

Perceived Sacrifice and Few Alternatives Commitments:  
The Motivational Underpinnings of Continuance Commitment's Subdimensions

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### Abstract

Using work on self-concepts and Conservation of Resources theory, the present research examined the motivational underpinnings of continuance commitment's subcomponents of perceived sacrifice and few alternatives. Study 1 ( $N = 208$ ) found job scope to be positively related to perceived sacrifice commitment, and negatively related to few alternatives commitment. Study 2 ( $N = 147$ ) found empowerment's meaning dimension to be positively related to perceived sacrifice commitment and self-determination to be negatively linked to few alternatives commitment. In Study 3 ( $N = 301$ ), perceived sacrifice commitment was found to be positively related to feedback seeking, while few alternatives commitment was negatively related to it. Finally, Study 4 ( $N = 278$ ) found perceived sacrifice commitment to be positively, and few alternatives commitment negatively, related to career success (promotion and pay raise decisions). Implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords: Continuance Commitment, Perceived Sacrifice, Few Alternatives, Job Scope, Feedback Seeking, Career Success

### Perceived Sacrifice and Few Alternatives Commitments:

#### The Motivational Underpinnings of Continuance Commitment's Subdimensions

The three-component model of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) which includes affective, continuance, and normative components, is the most widely used multidimensional model of organizational commitment. *Affective commitment* (AC) represents an emotional attachment to, involvement in, and identification with the organization, *normative commitment* (NC) refers to a sense of loyalty driven by a feeling of obligation towards the organization, while *continuance commitment* (CC) is an attachment derived from the recognition of the costs associated with leaving and/or the perception of a lack of employment alternatives (Allen, & Meyer, 1996; Meyer & Allen, 1991).

One controversy that has surrounded research on the three-component model traces back to McGee and Ford (1987) who identified two distinguishable dimensions within CC, one reflecting "the role of available alternatives in the decision to remain on one's job" (*few alternatives*) and the other referring to the "personal sacrifice that would result from leaving the organization" (*perceived sacrifice*) (McGee & Ford, 1987, p. 639). The distinction between few alternatives (FA) and perceived sacrifice (PS) within CC has been reported in several studies since that time (e.g., Bentein, Vandenberg, Vandenberghe, & Stinglhamber, 2005; Jaros, 1997; Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990; Powell & Meyer, 2004; Somers, 1993). Despite these efforts, one knows little about the psychological mechanisms that underlie the two subcomponents' workings, partly because the constructs are not well understood. This is reflected in conceptual disagreements about the nature of these constructs. Some (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 2000; Powell & Meyer, 2004) have suggested that FA should be considered as an antecedent to PS, itself being repositioned as the true essence of CC. More recently, Taing, Granger, Groff, Jackson, and Johnson (2011, p. 271) used work on economic exchange (Shore, Tetrick, Lynch, & Barksdale,

2006) to reconceptualize PS as “commitment based on the perception that the organization provides favorable economic exchanges”, therefore excluding non-economic side bets as potential antecedents of this form of commitment.

The present study intends to advance understanding of PS and FA by looking at their motivational foundations. We make the argument that the effects of PS and FA on work behavior can be understood by integrating a self-concept approach (Johnson & Chang, 2006, 2008; Johnson, Chang, & Yang, 2010) and Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (e.g., Hobföll, 2001). Our reasoning is based on three propositions. First, PS and FA focus on the individual’s sense of uniqueness and self-worth and are tied to the pursuit of self-interested goals (i.e., an individualized form of self-identity; Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Second, as they are grounded in individual self-identities, PS and FA tend to make gains (e.g., rewards) and losses (e.g., threat of unemployment) salient elements of their mindset. Third, drawing from COR theory, we contend that the gains and losses associated with the employment relationship will determine the level of resources available to complete one’s work duties (Hobföll, 2002; Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2009) and influence one’s motivational state. In essence, PS should be characterized by a resourceful psychological state allowing the individual to invest effort at work, while FA should be associated with resource drain and result in low effort and motivation.

Following these ideas, we conducted four studies illustrating the motivational dynamics characterizing PS and FA. In Study 1, we examined how job scope predicted subsequent PS and FA. Study 2 looked at whether these constructs related differentially to dimensions of psychological empowerment. Study 3 examined if PS and FA were distinctively related to feedback seeking behavior. Finally, Study 4 was conducted to test the prediction that PS and FA would differentially predict promotion and pay raise decisions. We discuss our hypotheses in the next sections.

### **Self-Identities and Resource Gains and Losses**

Johnson and colleagues (Johnson & Chang, 2006, 2008; Johnson et al., 2010) conceptualized AC's, NC's, and CC's workings as being intimately related to individuals' self-identities (or self-concepts). Self-identities represent knowledge structures that contain information about perceptions of oneself and others (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Johnson et al., 2010) and influence the goals that individuals set for themselves, and how they pursue them (Johnson & Chang, 2006). It is generally recognized that self-identities are relatively stable over time, even if they can be shaped by environmental influences. Three levels of the self-concept have been explored in the literature. The collective level involves defining oneself in terms of the groups (e.g., organization) one belongs to. Individuals with collective self-identities are sensitive to group goals and tend to internalize them. The relational level involves defining oneself in terms of relationships with significant others (e.g., supervisor). In this case, the value accorded to oneself is tied to the quality of these relationships. Finally, the third level refers to self-definitions "based on one's sense of uniqueness" and how one compares to others, and reflects a focus on one's own interests. Such individual self-concepts instill the willingness to preserve valued outcomes, and encourage individuals to seek personal rewards and avoid losses (Johnson & Chang, 2006). Along this line, it has been found that AC is associated with a collective self-identity and CC with an individual self-identity (Johnson & Chang, 2006, 2008). Further theoretical developments have linked AC and NC to both the collective and relational levels of self-identities, and subdimensions of CC to individual self-identities (Johnson et al., 2010).

Tying CC to individual self-identities helps to understand its motivational underpinnings. For example, "attaining and preserving valued outcomes" represents a salient motivator among people with individual self-concepts (Johnson & Chang, 2006), leading to high levels of CC. In other words, people with individual self-concepts – and hence, high CC – may be sensitive to the

gains and losses accumulated in the context of the employment relationship. Such gains and losses are central notions in COR theory (Hobföll, 1989, 2002) and have implications for how motivated behavior emerges.

Indeed, COR theory is centered on the idea that “people strive to retain, protect, and build resources and that what is threatening to them is the potential or actual loss of these valued resources” (Hobföll, 1989, p.514). Resources are conceived as “objects, personal characteristics, conditions or energies that are valued in their own right or that (...) act as conduits to the achievement or protection of valued resources” (Hobföll, 2001, p. 339). A central principle of COR theory is that resource loss is more salient than resource gain, and that resource gains acquire saliency in light of loss (Hobföll, 2001). Within this theory, resource gain (and the desire to accumulate resources) and resource loss (and the fear of losing resources) are thus two facets of the same psychological process. When people feel they have retained valued resources, they are in a position to devote enough energy to a line of action, i.e., their work motivation is optimal (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004). In contrast, when they experience a resource drain, the set of energetic forces they can devote to work (i.e., motivation) is minimal. Drawing from COR theory, we expect PS and FA to have different antecedents, and implications for behavior.

In sum, lessons from work on self-identities and commitment (e.g., Johnson et al., 2010) and COR theory (e.g., Hobföll, 1989, 2001, 2002) suggest PS and FA may reflect opposite motivational states. PS reflects the individual’s perception of having valuable resources (Powell & Meyer, 2004), and hence should be associated with motivation to protect these resources. Although PS is somewhat externally regulated (Meyer et al., 2004), FA is even more externally regulated (i.e., closer to a state of amotivation), as FA reflects a perceived lack of self-determination. Indeed, FA is characterized by feelings of being trapped in the organization (Vandenberghe, Bentein, Michon, Chebat, Tremblay, & Fils, 2007) and the fear of losing a key

resource, employment (Hobföll, 1989). Therefore, people experiencing FA may lack the energetic forces necessary for motivated behavior due to perceiving their jobs as being at risk (i.e., anticipation of resource loss).

As a consequence of these presumed motivational differences, PS and FA should be differentially related to antecedent, correlate and outcome variables that (a) have relevance for how individuals can differentiate themselves from others (Kampmeier & Simon, 2001), hence are experienced on an individual basis, and (b) represent potential gains vs. losses for oneself. For example, perceived organizational support and procedural justice might be more related to AC as they address collective self-identities (see Johnson & Chang, 2008), even if the former is a potential resource (Halbesleben, 2006; Hobföll, 2002). By contrast, job scope, an important feature of one's job, concerns employees on an individual basis and can be perceived as feeding one's resources at work (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) and should thus be (differentially) related to CC's subcomponents.

Similarly, the distinct motivational states underlying CC's subcomponents should result in PS and FA being distinctively related to psychological empowerment, with its "meaning" dimension being possibly positively associated with PS and its self-determination facet being plausibly negatively linked to FA. Likewise, PS and FA should display opposite relationships with feedback seeking behavior, conceived as the "conscious devotion of effort toward determining the correctness and adequacy of behaviors for attaining valued end states" (Ashford, 1986, p. 466). Owing to its resourceful mindset, PS should lead to more proactive engagement in seeking feedback that serves one's achievement goals while the resource loss mindset characterizing FA should lead to ego-protective behavior, hence reduced feedback seeking.

Similarly, when looking at relationships with outcomes, organizational citizenship behavior and performance may primarily have implications for the collective welfare (i.e., organization),

and hence should relate to AC (Johnson & Chang, 2006). By contrast, promotion and pay raise decisions (i.e., indicators of career success) are more tied to one's sense of self-worth and might depend on the amount of resources invested to earn them (Day & Allen, 2004; Feldman & Ng, 2007), and thus should relate to CC's subcomponents. Therefore, this study will look at PS's and FA's relationships with job scope (antecedent), psychological empowerment and feedback seeking (correlates), and career success (outcome), as all of these relationships speak to the chronic self-identities that presumably underlie CC (Johnson et al., 2010) and can be understood in terms of resource gains and losses (Hobföll, 2002).

### **Job Scope**

Job scope has its roots in the Job Characteristics Model (JCM; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The JCM includes core features of a job such as skill variety (involves a variety of different activities), task autonomy (provides discretion in scheduling and organizing the work), task identity (requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work), task significance (impacts the lives of other people), and task feedback (provides information about the effectiveness of the performance). While these characteristics are meant to reflect an objective reality, they may only influence employee attitudes, cognitions and behaviors to the extent that they are perceived by employees (Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976). As all of the dimensions are supposed to represent the extent to which a job is enriched and challenging, a single composite score along the dimensions is deemed suitable to define job scope (e.g., Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Raja & Johns, 2010; Schaubroeck, Walumbwa, Ganster, & Kepes, 2007). Research has generally reported good evidence supporting a positive relationship between job scope and internally regulated motivation and job satisfaction, among other outcomes (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007).

Job scope represents a potentially important psychological resource for employees. For



example, recent research on the job demands-resources model has shown that demands that represent challenges, i.e., “that have the potential to promote mastery, personal growth, or future gains”, such as high levels of job responsibility, are associated with stronger work engagement (Crawford, LePine, & Rich, 2010). Job scope involves a similar notion of challenge by offering opportunities to complete diverse and meaningful tasks in an autonomous manner, and therefore employees should be confident that they will develop themselves in these conditions. Also consistent with this view of job scope as an important resource is the possibility that job characteristics within the JCM contribute to fulfilling basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Gagne, Senecal, & Koestner, 1997).

Job scope should thus contribute positively to PS. Indeed, PS results from a variety of ties with the organization, some being instrumental, such as the material benefits associated with employment, and others being psychological or socioemotional, such as having interesting work (Vandenberghe et al., 2007). By offering resources (e.g., competencies and sense of autonomy) that can help employees complete their work duties, job scope likely enhances the perceived advantages associated with organizational membership, thus increasing PS. Furthermore, job scope represents an important psychological resource which may indirectly build people’s sense of self-worth. Indeed, “those who possess resources (...) are viewed by others, and will view themselves, more favorably” (Hobföll, 2002, p. 319). In contrast, job scope should be negatively related to FA. Indeed, the expected increase of one’s work competencies associated with job scope and the resulting sense of being mobile on the job market should decrease the fear of not being able to find suitable employment, which is at the core of FA. Conversely, jobs with low skill variety, job significance, autonomy, identity, and feedback may induce the feeling of having little value as an employee, which may increase one’s perception that employment alternatives are scarce. In other words, job scope may indirectly reduce the resource drain inherently related

to FA. The above reasoning leads to the following hypotheses.

*Hypothesis 1a:* Job scope will be positively related to PS.

*Hypothesis 1b:* Job scope will be negatively related to FA.

### **Psychological Empowerment**

Psychological empowerment is an important motivational construct (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1995) that may relate to PS and FA. Empowerment comprises a set of four interrelated cognitions “reflecting an individual’s orientation to his or her work role” (Spreitzer, 1995, p. 1443): competence, impact, self-determination, and meaning. Competence is one’s belief in the capacity to perform activities; impact is the perceived capacity to influence decisions at work; self-determination is the extent to which one feels having choice in initiating activities; and meaning refers to the relative congruence of a work role with regard to one’s own ideals (Spreitzer, 1995). All four cognitions are thought to contribute to build an active orientation to, and the ability to shape, one’s work role.

Psychological empowerment should relate to PS and FA because it has implications for one’s sense of self-worth, which is a central component of the self. Self-worth is central to PS and FA because, as these commitment components are rooted in individual self-concepts, they involve a process by which “self-worth is derived via one’s sense of uniqueness and exceptionality” (Johnson & Chang, 2006, p. 551). Among the four cognitions of empowerment, meaning is the one that most likely has implications for one’s sense of self-worth. Indeed, people high on PS and FA basically possess an “individualist” orientation (Johnson et al., 2010): they care about how great they feel and what gains and resources they can earn (i.e., self-interests are salient motives). As a sense of meaning basically reflects the extent to which a job’s values are concordant with one’s ideals (Spreitzer, 1995), in line with COR theory, it likely represents an important resource that contributes to one’s sense of self-worth. As a resource one wants to keep

(i.e., it builds self-worth), it should contribute to PS and reduce the degraded sense of self-worth that occurs when the fear of being unemployed is salient (i.e., FA). The above reasoning leads to the following hypotheses.

*Hypothesis 2a:* Meaning will be positively related to PS.

*Hypothesis 2b:* Meaning will be negatively related to FA.

In addition, FA may also be related to another empowerment dimension, self-determination. Indeed, although competence might also relate negatively to FA (e.g., competent people tend to be more employable), self-determination seems to address more basically what is at the core of FA: the feeling of being trapped in the organization (Vandenberghe et al., 2007). In fact, people experiencing FA essentially suffer from a loss of autonomy (i.e., the most basic human need; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, self-determination – which indicates autonomous motivation (Meyer et al., 2004) – should be negatively related to FA. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis.

*Hypothesis 2c:* Self-determination will be negatively related to FA.

### **Feedback Seeking**

Another stream of research that has relevance for understanding the motivational foundations of PS and FA is work on feedback seeking behavior (e.g., Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003). Feedback seeking behavior is a self-regulation tactic that focuses on seeking evaluative information from others about one's role performance. The information gained through seeking behavior helps employees to adapt to work situations and improve their performance (e.g., Chen, Lam, & Zhong, 2007; Renn & Fedor, 2001). There are two prominent methods of feedback seeking: *inquiry* and *monitoring*. The inquiry method involves formal and explicit requests for feedback from specific others. This method implies a conscious, effortful cognitive process that yields usable information, particularly when the target

is the supervisor. In contrast, monitoring is an indirect method based on automatic cognitive processes that gleans information through observing others and the environment, and is generally thought to be less efficient (Ashford et al., 2003).

Research has shown that different motives may drive feedback seeking (Ashford et al., 2003). The *instrumental motive* refers to the value of feedback for one's goal attainment. Seeking feedback helps employees to gain control over the performance contingencies of their environment, and is an important individual resource for achieving work goals. Another motive is *ego defense and enhancement* (Ashford et al., 2003) which refers to a motivation to protect one's ego while seeking feedback. Employees tend to avoid negative feedback as it may harm their sense of self-worth. When it is salient, the ego defensive motive may also encourage individuals to use less proactive seeking strategies such as *monitoring* (rather than *direct inquiry*). Finally, *image defense* represents a third important motive. This motive is tied to face loss considerations (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). For example, when a feedback is provided in a public context the risk of looking bad to others is higher. This motive is tied to the fear of looking incompetent.

In the present study, we focused on feedback seeking based on *direct inquiry* directed towards supervisors. We believe PS and FA should differ in their relationship to such seeking behavior. On one hand, PS presumptively reflects a resourceful psychological state characterized by a positive self-view. As discussed previously, this commitment implies a mindset where the individual does not want to forego instrumental and non instrumental advantages gained through membership in the organization. Individuals with high levels of PS should be motivated to both invest significant resources into seeking feedback from supervisors and should not be overwhelmed by ego and image defense motives. In other words, these people likely adopt a proactive orientation towards their work role and feel confident in their capacity to "take"

feedback (cf. Ashford et al., 2003). In contrast, people with high levels of FA may be more sensitive to ego and/or image defense motives. Indeed, the fear of losing face and/or looking incompetent if feedback is sought from supervisors is plausibly high, due to their negative self-views. In other words, due to a low sense of self-worth, people who experience FA likely want to avoid situations where their competencies are at stake, and hence do not want feedback through direct inquiry from supervisors. Therefore, PS should relate positively, and FA negatively, to feedback seeking. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed.

*Hypothesis 3a:* PS will be positively related to feedback seeking behavior.

*Hypothesis 3b:* FA will be negatively related to feedback seeking behavior.

### **Career Success**

Career success fares particularly well with the focus on self-interests of people with strong individual self-identities; and theory and evidence suggest that CC subcomponents are tied to chronic individual self-identities (Johnson et al., 2010). In fact, career success typically refers to subjective (e.g., career satisfaction) and/or objective (e.g., number of promotions) indicators of an individual's work accomplishments during a period of time (Feldman & Ng, 2007). We believe that people high in PS vs. FA differ in their ability to be successful in their careers.

With regards to PS, commitment theory suggests career success should contribute to this commitment mindset, as promotions and pay raises will enhance the material (financial) and, possibly, socioemotional benefits associated with organizational membership (a promotion may be associated with more challenging work or greater prestige, for instance). However, we contend that, initially, PS is likely to contribute to career success. Indeed, following COR theory principles (Hobföll, 2002), those people who enjoy more personal resources at work have a greater sense of self-worth, which places them in a better position to invest significant time and effort to pursue their work activities, and hence makes them more likely to achieve career

success. This may happen through a variety of means. For example, as discussed above, people high in PS may seek more feedback from supervisors. They may also create social networks in the organization, which may help them access information about norms and expectations and obtain social support (Feldman & Ng, 2007; Wolff & Moser, 2009). In support of this view, research has shown that those who work smart and hard earn better salaries and receive more promotions in the longer run (e.g., O'Reilly & Chatman, 1994). This is also consistent with our conceptualization of PS as a motivational construct which encompasses both economic and socioemotional (or motivational) ties with the organization. Indeed, if PS reflects both instrumental and motivational considerations, it should come as no surprise that it leads to motivational outcomes such as career progression. In contrast, people high in FA are concerned by resource loss and their sense of self-worth tends to be weak. As a consequence, they may seek less feedback from supervisors and/or engage in fewer networking activities. In the end, this may reduce their capacity to reach career success. To summarize, we propose the following, remaining hypotheses.

*Hypothesis 4a:* PS will be positively related to indicators of career success.

*Hypothesis 4b:* FA will be negatively related to indicators of career success.

## **STUDY 1**

Study 1 examined the relationships of job scope to PS and FA using a time-lagged design. In all four studies, affective and normative commitment measures were included so as to examine whether PS and FA could be distinguished from them.

### **Method**

#### **Sample and Procedure**

Seven hundred and ten university Alumni who graduated from a Belgian university received a survey questionnaire including measures of job scope and demographics (age, sex, and tenure)

at Time 1. Six months later, Time 1 respondents received a second questionnaire comprising measures of affective and normative commitment, and PS and FA. A cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and providing assurances of confidentiality accompanied questionnaires. Reminder memos were sent two weeks after survey delivery. Respondents sent completed questionnaires to the university using postage-paid return envelopes included in the survey packets. Questionnaires were coded so as to allow matching questionnaires across time.

Among prospective participants, 301 provided usable returns (42.4 %) at Time 1, of which 212 (70.4 %) also responded at Time 2. Excluding missing data, there remained 208 responses (29.8 %) for purpose of analysis. In the final sample, 56.50% of respondents were male, average age was 30.86 years ( $SD = 5.12$ ), and average tenure was 4.01 years ( $SD = 3.70$ ). A large variety of industries was represented including manufacturing, banking, law, construction, information technology, and many others. To determine whether subject attrition between Time 1 and Time 2 led to non-random sampling, we tested whether the probability of remaining in the sample at Time 2 ( $N = 509$ ) among Time 1 respondents ( $N = 920$ ) could be predicted by Time 1 variables (demographics and job scope) (Goodman & Blum, 1996). The logistic regression predicting the probability of remaining in the sample at Time 2, with age, sex, tenure and job scope as predictors, was non-significant ( $\chi^2 [4] = 3.17, ns$ ) and none of the predictors exerted a significant effect. This indicates that respondent attrition was essentially random.

### Measures

A 5-point Likert-type scale (1=*strongly disagree*; 5=*strongly agree*) was used for all items.

**Job scope.** We used five 2-item scales from the JCM (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) to measure skill variety, job autonomy, task identity, task significance, and task feedback. As previous factor analyses of these items observed one-factor solutions (e.g., Schaubroeck et al., 2007) and as the JCM conceives these job facets as complementarily contributing to job

enrichment, we used the mean of all items as a single measure of job scope. In this study, a single factor was extracted using a principal components analysis. However, two items that displayed a low loading were dropped. A sample item for this scale is “The job is arranged so that I can do an entire piece of work from beginning to end” (task identity) ( $\alpha = .72$ ).

**Commitment.** We used Bentein et al.’s (2005) adapted version of Meyer, Allen, and Smith’s (1993) commitment scales, which include affective commitment (6 items; e.g., “I really feel that I belong in this organization”;  $\alpha = .85$ ), normative commitment (6 items; e.g., “I think I would be guilty if I left my current organization now”;  $\alpha = .92$ ), PS (3 items; e.g., “I would not leave this organization because of what I would stand to lose”;  $\alpha = .81$ ), and FA (3 items; e.g., “I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization”;  $\alpha = .78$ ).

**Control variables.** We controlled for age, sex and tenure in our analyses as prior research had found them to correlate, albeit slightly, with commitment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

## Results and Discussion

We first examined the distinctiveness of our variables (particularly PS and FA) using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) via LISREL 8.72 (Jöreskog, Sörbom, Du Toit, & Du Toit, 2001) and the maximum likelihood method of estimation. A model including the four commitments along with job scope yielded a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(289) = 628.24$ ,  $p < .01$ , NNFI = .91, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .072. Merging perceived PS and FA into a single factor resulted in significant decrements in fit,  $\Delta\chi^2(4) = 196.64$ ,  $p < .01$ . Similarly, any simpler nested model obtained a poorer fit ( $p < .01$ ) (Results are available on request). PS and FA were thus distinguishable factors in this study.

Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and intercorrelations for the study variables are presented



in Table 1. PS correlated positively, and FA negatively, with affective commitment ( $r = .31, p < .01$ , and  $r = -.23, p < .01$ , respectively). Of importance, job scope was negatively related to FA ( $r = -.31, p < .01$ ) and positively related to PS ( $r = .16, p = .05$ ). The results of the multiple regression analyses predicting PS and FA are presented in Table 2. As can be seen, job scope was significantly positively related to PS ( $\beta = .22, p < .01$ ) and accounted for a significant portion of its variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .04, p < .01$ ). Hypothesis 1a is thus supported. Additionally, job scope was significantly negatively related to FA ( $\beta = -.30, p < .001$ ) and also accounted for a significant portion of its variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .08, p < .001$ ). This lends support to Hypothesis 1b.

These findings suggest that job characteristics that are conducive to job enrichment, hence are congruent with a sense of personal development, are related to higher costs associated with organizational membership and a lower sense of entrapment within the organization, hence reduced commitment by default (e.g., based on the lack of employment alternatives). Thus, job scope appears to play a role in the development of PS and FA.

## STUDY 2

Study 2 examines the relationships between dimensions of psychological empowerment, i.e., competence, impact, self-determination, and meaning, and PS and FA.

### Method

#### Sample and Procedure

Data for Study 2 were collected within the Belgian subsidiaries of three private companies operating in accountancy ( $N = 84$ ), insurance services ( $N = 42$ ), and petroleum and chemicals ( $N = 21$ ), respectively. With the agreement of the Human Resource director, a questionnaire including the study measures was sent to the subsidiaries' employees. A cover letter explained the purpose of the study and provided assurances of confidentiality. Reminder memos were sent

two weeks after survey delivery. About 40% of the questionnaires were completed and sent back to the researchers' office. In the final sample ( $N = 147$ ), 68.10% of respondents were male, average age was 32.45 years ( $SD = 12.46$ ), and average tenure was 6.57 years ( $SD = 7.42$ ).

### Measures

A 5-point Likert-type scale (1=*strongly disagree*; 5=*strongly agree*) was used for all items.

**Psychological empowerment.** We used Spreitzer's (1995) 3-item measures of competence (e.g., "I have mastered the skills necessary for my job";  $\alpha = .88$ ), impact (e.g., "I have significant influence over what happens in my department";  $\alpha = .92$ ), self-determination (e.g., "I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work";  $\alpha = .84$ ), and meaning (e.g., "The work I do is very important to me";  $\alpha = .92$ ) to measure empowerment.

**Commitment.** We used the same scales of affective commitment ( $\alpha = .72$ ), normative commitment ( $\alpha = .92$ ), PS ( $\alpha = .77$ ), and FA ( $\alpha = .78$ ) as in Study 1.

**Control variables.** As in Study 1, we controlled for age, sex and tenure in our analyses. We additionally controlled for the organization where employees worked by introducing two dummy-coded variables measuring whether the employee was affiliated with the insurance company (vs. other) and accountancy company (vs. other) in our analyses.

### Results and Discussion

As in Study 1, we first examined the distinctiveness of PS and FA using CFA. The eight-factor model including the four commitment components along with the four empowerment dimensions displayed a very good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(377) = 607.01$ ,  $p < .01$ , NNFI = .95, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .058, and outperformed any more parsimonious models ( $p < .01$ ) including a model that merged PS and FA into a single factor,  $\Delta\chi^2(7) = 147.86$ ,  $p < .01$  (Results are available on request). As our data were all collected at the same time, they might be subject to common

method variance. To examine this issue, we run a CFA including an additional orthogonal method factor (see Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). This model improved over the theoretical model,  $\Delta\chi^2(30) = 80.23, p < .01$ . However, the method factor accounted for only 4% of the total variance, which is lower than the median amount of method variance (25%) reported in studies of self-reported perceptions at work (Williams, Cote, & Buckley, 1989).

Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and intercorrelations for the study variables are presented in Table 3. Interestingly, PS correlated positively with impact ( $r = .21, p < .05$ ), self-determination ( $r = .18, p < .05$ ), and meaning ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ), while FA correlated negatively with self-determination ( $r = -.25, p < .01$ ) and meaning ( $r = -.18, p < .05$ ). As in Study 1, PS was positively, and FA negatively, related to affective commitment ( $r = .27, p < .01$ , and  $r = -.24, p < .01$ , respectively). The results of multiple regression analyses for PS and FA are presented in Table 4. As can be seen, empowerment dimensions accounted for significant incremental variance in PS ( $\Delta R^2 = .09, p < .01$ ) and FA ( $\Delta R^2 = .09, p < .01$ ). Meaning was positively related to PS ( $\beta = .30, p < .001$ ) but was unrelated to FA ( $\beta = -.02, ns$ ). Hypothesis 2a is thus supported while Hypothesis 2b is rejected. Furthermore, self-determination was the sole, negative predictor of FA ( $\beta = -.28, p < .01$ ). This lends support to Hypothesis 2c.

Overall, these findings suggest that PS and FA are associated with distinct components of psychological empowerment. A stronger sense of meaning was associated with higher PS, which plausibly indicates the importance of self-worth in this commitment dimension. Conversely, self-determination was negatively associated with FA, which confirms the entrapment mindset underlying this commitment dimension.

### STUDY 3

Study 3 examined the relationship of PS and FA to feedback seeking behavior.

## Method

### Sample and Procedure

Respondents for this study were recruited within the personal network of the author's research team. Email invitations sent to prospective participants, all business school alumni, included an introductory message explaining the purpose of the study and that responses would be kept confidential, and contained a link to an online questionnaire comprising the study measures. In total, 318 participants provided usable responses to the survey, for a 37.41% response rate. After deletion of missing data, there remained 301 responses for purpose of analysis. In this final sample of respondents, 46.30% were male, average age was 40.31 years ( $SD = 10.93$ ), and average tenure was 9.15 years ( $SD = 8.89$ ). Among respondents, 59.40% worked in large organizations (more than 1,000 employees), 23.60% in mid-size organizations (100-1,000 employees), and 17.00% in small organizations (fewer than 100 employees). A large variety of industries was represented in the sample including banking, construction, manufacturing, information technology, and many others.

### Measures

***Feedback seeking behavior.*** A 5-item scale developed by VandeWalle, Ganesan, Challagalla, and Brown (2000) was used to measure feedback seeking. More precisely, we asked respondents to report how frequently they asked for feedback from their supervisors regarding (a) their overall performance, (b) technical aspects of the job, (c) values and attitudes emphasized by the organization, (d) role expectations, and (e) their social behaviors ( $\alpha = .79$ ). A 5-point Likert-type response scale (1 = *never*; 5 = *very frequently*) was used for these items.

***Commitment.*** We used the same scales of affective commitment ( $\alpha = .89$ ), normative commitment ( $\alpha = .91$ ), PS ( $\alpha = .70$ ), and FA ( $\alpha = .78$ ) as in Studies 1 and 2.

***Control variables.*** As in Studies 1 and 2, we controlled for age, sex and tenure.

### Results and Discussion

CFA revealed that the five-factor model including the four commitment dimensions and feedback seeking displayed a very good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(220) = 540.00$ ,  $p < .01$ , NNFI = .95, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .074. A model that merged PS and FA into a single factor yielded a significantly lower fit,  $\Delta\chi^2(4) = 296.64$ ,  $p < .01$ . The five-factor model also outperformed any simpler representation of the data ( $p < .01$ ) (Results are available on request). As our data were all collected at the same time, we again examined whether common method variance was an issue. The CFA model including an additional orthogonal method factor (Podsakoff et al., 2003) improved over the theoretical model,  $\Delta\chi^2(23) = 129.08$ ,  $p < .01$ . However, the method factor accounted for only 3.5% of the total variance among items.

Descriptive statistics, internal consistency reliabilities, and intercorrelations for the study variables are presented in Table 5. Feedback seeking correlated negatively with FA ( $r = -.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ), while PS was not significantly related to it ( $r = .09$ , *ns*). As in Studies 1 and 2, PS was positively, and FA negatively, related to affective commitment ( $r = .31$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $r = -.23$ ,  $p < .01$ , respectively). The results of multiple regression analyses for feedback seeking behavior are presented in Table 6. As can be seen, PS and FA accounted for significant incremental variance in feedback seeking ( $\Delta R^2 = .05$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Consistent with Hypotheses 3a and 3b, PS was positively ( $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and FA negatively ( $\beta = -.15$ ,  $p < .05$ ) related to feedback seeking.

Study 3's findings demonstrate that PS and FA are differentially associated with feedback seeking behavior. This may indicate that individuals who are high on PS adopt a more proactive approach to the development of their skills while people who are high on FA tend to avoid feedback from supervisors, possibly as a strategy to protect themselves from negative judgments (Ashford et al., 2003).

## STUDY 4

As a final step of our investigation, Study 4 examines the relationships of PS and FA to career success over a period of 18 months.

### Method

#### Sample and Procedure

A random sample of alumni from a Belgian university was contacted for participation in a study of job attitudes. At Time 1, questionnaires including commitment measures and demographics were sent to prospective participants' private addresses. A cover letter explained the objective of the study, assured that responses would be kept confidential, and asked participants to send their completed questionnaires to the university using a stamped envelope. A reminder memo was sent after two weeks. Using a similar procedure, respondents were surveyed 18 months later about career outcomes (i.e., promotions and pay raises) since Time 1. Questionnaires were coded so as to allow matching responses across time.

In total, 478 participants provided usable responses at Time 1 (48.8%), of which 278 also responded at Time 2 (i.e., an overall 28.37 % response rate). In this final sample, 68.00% were male, average age was 29.60 years ( $SD = 4.40$ ), and average tenure was 3.32 years ( $SD = 2.66$ ). A large variety of industries was represented in the sample including banking and insurance, research, consulting, information technology, public administration, health, transportation, and many others. To determine whether subject attrition between Time 1 and Time 2 led to non-random sampling, we tested whether the probability of remaining in the sample at Time 2 ( $N = 278$ ) among Time 1 respondents ( $N = 478$ ) could be predicted by Time 1 variables (demographics and commitment variables) (Goodman & Blum, 1996). The logistic regression predicting the probability of remaining in the sample at Time 2, with age, sex, tenure and commitment variables as predictors, was significant ( $\chi^2 [7] = 32.09, p < .001$ ). This was due to

PS being associated with a lower probability of responding at Time 2 ( $B = -.50, p < .001$ ). Thus, respondent attrition was not completely random. Therefore, analyses predicting promotions and pay raises (see Table 8) may underestimate the true effects of PS.

### Measures

A 5-point Likert-type scale (1=*strongly disagree*; 5=*strongly agree*) was used for all items.

**Commitment.** We used the same scales of affective commitment ( $\alpha = .87$ ), normative commitment ( $\alpha = .92$ ), PS ( $\alpha = .74$ ), and FA ( $\alpha = .83$ ) as in the first three studies.

**Career success.** Time 1 respondents were surveyed 18 months after the initial survey about whether they (a) were granted a promotion (1 = not promoted; 2 = promoted) and (b) obtained a pay raise that was greater than the legally mandated one (1 = no pay raise greater than the legal one; 2 = received a pay raise greater than the legal one) during this period. Over the 18-month period of the study, 34.50% of the respondents were promoted and 56.10% obtained a pay raise. These figures are consistent with the fact that respondents were young university graduates at the early stage of their careers, hence were highly promotable and liable to pay raises.

**Control variables.** As in the other studies, we controlled for age, sex and tenure.

### Results and Discussion

CFA revealed that the model including the four commitments as distinct factors yielded a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(129) = 246.44, p < .01$ , NNFI = .96, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .062. A more parsimonious model that merged PS and FA into a single factor resulted in significant decrements in fit,  $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 143.63, p < .01$ . Similarly, any other more parsimonious model yielded a poorer fit ( $p < .01$ ) (Results are available on request). These results suggest PS and FA are distinguishable factors within CC.

Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and intercorrelations for the study variables are presented

in Table 7. Interestingly, while FA displayed negative associations with the likelihood of being promoted ( $r = -.13, p < .05$ ) and receiving a pay raise ( $r = -.19, p < .01$ ), PS was unrelated to these outcomes ( $r = .09, ns$ , and  $r = .09, ns$ , respectively). In this study, PS and FA were unrelated to affective commitment ( $r = .11, ns$ , and  $r = -.10, ns$ , respectively). Logistic regression was used to examine PS and FA as predictors of the likelihood of being promoted and receiving a pay raise (see Table 8). Commitment components explained unique variance in promotion and pay raise decisions ( $\Delta R^2 = .07, p < .01$ , and  $\Delta R^2 = .11, p < .001$ , respectively). PS positively predicted the likelihood of being promoted and receiving a pay raise ( $B = .46, p < .01$ , and  $B = .50, p < .01$ , respectively). Hypothesis 4a is thus supported. In contrast, FA negatively predicted these outcomes ( $B = -.47, p < .05$ , and  $B = -.68, p < .001$ , respectively). This lends support to Hypothesis 4b.

These findings add further evidence that PS and FA refer to distinct motivational states. PS presumably corresponds to a more resourceful motivational state, which translates into more persistent effort at pursuing one's career. In contrast, FA is driven by self-protective motives (i.e., the fear of losing employment and feelings of entrapment), therefore considerably reducing the willingness to invest time and effort into advancing one's career. These opposite patterns of motivational underpinnings may explain why PS and FA lead to opposite career outcomes.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

Using work on self-identities (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Johnson et al., 2010) and COR theory (Hobföll, 1989, 2002) as conceptual linchpins, this research found PS and FA to be differentially related to job scope, empowerment, feedback seeking, and career success. Findings bear important implications for research and practice that are outlined below.

### Theoretical Implications and Future Directions

Study 1 found job scope to be positively related to PS. This finding is consistent with



viewing PS as being tied to non instrumental as much as economic investments (Powell & Meyer, 2004; Vandenberghe et al., 2007). Although Taing et al. (2011, p. 271) proposed to restrict PS to “commitment based on the perception that the organization provides favorable economic exchanges”, there is value in adopting a broader view on this construct using COR theory (Hobföll, 1989, 2002). COR theory specifies that “people strive to obtain, retain, protect, and foster resources” (Hobföll, 2002, p. 317) in order to meet life demands. A variety of resources can fill people’s resource reservoir such as self-efficacy, rewards, social support, and self-esteem, among others. It comes as no surprise that job scope contributes to PS as Hackman and Oldham’s (1976) JCM and its summary feature of job scope is thought to provide rich, complex, and challenging tasks, and has been empirically linked to intrinsic motivation, satisfaction, and performance (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2007; Raja & Johns, 2010). This may be so because job scope represents an important psychological resource which may indirectly build people’s sense of self-worth, and help employees perform their work duties. This reasoning is also consistent with research on self-identities. As Johnson et al. (2010) theorized, as a component of CC, PS is tied to a chronic individual self-concept whereby the individual focuses on gains and losses that affect his or her sense of self-worth. Therefore, job scope may contribute to build PS because it builds people’s resource reservoir and induces positive self-views.

Conversely, Study 1 found job scope to be negatively associated with FA. Again, this finding can be understood using both work on self-concept and COR theory. Low job scope would reduce people’s growth potential and negatively affect their resource reservoir. This may help elucidate the process by which people come to experience FA. In fact, low job scope may reduce perspectives of self-development, which in and of itself can be perceived as a resource loss (Hobföll, 2002). This in turn would negatively affect people’s sense of self-worth, which

makes sense given the salience of self-interests (i.e., gains and losses for oneself) in FA (Johnson et al., 2010). Consistent with this view, research reports FA to be negatively related to organization-based self-esteem (Lapointe, Vandenberghe, & Panaccio, 2011). Thus, poor job conditions may reduce perceived resources and self-worth, which may cause people to see themselves as being weakly employable. Obviously, this complex process needs to be further examined in future research.

Study 2's findings add to Study 1's by demonstrating that dimensions of psychological empowerment are distinctively related to PS and FA. Meaning was positively related to PS, suggesting that this mindset is associated at least partly with internally regulated motivation (Meyer et al., 2004). Consistent with COR theory, a sense of meaning may also represent an important resource that contributes to one's sense of self-worth. In fact, job characteristics which foster a sense of meaning can count among the category of challenge stressors which are generally appraised as having the potential to promote self-development (Crawford et al., 2010). This suggests job scope may contribute to PS in part via a sense of meaning; future research is needed on this issue. In contrast, FA was negatively related to self-determination, which suggests it is governed by purely external contingencies and that the basic need for autonomy, the most important human need (Ryan & Deci, 2000), is not fulfilled in this case. Moreover, the fact that the other dimensions of empowerment such as competence and meaning were unrelated to FA while self-determination was may indicate that the feeling of entrapment is a core aspect of this construct.

Study 3 reveals other interesting findings. PS was associated with more feedback seeking from supervisors, suggesting that people high on PS are immune to ego-defensive reactions and wish to obtain feedback to improve their skills. As seeking behavior measured in this study referred to the direct inquiry method, this also suggests that these people engaged in conscious

effort at gleaning information, therefore serving a deliberate strategy of developing their potential. Findings concerning FA were in sharp contrast to those associated with PS. People high in FA were less likely to seek feedback, possibly in order to protect their ego. This has two important implications. First, these findings tend to support the view that low self-worth is a plausible core aspect of FA. Indeed, a possible explanation is that people who experience FA avoid asking for feedback from supervisors for fear they might appear incompetent. Second, such a situation creates conditions for negative feedback loops: due to low self-esteem, those people avoid being exposed to external judgments and feedback, hence are less likely to learn, which in turn makes them even less likely to seek feedback, and then learn. In the end, this may increase their sense of entrapment and lower their self-esteem.

Finally, Study 4 investigated the career outcomes associated with PS and FA. Consistent with an interpretation of these constructs in terms of the relative resources available to energize work-related behavior, PS was positively and FA negatively linked to the likelihood of being promoted and receiving a pay raise. In fact, people high in PS are in a better position to exert effort and invest time at developing their work activities, a known predictor of career success (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1994). Findings from Study 3 suggest that this may happen through more feedback seeking from supervisors. Indeed, when employees are more proactive in their search for information, they are likely to attract more developmental feedback from supervisors (Li, Harris, Boswell, & Xie, 2011). PS may also result in improved career success through networking in the organization. The development of networks allows employees access relevant information about values and expectations that in the end facilitate work adjustment (Blickle, Witzki, & Schneider, 2009). In contrast, FA was negatively associated with career success. This makes sense as people high in this commitment mindset adopt a more avoidant attitude with respect to their social environment, engage in less feedback seeking (see Study 3's findings), and

according to COR theory would merely enjoy fewer resources and view themselves unfavorably (Hobföll, 2002).

As discussed above, it is the combination of work on self-concepts (e.g., Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Johnson et al., 2010) and COR theory (e.g., Halbesleben, 2006; Hobföll, 2002) that helps adopt a broader motivational view on PS and FA. However, while discussing the studies' findings, several notions appeared to be central but in need of further exploration. For example, given the presumed sensitivity of PS and FA to self-interests, it would be interesting to assess the role of self-identify as a moderator of relationships between antecedents and these commitment mindsets, or commitment and outcomes. Furthermore, it would be worth exploring what role self-worth or self-esteem plays in the development of these constructs. Does job scope affect PS and FA through influencing employees' self-views? Another issue that warrants attention is whether PS's and FA's divergent relationships to feedback seeking are explainable by self-worth differences. For example, it makes sense from research on self-concepts that self-worth mediates the relationship of PS and FA to feedback seeking. Finally, another question that needs attention is whether feedback seeking, and more generally proactive behavior, and networking activities mediate the relationships of PS and FA to career outcomes.

### **Practical Implications**

This research has implications for practice. First, findings suggest organizations should strive to foster PS (i.e., a positive form of commitment; see Taing et al., 2011) while reducing FA. Ways to do so include providing more challenging job conditions, as this may increase individuals' sense of resilience and reduce negative self-views. Providing challenging job characteristics may also increase one's sense of empowerment (Gagne et al., 1997), which was found to relate to PS and FA in this research. Provided that the presumed relationship of PS and FA to self-worth works as described, managers can indirectly influence their employees'

standing on these constructs by offering coaching and supervision targeted at building self-esteem. Once people high on FA are identified, they can also be directed toward appropriate training programs (Ito & Brotheridge, 2005).

Recent research on job demands and resources (e.g., Crawford et al., 2010) also suggests reducing hindrance demands (e.g., administrative hassles, resource inadequacies, etc.) and fostering resources (e.g., autonomy, feedback, etc.) would be possible ways of enhancing PS while at the same time reducing FA. Findings also suggest managers can help alleviate the barriers of negative feedback. That is, by addressing the concerns of people who are high on FA, they can show the value of feedback in terms of skill improvement. This may restore a virtuous cycle of learning and ultimately career success among these people.

### **Limitations**

This study has limitations. First, Study 2 and Study 3 relied on self-reports and cross-sectional data. Therefore, the relationships of psychological empowerment (Study 2) and feedback seeking (Study 3) to PS and FA should be further examined using longitudinal designs. Second, as career outcomes were self-reported in Study 4, future research should examine whether findings can be replicated using objective measures of these outcomes. Third, we alluded to the possibility that the relationship between PS and career success is mediated, at least partially, by feedback seeking. However, as different data sets were used for Study 3 and Study 4, we were not able to test that mediating relationship. Future research using a longitudinal design and, ideally, objective measures of career success, is needed to determine whether that mediation really occurs. Fourth, given the presumably complex manner in which PS and FA influence career success, the present findings should be replicated using crossed panel designs in which it is possible to determine how variables affect one another over time. Indeed, it may be that PS contributes to career success which, in turn, reinforces PS because of the rewards

(working conditions, interesting work) which it brings. It would also be interesting to examine whether PS interacts with FA in predicting some outcomes. Although we did not find evidence for such effects in our data, it might be that PS relates more positively to well-being when FA is low, as the individual would focus only on gains excluding losses. Finally, there might be moderators of the relationships of PS and FA to career success and/or their presumed antecedents. For example, risk aversion may amplify the negative effects of FA and temper the positive effects of PS.

### **Conclusion**

Using work on self-concepts (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Johnson et al., 2010) and COR theory (Halbesleben, 2006; Hobföll, 2002), the present study breaks new ground by examining the motivational foundations associated with CC's subcomponents of PS and FA. Based on four studies, PS was found to be positively related to job scope, empowerment's meaning dimension, feedback seeking, and career success, while FA was found to be negatively associated with job scope, empowerment's self-determination dimension, feedback seeking, and career success. It is our hope that these findings will encourage further research on these neglected yet important dimensions of organizational commitment.

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Table 1

*Study 1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age (Time 1)	30.86	5.12	–							
2. Sex (Time 1)	1.57	0.50	.13	–						
3. Organizational tenure (Time 1)	4.01	3.70	.51**	.14*	–					
4. Job scope (Time 1)	3.86	0.61	.13	.19**	–.01	(.72)				
5. Affective commitment (Time 2)	3.22	0.86	.06	.02	.16*	.35**	(.85)			
6. Normative commitment (Time 2)	2.49	1.08	.04	–.05	–.01	.19**	.50**	(.92)		
7. Continuance commitment-perceived sacrifice (Time 2)	2.78	1.04	.04	–.14*	.15*	.16*	.31**	.29**	(.81)	
8. Continuance commitment-few alternatives (Time 2)	1.97	0.99	–.00	–.11	.05	–.30**	–.23**	–.09	.27**	(.78)

*Note.* *N*s = 207-208. For Sex, 1 = Female, 2 = Male. Reliability coefficients are reported in parentheses on the diagonal.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 2

*Study 1: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Continuance Commitment Perceived Sacrifice and Few Alternatives*

Step	Variable(s) entered	Perceived Sacrifice		Few Alternatives	
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
1	Age	-.03	-.07	-.03	.02
	Sex	-.16*	-.20**	-.12	-.06
	Organizational tenure	.19*	.21**	.09	.05
2	Job scope		.22**		-.30***
	$\Delta R^2$	.05*	.04**	.02	.08***

*Note.* Except for the  $\Delta R^2$  row, entries are standardized regression coefficients. Final model statistics: Perceived sacrifice:  $F(4, 206) = 5.11, p < .001$ ; Few alternatives:  $F(4, 206) = 5.64, p < .001$ .

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

Table 3

*Study 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Age	32.45	12.46	–												
2. Sex	1.68	0.47	.08	–											
3. Organizational tenure	6.57	7.42	.28**	.14	–										
4. Insurance firm (vs. other)	1.71	0.45	–.15	.16	–.12	–									
5. Accountancy firm (vs. other)	1.43	0.50	.35**	–.04	.30**	–.73**	–								
6. Competence	4.09	0.62	.12	.17*	.08	–.08	.10	(.88)							
7. Impact	3.30	1.00	.25**	.27**	.29**	–.19*	.37**	.27**	(.92)						
8. Self-determination	3.93	0.78	.20*	.14	.31**	–.14	.23**	.36**	.58**	(.84)					
9. Meaning	3.96	0.75	.14	.14	.10	–.15	.18*	.28**	.38**	.53**	(.92)				
10. Affective commitment	3.58	0.60	.10	.11	.04	–.04	.09	.13	.29**	.31**	.49**	(.72)			
11. Normative commitment	2.72	1.03	.16	.07	.08	–.07	.01	.07	.36**	.29**	.39**	.49**	(.92)		
12. CC-perceived sacrifice	3.12	0.97	.02	.12	.22**	–.20*	.25**	–.04	.21*	.18*	.31**	.27**	.28**	(.77)	
13. CC-few alternatives	1.72	0.77	–.13	.05	.19*	.01	–.09	–.15	–.13	–.25**	–.18*	–.24**	–.09	.21*	(.78)

*Note.* *N*s = 142–147. For Sex, 1 = Female, 2 = Male. CC = Continuance commitment. Reliability coefficients are reported in parentheses on the diagonal.

\**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01.

Table 4

*Study 2: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Continuance Commitment Perceived Sacrifice and Few Alternatives*

Step	Variable(s) entered	Perceived Sacrifice		Few Alternatives	
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
1	Age	-.11	-.13	-.15	-.12
	Sex	.13	.10	.05	.09
	Organizational tenure	.17*	.17	.28**	.34***
	Insurance firm (vs. other)	-.08	-.07	-.14	-.16
	Accountancy firm (vs. other)	.17	.13	-.25	-.21
2	Competence		-.15		-.07
	Impact		.05		.01
	Self-determination		-.02		-.28**
	Meaning		.30***		-.02
	$\Delta R^2$	.11**	.09**	.10*	.09**

*Note.* Except for the  $\Delta R^2$  row, entries are standardized regression coefficients. Final model statistics: Perceived sacrifice:  $F(9, 141) = 3.65, p < .001$ ; Few alternatives:  $F(9, 141) = 3.35, p < .001$ .

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



Table 5

*Study 3: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age	40.31	10.93	–							
2. Sex	1.46	0.50	.23**	–						
3. Organizational tenure	9.15	8.89	.65**	.21**	–					
4. Affective commitment	3.46	0.87	.16**	.02	.11	(.89)				
5. Normative commitment	2.48	1.03	.02	.10	.02	.58**	(.91)			
6. Continuance commitment-perceived sacrifice	3.31	0.93	.10	–.08	.22**	.31**	.36**	(.70)		
7. Continuance commitment-few alternatives	2.06	0.99	.16**	.13*	.21**	–.23**	.02	.24**	(.78)	
8. Feedback seeking behavior	2.57	0.76	–.20**	–.09	–.23**	.33**	.30**	.09	–.16**	(.79)

*Note.* *N*s = 255–301. For Sex, 1 = Female, 2 = Male. Reliability coefficients are reported in parentheses on the diagonal.

\**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01.

Table 6

*Study 3: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Feedback Seeking Behavior*

Step	Variable(s) entered	Model 1	Model 2
1	Age	-.03	-.00
	Sex	-.06	-.02
	Organizational tenure	-.20*	-.24**
2	Perceived sacrifice commitment		.19**
	Few alternatives commitment		-.15*
	$\Delta R^2$	.06**	.05**

*Note.* Except for the  $\Delta R^2$  row, entries are standardized regression coefficients. Final model statistics:  $F(5, 250) = 5.74, p < .001$ .

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 7

*Study 4: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age (Time 1)	29.60	4.40	–								
2. Sex (Time 1)	1.32	0.47	–.16**	–							
3. Organizational tenure (Time 1)	3.32	2.66	.57**	–.07	–						
4. Affective commitment (Time 1)	3.28	0.85	.08	–.10	.01	(.87)					
5. Normative commitment (Time 1)	2.06	0.92	–.09	–.05	–.12	.36**	(.92)				
6. Continuance commitment-perceived sacrifice (Time 1)	2.60	0.92	.01	.10	.09	.11	.24**	(.74)			
7. Continuance commitment-few alternatives (Time 1)	1.62	0.77	.22**	–.09	.18**	–.10	.11	.31**	(.83)		
8. Promotion (1 = not promoted; 2 = promoted; Time 2)	1.35	0.48	–.08	–.08	–.12*	.05	–.05	.09	–.13*	–	
9. Pay raise (1 = no pay raise; 2 = granted a pay raise; Time 2)	1.56	0.50	–.06	–.11	–.12	.10	–.04	.09	–.19**	.51**	–

*Note.* *N*s = 268-278. For Sex, 1 = Female, 2 = Male. Reliability coefficients are reported in parentheses on the diagonal.

\**p* < .05; \*\**p* < .01.

Table 8

*Study 4: Results of Logistic Regression Analysis for Promotion and Pay Raise*

Step	Variable(s) entered	Promotion		Pay Raise	
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
1	Age	-.04	-.02	-.02	.01
	Sex	-.41	-.56	-.47	-.69*
	Organizational tenure	-.10	-.11	-.09	-.10
2	Continuance-perceived sacrifice commitment		.39**		.46**
	Continuance-few alternatives commitment		-.51*		-.73***
	$\Delta R^2$	.04	.05**	.03	.09***

*Note.* Except for the  $\Delta R^2$  row, entries are unstandardized regression coefficients. The  $\Delta R^2$  row includes Nagelkerke  $\Delta R^2$  values. For

Promotion: 1 = not promoted, 2 = promoted; for Pay raise: 1 = no pay raise, 2 = granted a pay raise. Final model statistics: for Promotion:

$\chi^2(5) = 17.22, p < .01, -2LL = 330.40, \text{Constant} = .83$ ; for Pay raise:  $\chi^2(5) = 25.50, p < .001, -2LL = 341.04, \text{Constant} = 1.20$ .

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