from others in the workgroup have less job satisfaction and organizational commitment, perceive less social integration and have greater turnover intentions that do individuals demographically similar to their cohorts (Tsui & Gutek, 1999; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998).

Williams and O'Reilly (1998) postulate that individuals prefer to work in groups with other in-group (same) members and when working in groups with out-group (different) members their work experiences automatically tend to be poor. Furthermore the authors indicate individuals with dissimilar others would have less organizational commitment than persons in the same groups.

The aforementioned is proven in a study conducted by Cunningham and Sagas (2004) amongst two hundred and thirty five (235) assistant basketball coaches to examine the effects of racial dissimilarity of organizational commitment, the research indicated black coaches in staff with a relatively equal distribution of whites and racial minorities had a lower commitment than did black coaches on predominantly white or black staff's and vice versa. The findings indicate that being different impacts various groups of individuals differently.
In another study conducted amongst 838 elementary and secondary school teachers by Mueller et al. (1999), researching the level of commitment experienced by teachers, the results displayed there is no difference in the level of commitment amongst black teachers in schools of different races. In contrast to the results of the research study indicated that white teachers predominantly white educational environment schools displayed more commitment to their schools than when in other different racial school environments.

Hence, it is suggested that further research needs to be conducted in terms of the relationship impact between organizational commitment and race.

### 5.7.5 Marital status

Research on the effect of marital status on organizational commitment has yielded that married individuals report higher levels of commitment than unmarried, because of their greater financial burdens and family responsibilities (Kacmar et al., 1999; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

In a study conducted by Hrebinak and Alutto (1972) single employees were found to be more likely than married or separated employees to be positively disposed toward attractive employment alternatives. The author's further assert that married or separated individuals especially women see greater costs attached to inter-organizational mobility. Therefore they are less likely than single or male
employees to consider employment alternatives, even if they are offered or encouraged to do so.

This view is supported by a study conducted by Cetin (2006) amongst one 132 academics who found married or divorced women evaluate leaving an organization more costly than ones who are single. In another study conducted by Kacmar et al. (1999) the researchers also found that married individuals reported higher levels of commitment than unmarried individuals because of their greater financial burdens and responsibilities.

5.7.6 Education

In contrast to age and tenure, many researchers have found education to be inversely related to organizational commitment (Angle & Perry, 1981; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Morris & Steers, 1980; Mowday et al., 1982). In addition Meyer and Allen (1997) also posit that educational level is inconsistently or inversely related to an employee's level of commitment.

Researchers have suggested the negative relationship between organizational commitment and education could be due to the fact that the higher educated employees may tend to be more cosmopolitan and may have high expectations than the organization is able to meet or may be more committed to their profession which, the organization and therefore may have higher expectations or
greater number of alternative work opportunities (Grau et al. 1991; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

Steers (1977) cited in Lowe and Barnes (2002) found that the level of education was negatively related organizational commitment. In a meta-analysis study conducted by Mathieu and Zajac (1990), the results yielded that the relationship was significantly stronger for attitudinal commitment than for calculative commitment. The authors attribute this negative relationship to the greater number of job options that may be available to employees with higher levels of education.

In a study conducted by Sommer, Bae and Luthans (1996) cited in Lok and Crawford (2004) no significant relationship was found between organizational commitment and educational level. Similarly in a study conducted by Awamleh (1996) amongst civil service managers in Jordan found no significant relationship between organizational commitment and educational level.

However, Voster (1992), found that a positive relationship between organizational commitment and educational qualifications exist and that educational level may be a predictor of commitment, mostly for working women. Similarly Lowe and Barnes (2002) found that a positive relationship between organizational commitment and educational level exist.

Camilleri (2002) states that the lower the education standard the higher the level of organizational commitment. The author attributes the aforementioned to the
fact that lower educated employees have less job options and opportunities than the more educated employees. Thus, they tend to be more committed to the organization. In contrast Camilleri (2002) contended that the more educated employees tend to have higher expectations than the organization may be able to provide. Hence, they would tend to be less committed and therefore tend to change from one organization to another in order to advance at a faster pace.

It is evident that there is no conclusive consensus about the relationship between organizational commitment and the educational level. Therefore, further research into the relationship between organizational commitment and educational level is required to draw definitive conclusions. Research generally indicates an inverse relationship between organizational commitment and an individual’s level of education, however, the results are not entirely consistent (Luthans et al., 1987; Mowday, et al., 1982; Voster, 1992).

A number of researchers maintain that the higher an employee's level of education, the lower that individual’s level of organizational commitment (Luthans et al., 1987; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). The negative relationship may result from the fact that highly qualified employees have higher expectations that the organization may be unable to fulfil.

More educated individuals may also be more committed to their profession or trade. As a result, it would become difficult for an organization to compete successfully for the psychological involvement of these employees (Mowday et
al., 1982). It is also suggested by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) that more highly qualified individuals have a greater number of alternative work opportunities.

However, Billingsley and Cross (1992) failed to find support for a relationship between education and commitment. Still other studies, such as that by Loscocco (1990), revealed a negative association between commitment and education among male employees, but failed to find a link between these two variables among females.

Chusmir (1982), cited in Voster (1992), on the other hand, maintains that there is a positive relationship between educational qualifications and commitment, and that education may serve as a predictor of organizational commitment, particularly amongst working women.

Clearly, additional research is needed if definitive conclusions are to be drawn regarding the relationship between organizational commitment and education. Rentsch and Steel (1998) maintains that educated employees generally occupy better positions within organizations and thus experience higher levels of satisfaction. This combination of better education and higher job satisfaction are postulated to translate into lower withdrawal behaviour (absenteeism and turnover).

Research (Camilleri, 2002) indicates a low negative correlation between organizational commitment and education. Similarly, Mathieu and Zajac (1990)
reviewed the antecedents, correlates and consequences of organizational commitment, in which they report education, exhibited a small, inverse correlation with organizational commitment. They maintain that, a plausible reason for this relationship is that higher educated individuals have higher expectations of the organization which the organization is often unable to meet. Subsequent research on correctional service workers (Camp, 1993) indicated that education did not play a contributory role in organizational commitment.

5.7.7 Age

Across organizational studies age has been found to be positively correlated with organizational commitment, that is, older employees are generally more committed to the organization than are their younger counterparts (Cramer, 1993; Loscocco, 1990; Luthans, 1992; Luthans et al., 1987; Mowday, et al., 1982; Sekaran 2000). Some researchers, however, maintain that this relationship is weak (Kacmar et al., 1999), while others claim that no significant relationship exists (Billingsley & Cross, 1992).

The literature identifies primarily two reasons for the positive association between commitment and age. Firstly, as individuals' age, alternative employment opportunities tend to decrease, making their current jobs more attractive (Kacmar, et al., 1999; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday, et al., 1982). Secondly, older individuals may be more committed to their organizations because they have a stronger investment and a greater history with the organization than do younger employees (Harrison & Hubbard, 1998; Kacmar et al., 1999).
Therefore, younger employees are generally likely to be more mobile and to have lower psychological investments in the organization. The older employees become, the less willing they are to sacrifice the benefits and idiosyncratic credits that are associated with seniority in the organization (Hellman, 1997).

Camp (1993) found that age played a significant role in organizational commitment, in research conducted among correctional services personnel. Organizational commitment was found to be higher amongst older employees and conversely, lower among younger employees. Rowden (2000) also found a significant relationship between age and organizational commitment.

Various authors have found that age is positively related to an employee's level of organizational commitment (Lok & Crawford, 2001; Mowday et al., 1982; Rowden, 2000). A study conducted by Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) found that older and longer tenured employees would tend to cognitively justify their remaining with the organization by reporting higher levels of satisfaction and commitment. Similarly, studies conducted by (Cramer, 1993; Lok & Crawford, 1999; Loscocco, 1990; Luthans, 1992; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday et al., 1982; Sekaran, 2000) revealed that a significant relationship between organizational commitment and age exist. The aforementioned studies consistently reflected that older employees are generally more committed to the organization in comparison to younger employees.

Kalderberg et al. (1995) suggest that younger employees are less committed than older employees, mainly due to the fact that as age increases, the employee's
opportunities for alternate employment decrease and thus making their current job more attractive. Furthermore, the authors contend that older employees may have more commitment to the organization because they have a stronger investment and longer history with the organization than younger employees. This view is supported by Parasumman and Nachman (1995) cited in Rowden (2000). The authors suggest that people become more committed when they realize that it may cost them more to leave than to stay with the organization.

There have however, been researchers who have not been able to find a significant relationship between organizational commitment and age. A study conducted by Shin and Reyes (1991) cited in Lowe and Barnes (2002) amongst catholic school administrators in 162 public and private schools respectively, did not find a significant correlation between organizational commitment age and at either the .01 or the .05 confidence interval level. Colbert and Kwon (2000) could also not find a significant relationship between organizational commitment and age. Their study targeted 497 college and university internal auditors.

5.7.8 Tenure

Numerous researches have found that there is a positive correlation between organizational commitment and tenure (Kushman, 1992; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Sheldon, 1971).
A study conducted by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found that organizational commitment was positively related to tenure. The authors further assert that the years spent in the organization increases the employee's psychological attachment to the organization as well as internalization of norms.

Gerhart (1990) also found a positive relationship between organizational commitment and tenure. Similarly, Kushman (1992) conducted a study on urban elementary and middle school teachers and found that a positive relationship between organizational commitment and tenure exists. According to Sekaran (2000), there is a consensus that tenure is an element of status and prestige, and that it causes a greater commitment and loyalty to the employing organization.

In another study, Hawkins (1998) found a statistically significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and tenure amongst high school principals. Meyer and Allen (1997) suggest the results of a positive relationship between organizational commitment and tenure might be a simple reflection of the fact that uncommitted employees leave an organization and only those with a high commitment remain.

There have however been researchers that have reported no significant correlations exist between organizational commitment and tenure (Caldwell et al. 1990; Cohen and Lowenberg, 1990; Ferris & Aranya, 1983 Meyer et al., 1989).
These findings are supported by Liou and Nyhan (1994), who have found a negative relationship between organizational commitment and tenure. Furthermore, this view is supported by Kinneir and Sutherland's (2000) study who did not find a significant relationship between organizational commitment and tenure. These findings are supported by (Cramer, 1993; Kinneir, 1999; Voster, 1992) who have failed to find support for the relationship between organizational commitment and tenure.

It is evident from the above – mentioned research that both a positive and a negative relationship exist between organizational commitment and tenure and further research in understanding the relationship between organizational commitment and tenure is suggested. Research overwhelmingly indicates that tenure has a positive influence on organizational commitment (Loscocco, 1990; Luthans, 1992; Luthans et al., 1987; Mowday et al., 1982). Moreover, Loscocco (1990) found tenure to be a particularly strong predictor of commitment in female employees.

As in the case of age, the reason for the positive relationship between tenure and commitment may be sought in the reduction of employment opportunities and the increase in the personal investments that the individual has in the organization. This is likely to lead to an increase in the individual’s psychological attachment to the organization (Harrison & Hubbard, 1998; Lum et al., 1998; Luthans, 1992; Mowday et al., 1982). It is further held by Sekaran (2000) that tenure generally
carries with it some status and prestige, and that this induces greater commitment and loyalty to the employing organization.

However, researchers such as Luthans, McCaul and Dodd (1985), cited in Voster (1992), failed to find support for the relationship between tenure and organizational commitment. This is further substantiated by Cramer (1993) who contends that longer tenure is not associated with greater commitment when age, rather than age at joining the organization, is controlled.

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) maintain that the number of years spent at a particular organization could possibly influence the level of attachment to the organization. Thus, the report can be attributed to greater side bets, such as pension plans and other monetary value the person accrued while being employed in the organization.

5.8 DIFFERENCES IN ABSENTEEISM BASED ON BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

Hypothesis 6

There will be a significant difference in absenteeism based on biographical variables amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.
Table 4.8 indicates that there are statistically significant differences in absenteeism based on some of the biographical characteristics of the respondents.

There was a significant difference in absenteeism based on gender (p < 0.01), tenure (p < 0.05), age (p < 0.05) and marital status (p < 0.05). Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected.

5.8.1 Gender

Most research on the gender-absenteeism relationship indicates that women are more absent than males. In accordance with this, Fried et al. (2002) conducted a study on a sample of 802 white-collar employees across twenty one organizations in Israel where they found that females are more absent than males. These authors suggest that women tend to respond to illnesses by being absent, whereas men would not.

Lau et al. (2003) reported similar findings. The authors postulate that it could be due to women taking up the role of caregivers of families and elder care. Such responsibilities could tax their ability to go to work. According to Lau et al. (2003), organizations could offer childcare to help alleviate the pressures on female workers which in turn could help reduce absenteeism. Mowday et al. (1982) note that absenteeism rate for women declines throughout their work career, possibly because responsibility associated with young children declines.
Contrary to these findings, Siu (2002) conducted a study on 2 samples of Hong Kong nurses (n = 258). The results indicate that gender was not a significant predictor of absence in any of the samples.

5.8.2 Age

Most research on the relationship between age and absenteeism indicates that younger employees are more absent than older employees (Dillingham, 1981 as cited by Martocchio, 1989; Lau et al., 2003; Matrunola, 1996). Martocchio (1989) conducted a meta-analysis on about 17 studies to identify whether age has an impact on absenteeism. These studies indicate that both absence frequency and number of days absent are inversely related to age. The rationale for this relationship is greater job commitment and sense of responsibility amongst older employees, hence, the lower levels of absenteeism (Martocchio, 1989).

A study by Super (1957) as quoted by Martocchio (1989) suggests that absence of younger employees may be due “to role conflict or uncertainly of what they believe is the most suitable work role” (Martocchio, 1989, p. 414). This conflict may lead to an increase in unscheduled absence.

Hoque and Islam (2003) on the other hand, found a non-significant effect of age on absenteeism. Consistent with this, Rhodes (1983) as quoted by Martocchio
(1989), in a qualitative review of studies, found no logical age-absence pattern for either frequency or number of days lost due to absence.

5.8.3 Tenure

According to Robbins et al. (2003), studies consistently demonstrate an inverse relationship between tenure and absenteeism, which means that employees with higher work experience will be less absent than those with lower work experience. Employees, who have been in employment for long periods, tend to express higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, resulting in lower rates of absenteeism (Martocchio, 1989).

Studies by Hoque and Islam (2003), on the other hand, found that absenteeism were more amongst employees with longer service than those with few years of work experience. A further view is posited by Lau et al. (2003) who in their meta-analysis found no association between tenure and absenteeism.

5.8.4 Marital status

There is contradictory evidence on the impact of marital status on absenteeism. Robbins et al. (2003) found that married employees have fewer absences, compared to unmarried employees. The authors note that it could be that married
employees mostly have families, hence, they are less absent due to these economic pressures.

Contrary to this, Hoque and Islam’s (2003) and Lau et al.’s (2003) studies reveal a non-significant association between marital status and absenteeism.

5.8.5 Number of Dependents

Research done by Robbins (1989) states that there is strong evidence suggesting that number of children is positively correlated with absence that is the higher the number of dependents, the higher their absenteeism, especially amongst females. An explanation could be that women would tend to stay at home if a child suddenly becomes ill, to tend to their children’s needs.

Findings by Goldberg and Waldman (2000) indicate only a modest relationship between absenteeism and number of dependents. Furthermore, Hoque and Islam (2003) who conducted a study amongst 400 workers from textile and jute mills in Bangladesh, found a non-significant relationship between absenteeism and number of dependents.

5.8.6 Job Level

These results corroborate research findings provided by Du Plessis, Visser and Fourie (2003). These authors conducted a study of 145 employees within the meat
industry over a period of one year and found a non-significant correlation between job level and absenteeism.

Contradictory findings are presented by Fried et al. (2002) who conducted a study on a sample of 802 white-collar employees across twenty one organizations in Israel. These authors found that employees in higher level jobs tend to be less absent than employees with relatively simpler jobs. According to Voster (1992), this correlation could be attributed to the fact that higher-level jobs tend to be more complex and have better working conditions, pay, promotion prospects, supervision, autonomy and responsibility. Hence, these employees would less likely be absent.

5.9 Hypothesis 7

The biographical variables will statistically significantly explain the variance in organizational commitment amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

Results in Table 4.9 indicate that multiple R is 0.62392, with the R-squared being 0.38927. This indicates that approximately 39% of the variance in organizational commitment can be attributed to the independent variables entered into the regression. The F-statistic of 5.528 is significant at the 0.01 level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.
The majority of studies conducted in this area overwhelmingly indicate that biographical variables are significant predictors of commitment (Johnson & Johnson, 2000; Luthans, et al., 1987; Williams & Hazer, 1986).

Across organizational studies age has been found to be positively correlated with organizational commitment, that is, older employees are generally more committed to the organization than are their younger counterparts (Cramer, 1993; Loscocco, 1990; Luthans, 1992; Luthans et al., 1987; Mowday et al., 1982; Sekaran; 2000). Some researchers, however, maintain that this relationship is weak (Kacmar et al., 1999), while others claim that no significant relationship exists (Billingsley & Cross, 1992).

The positive relationship between tenure and commitment may be sought in the reduction of employment opportunities and the increase in the personal investments that the individual has in the organization. This is likely to lead to an increase in the individual’s psychological attachment to the organization (Harrison & Hubbard, 1998; Luthans, 1992; Mowday et al., 1982). It is further held by Sekaran (2000) that tenure generally carries with it some status and prestige, and that this induces greater commitment and loyalty to the employing organization.

A number of researchers maintain that the higher an employee's level of education, the lower that individual’s level of organizational commitment (Luthans, et al., 1987; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). The
negative relationship may result from the fact that highly qualified employees have higher expectations that the organization may be unable to fulfil.

The general contention appears to be that women as a group tend to be more committed to their employing organization than are their male counterparts (Cramer, 1993; Harrison & Hubbard, 1998; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982). Several explanations have been offered to account for the greater commitment of female employees. Mowday et al. (1982) surmise that women generally have to overcome more barriers to attain their positions within the organization. The extra effort required to enter the organization is, consequently, reflected in the higher commitment of female employees.

Harrison and Hubbard (1998) are further of the opinion that women display greater commitment because they encounter fewer options for employment. Sekaran (2000), on the other hand, suggests that the situation may be explained by the fact that women are generally dual-income family members who would not be unduly concerned with making more money, but are inclined to derive satisfaction by doing the best job where they are.

Voster (1992), however, failed to find support for the relationship between tenure and organizational commitment. It is, however, also possible that longer tenure is associated with greater commitment when age, rather than age at joining the organization, is controlled (Cramer, 1993).
Age was also found to explain a significant amount of the variance in commitment. However, in interpreting the role of age, Kacmar et al. (1999) maintains that the relationship between commitment and age is a weak one. As stated by Mowday et al. (1982, p. 33), “although different organizations manifest different overall levels of employee commitment, this commitment is equally strong up and down the organizational hierarchy.”

5.10 Hypothesis 8

The biographical variables will statistically significantly explain the variance in absenteeism amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

The F-statistic of 5.325214 is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Hence, it may be concluded that the five demographic variables namely, age, gender, level of education, job level and tenure significantly explain 35% of the variance in absenteeism. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005) attempted to predict the role of personal background factors on teacher absenteeism. Based on a sample of 51,916 teachers in the USA, they report that age and educational qualifications had a significant impact on absenteeism. However, the same could not be said of the role of gender in absenteeism.
In studying the relationship between gender and absenteeism, the typical expectation is that women will be absent from work more than men (Rosenblatt & Shirom, 2005). One reason is the traditional labour division in the family, according to which women have more than an equal share in child rearing and housework. An alternative explanation is that women typically have lower status jobs, leading to a greater motivation to be absent (Vanden Heuvel & Wooden, 1995). However, results pertaining to gender effect on absenteeism are not consistent.

Burton, Lee and Holtom (2002) investigated the influence of motivation to attend, ability to attend and organizational commitment on different types of absence behaviour. Their research was based on absenteeism as a multidimensional rather than a unidimensional view, thereby separating absenteeism into several components (illness, personal, family, transportation). Based on their sample of 243 customer service representatives, the only significant predictor of absenteeism was found to be respondents’ age.

Most studies report a negative relationship between age and absenteeism among employees in general (Rosenblatt & Shirom, 2005). Frequent reasons advanced for the inverse relationship between age and absenteeism are higher job commitment in older age, self-selection into a better person-organization fit, and age-related injury incidence (Martocchio, 1989). Hackett (1990) found that the negative relationship between age and absenteeism weakened when tenure was
considered. However, the basic inverse relationship between age and absenteeism seems to be conclusive.

Little research has been conducted on the relationship between educational qualifications and absenteeism. In a study where demographic variables were used as background to the relationship between job characteristics and absenteeism (Rentsch & Steel, 1989), education was found to contribute to lower absenteeism. Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005) postulate that educational qualifications may well elevate employees’ professionalism, and consequently improve their level of responsibility and commitment to basic work values, such as attendance.

In previous research, this variable has been mostly related to decreased absenteeism; the higher the position, the lower the absenteeism (Johns, 1997). Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005) report on a study in which service employees increased their absenteeism as a result of a failure to get a promotion, supporting the negative relationship often espoused in the literature. Moreover, in a study on health-care employees, job level proved the strongest predictor of personal and occupational variables relative to absenteeism.
The aim of this research was primarily to determine the relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst employees at a public health institution in the Western Cape. A literature survey was conducted to form the theoretical premise for the study.

The empirical findings from the study indicate that employees at the public health institution in the Western Cape displayed below average beliefs in the organization’s goals, values, desire to maintain affiliation and willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. With reference to the stated research hypothesis the following specific empirical findings emerged from the research study:

- There is a significant relationship between organizational commitment and absenteeism amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape.

- A significant relationship between organizational commitment and biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape is prevalent.

- A significant relationship between absenteeism and biographical variables in a public health institution in the Western Cape exist.
There is a significant difference in organizational commitment based on biographical variables amongst employees in a public health institution in the Western Cape based on their biographical characteristics.

There is a significant difference in absenteeism based on biographical variables amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

The biographical variables significantly explain the variance in organizational commitment amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

The biographical variables significantly explain the variance in absenteeism amongst employees in the public health institution in the Western Cape.

Since the current study utilized a non-probability sampling method in the form of convenience sampling, certain occupational classes may have been under-represented. Notwithstanding the fact that a sample of ninety eight (98) is considered appropriate, it is suggested that a stratified random sample for future research be utilized. The application of a stratified random sampling method would enable greater precision and control with respect to the sample. This will also enhance external validity of the study. Moreover, the small sample and the fact that the study was conducted in one public health institution in the Western Cape.
Cape, reduces the study’s generalizability to other public institutions and occupations.

The study utilized a cross-sectional design in which the different criterion groups were examined in terms of one or more variables at approximately the same time. Although this type of design is considered appropriate, a longitudinal study would allow for the same group to be examined at different time intervals. Therefore, as a longitudinal study is relevant when investigating changes due to the passage of time, it would allow for forming a better understanding of the true nature of organizational commitment and absenteeism.

The role of other confounding extraneous variables, such as job satisfaction, role conflict, organizational climate, working conditions and job involvement, have not been considered, although their potential impact have been noted. In this regard it is suggested that further research be undertaken to ascertain the potential relationship with these variables.

The research is further limited as self-report questionnaires were used as a measure of absence, which is highly subjective. Siu (2002) argues that employees do not have accurate perceptions of their personal absenteeism as well as that of their co-workers. Future research nature should adopt more objective measures of absence.
Future research of this nature should also examine the absence severity rate (ASR) which highlights the number of days per incident over a period of time, that is, the period employees are off when they do take sick leave (Mowday et al., 1982). High levels of absenteeism can have a direct impact on work quality, productivity and staff morale. According to van der Merwe and Miller (1993), the absence frequency rate (AFR) also needs to be monitored. This entails examining the total number of absence incidents over a period divided by the average number of people in employment for that period. The afore-mentioned will reflect a more accurate index of how widespread absence is.

As organizational commitment has been found to be inversely related to withdrawal behaviours such as absenteeism, tardiness and turnover, ongoing research in this domain is imperative in order to create a better understanding of the causal relationships among these variables.

5.12 Managerial Implications

The knowledge derived from this study can be used to design interventions to minimize absenteeism when it is perceived as destructive. It can also be utilized to influence organizational commitment based interventions.

Zaccaro and Collins (1998) maintain that effective socialization practices and other commitment-based interventions are likely to influence the level of commitment amongst employees. They further suggest that strategies that
strengthen interaction and communication, most notably process consultation and team building, can have multiple benefits for employee attitudes and work attendance.

Moreover, Zaccaro and Collins (1998) postulate that commitment and attendance should be higher when organizational members perceive interactive processes to be open and non-restrictive. Such environments, it is argued, are likely to encourage greater freedom to participate in decision making and fewer constraints being placed on individual members’ contributions. A corollary of this is that, such perceptions will probably lead to greater attachment to and attendance at the organization. In this vein, Boshoff and Mels (1995) argue that individuals who experience a positive affective relationship with their employing organizations seem to be less likely to want to leave their organizations and are also likely to not remain absent.

In accordance with this, Haswell (2003) suggests several methods to reduce absenteeism, such as:

- Giving responsibility for absence management to senior or HR managers rather than line managers
- Introducing return to work interviews
- Introducing discipline procedures
- Formal notification procedures
- Occupational health services and
• Employee Assistance programs.

Sonnenberg, Hoffman and Galombik (2004) advance the view that organizations can address absenteeism by:

• Developing a clear policy on absenteeism
• Keeping detailed records of absenteeism and analyzing trends
• Appointing a steering committee to oversee the development of solutions
• Using the company’s disciplinary procedure if it is clear that the company policy is violated.
• Developing a dynamic organizational culture based on trust and a balance between the needs of the employer and those of employees, so that the needs of both parties can be addressed.

Burton et al. (2002) also maintain that managers and organizations should monitor the perceived cause of absenteeism (e.g. family issues, illness etc.) in order to implement appropriate methods to curtail these absences. Proactive management would, for example, be able to determine if the institution offer opportunities to modify work schedules through flexi-time would facilitate a reduction in absenteeism.

Organizations can also institute wellness programs to assist employees to monitor and improve their health. An interesting suggestion advanced by Gaudine and Saks (2001) is the implementation of absenteeism feedback programs. These
programs are postulated to enhance an employee’s propensity and motivation to attend.

The results of the study can be used as a foundation for future research to ascertain the psychological and social processes that underpin absenteeism. Such studies could serve to complement research which has focused on those psychological and social processes regarded as playing a pivotal role in absenteeism, most notably job satisfaction, job involvement, job stress, organizational change and downsizing (Rosenblatt & Shirom, 2005).

Based on the results of the study, a heuristic framework/model was developed as a tool to assist in the understanding of the relationship between absenteeism and organizational commitment (cf figure 5.1).
FIGURE 5.1. HEURISTIC MODEL OF PRACTICES TO ENHANCE ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND REDUCE ABSENTEEISM

Managing Organizational commitment

- HRM policies and practices
- Recruitment and selection
- Socialisation and training
- Assessment and promotion
- Compensation and benefits
- HRM systems
- Management of Change

Managing Absenteeism

- Develop a policy on absenteeism
- Keep detailed records of absenteeism
- and analyzing trends
- Appoint a steering committee to oversee
- the development of solutions
- Use the company’s disciplinary procedure
- if it is clear that the company policy is violated.
- Develop a dynamic organizational culture
- based on trust and a balance between the
- needs of the employer and those of
- employees, so that the needs of both parties can be addressed
- Introduce return to work interviews
- Introduce discipline procedures
- Formal notification procedures
- Occupational health services and
- Introduce
- Employee Assistance Programmes

Affective Commitment:
The employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement with the organization

Normative Commitment:
Refers to an employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization

Absenteeism:
Absenteeism is the practice of regular failure to turn up for work

Organisational Commitment:
Relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization

Continuance Commitment:
The employee's awareness that costs are associated with leaving the organization
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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF REQUEST TO COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRES
Dear Participant

REQUEST TO COMPLETE A BIOGRAPHICAL AND RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

I am currently doing a Masters degree in Industrial Psychology at the University of the Western Cape. In order for me to be able to complete the course, I am obliged to do a mini-thesis that includes conducting research.

I will be conducting research for my thesis on Organizational Commitment and Absenteeism. I obtained permission from Professor K.C. Househam (Head of Department: Health) to proceed with my research at your institution.

I humbly request your participation by completing the questionnaires. I assure you that your responses will be treated with the utmost of confidentiality and that your anonymity will be protected. The data obtained from the study is strictly for research purposes.

Thanking you

M. Morar
**BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

The information received in this questionnaire is **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL** and will be treated as such.

Please circle the appropriate response for each of the following that is applicable to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Gender</th>
<th>2. Age</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>younger than 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20 - 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Race</th>
<th>4. Marital Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>Widowed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Educational Level</th>
<th>6. Years of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to Std. 6</td>
<td>0 - 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to Std. 9</td>
<td>6 - 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. 10</td>
<td>11 - 15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 year Degree / Diploma</td>
<td>16 - 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Graduate</td>
<td>more than 20 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Monthly Income</th>
<th>8. Occupational Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less than R5 000</td>
<td>Pharmacist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5001 - R10 000</td>
<td>Pharmacist Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R10 001 - R15 000</td>
<td>Auxiliary Service Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than R15 000</td>
<td>Administrative Clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrative Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Accountant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Employed currently as</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract / Temp.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (OCQ)
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (OCQ)

Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that you may have about the company. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by circling the number, which is most applicable to you.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Moderately Disagree
3. Slightly disagree
4. Neither Disagree or Agree
5. Slightly Agree
6. Moderately Agree
7. Strongly Agree

Your responses will be treated as strictly confidential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I talk about this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I find that my values and the organizations values are very similar.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type or work was similar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I am extremely glad that I chose to work for this organization rather than others I was considering at the time I joined.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. There is not much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization’s policies on important matters relating to its employees.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I really care about the fate of this organization.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSENTEEISM QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please indicate the number of days you were absent due to sick leave during the past six (6) months.

| 0 days | 1 – 3 days | 4 – 6 days | 7 – 10 days | more than ten (10) days |

2. Please indicate the number of times you were absent due to sick leave during the past six (6) months.

| 0 times | 1 – 2 times | 3 – 4 times | 5 – 6 times | more than six (6) times |