

Organizational commitment profiles and job satisfaction among  
Greek private and public sector employees

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#### Abstract

Recent research into organizational commitment has advocated a profiles-based approach (Gellatly, Meyer & Luchak, 2004). However, with the exception of Wasti (2005), published findings are confined to North American samples. This paper examines the relationships between organizational commitment profiles and job satisfaction in Greece. Greek organizations have rarely been the subject of detailed examination so the study provides baseline information regarding levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction in Greece. Both private ( $N = 1119$ ) and public sector ( $N = 476$ ) employees in Greece were surveyed as this sectoral distinction is regularly associated with different patterns of job-related attitudes. The contrasts between Greek and Anglo-American values present a new challenge to the profiles approach. The results confirm the utility of the profiles approach to the study of organizational commitment. Affective organizational commitment was found to be most influential with respect to levels of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. This concurs with other studies of the behavioral outcomes of commitment.

Key words: Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, commitment profiles, Greece, private sector, public sector

### Introduction

This paper examines the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction in Greece. Greece is represented in most major studies of cross-cultural variation (Hofstede, 1980; 2001; House, Hanges, Javidan, & Dorfman 2004), however organizational commitment is barely reported from a Greek perspective. Following from Myloni, Harzing and Mirza's (2004) identification of the culture-specific nature of Greek Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, this paper explores the outcomes of these practices in terms of organizational commitment and its relationship with job satisfaction.

In line with recent developments, we take the approach of exploring the role of commitment *profiles* (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). That is, the way in which different commitment components combine to form an overall pattern or profile of organizational commitment, and how these profiles influence the outcomes of organizational commitment, specifically intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction.

Finally, the paper contrasts the responses of employees in the public sector with those in private sector employment in Greece. These sectors have different implications for the likely nature of commitment profiles generated and for job satisfaction. However the approach to employment in the two sectors in Greece differs markedly from the pattern normally expected in Western European countries, which is also discussed.

### **Greek context and culture**

Greece is rarely explored in management research (Myloni et al., 2004; Papalexandris, 1992) although it is represented in major studies of cross-cultural variation. Indeed its position in these studies is quite distinctive. The GLOBE studies (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness; House et al., 2004) locate Greece in the Eastern Europe cluster while Hofstede's earlier work (1980) locates Greece in a broadly "Near Eastern" cluster (c.f. Ronen

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& Shenkar, 1985) including Arab countries, Spain, some Latin American countries and Turkey. Griffeth, Hom, Denisi and Kirchner (1985) cluster Greece with the Latin European countries of Spain, Portugal and Italy, and the Netherlands and Belgium. In terms of the societal values, institutional collectivism and uncertainty avoidance are highly valued, while power distance and assertiveness are less valued than in most of the GLOBE participant countries. Of the nine GLOBE dimensions, only gender egalitarianism is both highly valued and widely practiced in Greece. Societal practices (in contrast to values) are reported to be high on assertiveness and power distance, and low on performance orientation, institutional collectivism, humane orientation and uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede's findings are largely similar, although he reported high power distance being valued rather than just practiced. This shift from Hofstede's study to the GLOBE findings may be a function of economic development and related changes that Greece has experienced in the past 30 years.

While Greek values have been explored, the impact of this value set on organizational outcomes has not, in contrast to its neighbor Turkey which has been the subject of an extensive series of studies on organizational commitment by Wasti (1998; 2003). Those cross-cultural studies that have included Greece reinforce the contrast between Greek attitudes, decision-making style, values and beliefs and those of more widely researched contexts, primarily the UK and North America (Schwartz, 1994). Bourantas, Anagnostelis, Mantes, and Kefalas (1990) argue that Greek management is characterized by the fear of responsibility and the low belief on others' knowledge and capacity, a characterization that accords with the GLOBE data.

Green, Deschamps, and Páez (2005) clustered countries' individualistic and collectivistic dimensions on the basis of three attitudes: self-reliance (an individualistic attitude), group-oriented interdependence (a collectivistic attitude), and competitiveness (an attitude both individualistic and collectivist). Greece was clustered into the self-reliant non-

competitor quadrant, (together with Italy), whereas the USA was on the borders of the interdependent competitor quadrant and Turkey was located in the self-reliant competitor quadrant. This seems to indicate an emergent individualism within both Greece and Turkey.

Taken as a whole, these and other studies (e.g. Bond et al., 2004, Smith, Peterson, & Schwartz, 2002) support the assertion that Greece is clearly distinguishable from Anglo and East Asian countries, but shares similarities with Latin, Eastern European and Arabic countries. Lammers and Hickson (1979) describe Greece as akin to a typical bureaucracy, high in power distance and with a strong rule orientation, the inverse of the Anglo pattern. Kirkman and Shapiro (2001) argue that there is a tendency for higher levels of collectivism to be associated with greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and a tendency for lower levels of power distance to be associated with higher levels of organizational commitment. Clugston, Howell and Dorfman (2000) argue that high power distance results in strong relationships with continuance and normative commitment but not affective commitment; individuals high on uncertainty avoidance develop continuance-type relationships across all foci; while collectivism led to more workgroup commitments as well as normative commitments. According to Smith, Fischer and Sale (2001) job satisfaction is greater in individualistic than collectivist nations, possibly due to greater economic and social prosperity. Against this background, Greece would appear to be a good socio-cultural context to further examine organizational attitudes.

### **Organizational commitment and commitment profiles**

Organizational commitment (OC) has been a popular topic for research into work attitudes and behaviors in recent years (see Meyer, Stanley Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). It has been formulated in a variety of ways, typically as a construct with multiple components describing individuals' feelings of attachment to, identification with and obligation to the

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organization (e.g. Allen & Meyer, 1990; Cook & Wall, 1980; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

Cook and Wall (1980), working in a UK context, view OC as the “feelings of attachment to the goals and values of the organization, ... and attachment to the organization for its own sake rather than for its strictly instrumental values” (p. 40). This attachment takes three forms: *identification* (a feeling of pride and belonging to the organization); *involvement* (the willingness to invest personal effort for the sake of the organization); and *loyalty* (attachment and obligation towards the organization). This is operationalised in the British Organizational Commitment Scale (BOCS), modeled on Mowday et al.’s (1979) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, and has been widely used in the UK across a range of employment contexts (e.g. Biggs & Swailes, 2006; Pendleton, 2003). Its psychometric properties have been extensively tested: a recent study by Mathews and Shepherd (2002) supported the three-component structure, although like Guest and Peccei (1993) a decade earlier, cautions remain regarding some negatively worded items.

Internationally, the BOCS has been used in the USA (Madsen, Miller, & John, 2005), in Israel (Bar-Hayim & Berman, 1992), and in Australia (Albrecht & Travaglione, 2003), however there are no reports of its use in the Near East (Israel is located in the Latin Europe cluster in the GLOBE studies and tends more towards northern Europe in Hofstede’s 1980 study).

Allen and Meyer’s (1990) formulation also proposes a three-component model: affective commitment (employees remain with the organization because they want to; AC), continuance commitment (employees remain because they need to; CC) and normative commitment (they remain because they feel they ought to; NC). A self-report measure of these three components has been developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993).

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The BOCS and Meyer and Allen's conceptualization share an "affective" component (organizational identification or affective commitment), which is generally suggested to be the main determinant of commitment-related focal and discretionary behaviors (Meyer et al., 2002). They also share a broadly normative component (NC or loyalty) emphasizing mutual obligation. The remaining components (job involvement and continuance commitment) are not directly comparable.

Meyer et al.'s (1993) measure has been researched extensively across cultures. Its construct validity has been demonstrated in Europe (Vandenberghe, 1996; Vandenberghe, Stinglhamber, Bentein, & Dehaise, 2001), Nepal (Gautam, Van Dick, & Wagner, 2001), and the Middle East (Yousef, 2002) although others question its validity in East Asian samples (e.g. Chen & Francesco 2003; Cheng & Stockdale 2003; Ko, Price, & Muller, 1997; Lee, Allen, Meyer, & Rhee, 2001). The debate continues as to whether differences arise from translation problems (Lee et al., 2001) or cultural differences in the OC construct: Wasti (2003) demonstrated the importance of developing "emic" items when assessing "etic" OC constructs.

The antecedents of OC appear to vary systematically with societal values, particularly collectivism. Wasti (2003) found that satisfaction with work and promotions were the strongest predictors of OC among individualists, whereas satisfaction with supervisor was an important predictor of OC among collectivists. Across seven nations, Mesner Andolšek and Štebe (2004) also found that material job values (e.g. job quality) were more predictive of OC in individualistic societies whereas post-materialistic job values (e.g. helping others) were more predictive of OC in collectivistic societies.

Research on the consequences of OC has found that OC in general is a more powerful predictor of job performance in nations scoring high on collectivism (Jaramillo, Prakash Mulki & Marshall, 2005). Meyer et al. (2002) report AC in particular to be a powerful

predictor of job outcomes in the (individualistic) U.S, with NC becoming more important elsewhere (cf. Gautam, Van Dick, Wagner, Upadhyay, & Davis, 2005; Wasti, 2003).

Recent theoretical developments, (Gellatly et al., 2004; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Wasti, 2005) have begun to emphasize the importance of overall commitment *profiles*. This goes beyond the extent to which individual components of commitment relate to other variables, to looking at the combinations of those components and how they interact as a whole to influence focal and discretionary outcomes. A review of the literature identified only limited research on commitment profiles and their work-related implications, and these have adopted Allen and Meyer's (1990) approach to OC. Until recently such studies have limited themselves to exploring only two-way interactions among the three forms of OC. For example, Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, and Jackson (1989) and Randall, Fedor, and Longenecker (1990) associated the components of organizational commitment with job performance and behavioral manifestations of job attitude. Both studies reported differences in the correlations of each component of commitment with the predictor variables, and some two-way interactions, but neither examined three-way interactions. Subsequently, Somers (1995) identified that while AC was the sole predictor of turnover and absenteeism, when observed in conjunction with NC a positive relationship with intent to remain emerged; a two-way interaction. However, the statistically significant relationships among the variables were modest. Similar results were found by Jaros (1997), where turnover intentions were more strongly correlated with AC than with either NC or CC. In China, Cheng and Stockdale (2003) found that NC reduced the relationship between CC and job satisfaction, and Chen and Francesco (2003) found that NC moderated the impact of AC on organizational citizenship behavior and performance, providing support for the primacy of NC in non-Western cultures.

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In their 2001 paper, Meyer and Herscovitch proposed eight theoretically distinguishable commitment profiles, derived from splitting each component into high or low scores (2 x 2 x 2). The existence of “pure” affective commitment was suggested to create the highest levels of both focal and discretionary behaviors, followed by those cases where AC is accompanied by high levels of either NC or CC, or both. Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) report three studies exploring this model, demonstrating that commitment to change was positively correlated with compliance with the requirements of change. However cooperation and championing of change were only correlated with AC and NC. Overall, both papers supported the view that AC by itself or in conjunction with NC were the best predictors of positive organizational behaviors.

Continuing this line of research, Gellatly et al. (2004) explored the association between intention to stay and OC among Canadian hospital staff. They report that intention to stay was strong when any one component of commitment was strong *and* the other two components weak. They further reported that normative commitment could take different forms depending on its context. In conjunction with low affective commitment and high continuance commitment, normative commitment *reduced* the display of discretionary behaviors. When coupled with high levels of affective commitment however, normative commitment *increased* the likelihood of engaging in discretionary behavior.

In the first reported replication of the profiles approach outside North America, Wasti (2005) adopts a clustering procedure rather than explicitly exploring eight theoretically constructed profiles. This procedure identified six distinguishable commitment profiles in her Turkish data: the highly-committed, the non-committed, the neutral, the affective dominant, the continuance dominant and the affective-normative dominant. Despite the difference in approach, Wasti’s analysis indicated that, in line with previous findings, the best job-related outcomes for both employee and employer were exhibited where affective commitment was

high. Specifically the highly committed group (high on all three commitment components), and the affective-normative dominant group displayed significantly lower levels of turnover intention, and the affective-normative dominant group showed significantly more loyal boosterism (defending the organization against co-worker criticism) than all other groups except the highly committed group.

This contrasting approach lends further support to the case for a distinctive contribution of a profile-based interpretation of commitment. The current paper returns to the original approach from Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), statistically generating eight theoretically feasible groups within a three-component model. However, it explores two different three-component models of commitment, those of Cook and Wall (1980) and Allen and Meyer (1990; Meyer et al., 1993), in terms of their relationships to intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction.

### **Job satisfaction and organizational commitment**

Job satisfaction is one of the most widely researched concepts in organizational behavior, although to date no studies have been published linking it to commitment profiles. Job satisfaction is typically construed either as an affective or emotional attitude of an individual towards his or her job (James & Jones, 1980) or as a general attitude towards a job and some particular aspects of it (Knoop, 1995). We take the position that job satisfaction has two facets relating to the extrinsic and intrinsic features of a job (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005), a formulation that can be traced back to Herzberg (1968). Extrinsic job satisfaction relates to satisfaction from, for example, pay, physical conditions of the organizational environment, human resource management policies and procedures, interpersonal relationships, etc. Intrinsic job satisfaction represents employee's satisfaction from the non-monetary, qualitative aspects of work, such as creativity, opportunity to develop, ability

utilization, feelings of personal achievement and accomplishment, etc. These features are internal to a particular job and are viewed and felt individually and differently by each employee (Arvey, Abraham, Bouchard, & Segal, 1989).

An examination of the relationships between organizational commitment and its forms and job satisfaction and its facets demonstrates consistent and significant correlations, in particular with respect to the affective component of commitment. The meta-analysis by Meyer et al. (2002) reports strong correlations between affective commitment and overall job satisfaction ( $\rho = 0.65$ ), extrinsic satisfaction ( $\rho = 0.71$ ) and intrinsic satisfaction ( $\rho = 0.68$ ). These relationships have been shown to be influenced by cultural context.

### **Differences between public and private sector in Greece**

One final dimension of this study relates to the impact of employment sector on commitment and job satisfaction. There are significant differences in the nature of employment in the public and private sectors in Greece, which are likely to have different implications for the nature of commitment and the commitment profiles generated. Therefore it is appropriate to explore these sectoral differences and speculate on the likely impact on commitment profiles that they may generate. Reports of differences in attitudes among public and private sector employees abound. For example, in Israel, Solomon (1986) reports that performance-based rewards and policies intending to promote efficiency leads to higher job satisfaction among private than public sector managers. Karl and Sutton (1998) found that private sector employees placed higher value on good wages, while public sector employees valued interesting work. Naff and Crum (1999) reached to similar conclusions, identifying the different values and responded to different incentives between the sectors in the USA.

With respect to organizational commitment, studies using the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and the BOCS highlight that Australian private sector

employees were more committed than their public sector counterparts (Rachid, 1995). Cho and Lee (2001) argue that organizational culture and the societal values determined the differences on commitment between public and private sector managers in South Korea. Goulet and Frank (2002), reporting on findings from the OCQ in the USA, identified lowest levels of organizational commitment in the public sector, with higher levels in the non-profit sector and still higher levels of commitment in the for-profit sector. The only study examining the differences between private and public sector employees in Greece was conducted by Bourantas and Papalexandris (1999). They showed that, apart from the structural and environmental differences exemplified between the private and the public sector, there were also differences on the personality characteristics of the people attracted to each sectors. In general, Bourantas and Papalexandris argued that private sector employees tended to display higher levels of activity, a greater sense of competence, more tolerance of ambiguity, a stronger work ethic and higher growth need, all of which were believed to contribute to higher job performance. They conclude that the public organization's context tended to attract people with certain characteristics, and that these characteristics did not promote positive work-related attitudes and behaviors. In summary, private and public sector employees project different attitudes and behaviors towards their organizations and jobs, however specific influences on organizational commitment, job satisfaction and their relationships remain unexplored.

Substantial differences in employment relationships, status, wages, fringe benefits, and HRM exemplify differences between private and public sector employment in Greece. Table 1 summarizes the most important and significant of these differences (derived from Papapetrou, 2006; Sotirakou & Zeppou, 2005). Unusually, the starting wage for Greek public sector employees is higher than for the private sector, and given it's stability of employment

and guarantee of pay increases, it is a highly attractive career choice for young Greeks. Private sector employment offers greater potential rewards but at greater risk.

Insert Table 1 here

This research represents the first attempt at exploring commitment profiles among Greek employees. It also provides an analysis of the nature of organizational commitment in Greece and its relationships to job satisfaction, and an exploration of the impact of employment sector on commitment and job satisfaction.

Two studies are reported, one based in the private sector and one in the public sector. Greek translations of Cook and Wall's (1980) BOCS and Meyer et al.'s (1993) organizational commitment questionnaire are used. Initially, the two samples are analyzed separately to explore the roles of commitment profiles derived from Cook and Wall's model in influencing job satisfaction in the private and public sectors separately. This analysis is then repeated for the public sector sample alone, using Meyer et al.'s scales. Conclusions are drawn regarding the development of organizational commitment profiles to enhance satisfaction and motivation at work.

From the information presented so far a number of hypotheses can be generated regarding the nature of organizational commitment in Greece. Three hypotheses can be identified with respect to the likely impact of commitment profiles on reported job satisfaction among Greek employees. Looking first at the BOCS measure, high levels of organizational identification, job involvement and loyalty are likely to result in satisfaction both with the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of a job.

*Hypothesis 1(a):* Employees will be most satisfied, both extrinsically and intrinsically, if they are *totally organizationally committed* (i.e. have high scores on all three

components: organizational identification, job involvement and loyalty) compared to all other profiles.

Even if employees are not involved or loyal to their organization, the dominance of the affective aspect of commitment (organizational identification) in predicting work-related outcomes suggests that where identification is present, higher satisfaction will be found.

*Hypothesis 1(b):* Employees reporting high levels of identification will exhibit higher mean values for extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction than those reporting low identification, irrespective of loyalty and job involvement.

While the nature of organizational commitment and job satisfaction between public and private sector employees in Greece may vary in degree, it is unlikely that it will vary in type. Therefore these hypotheses hold equally for both private and public sector employees. However, the role of loyalty may differ by sector. In particular, public sector employees are expected to both value and express greater loyalty to their organization, given the stability of employment and the high cost of leaving.

*Hypothesis 1(c):* Public sector employees will report higher levels of extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction when loyalty is high than when loyalty is low.

Turning to the Meyer et al. (1993) measure of commitment, comparable hypotheses can be generated. The direct association identified earlier between organizational identification and affective commitment would suggest a similar pattern should occur with respect to affective commitment as for identification above.

*Hypothesis 2(a):* Employees will be most satisfied, both extrinsically and intrinsically if they are *totally organizationally committed* (i.e. have high scores on all three components: affective, continuous and normative commitment), compared to all other profiles.

*Hypotheses 2(b):* Employees reporting high levels of affective commitment will exhibit higher mean values for extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction than those reporting low affective commitment, irrespective of levels of normative and continuance commitment

In the literature drawing on Meyer et al.'s model, affective and normative commitment are highly correlated and normative commitment displays similar but distinguishable patterns of association with antecedent and consequential variables. Given the importance of job security in Greece and the way in which normative commitment recognizes the binding of the employee to the organization through a sense of obligation and its tendency to be more strongly represented within more collectivist cultures, we put forward

Hypothesis 2(c): Public sector employees who report high levels of normative commitment will report higher mean values for extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction, irrespective of the value of continuance commitment.

## **Method**

### ***Data collection and samples***

Data were collected from two different sets of participants. The first was a random sample of 1,119 non-supervisory employees from 35 private sector organizations in the Northern Central Greece, surveyed with the assistance of business students from the Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki. Participants' organizations ranged from family owned small businesses to medium-sized industrial or commercial enterprises, producing a response rate of 69%. A little less than half the sample (45.3%) was male, with a mean age for the sample of 33 years and mean organizational tenure of 6 years. Educational achievement was varied, with 38.2% having completed secondary education, 29.3% having attended a technological educational institute, and 23.8% being university graduates.

The second set of data was collected from a random sample of 476 public sector employees from Northern Greece, working in governmental authorities, customs and public health care. The response rate from the different areas of public sector employment ranged from 61% to 85%. Approximately 40% of this sample was non-supervisory employees, while the remainder was mainly middle level supervisors. All were employed in secure, primarily white-collar civil service employment. Again slightly less than half the sample (47.3%) was male, the mean age being 41 years and an average tenure of 11 years. Education level was generally higher than in the private sector sample, with 11.6% achieving only secondary education, 21.4% technological educational institute and 67% university graduates.

### *Measures*

All scales used were translated into Greek, in some cases with minor modifications providing explanations of the concepts under study. The job satisfaction measure was based on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967) coupled with the questionnaire developed by Warr, Cook, and Wall (1979). In total 21 items were included, each scored on a 7-point scale (endpoints 1 = I am very dissatisfied, 7 = I am very satisfied). The scale is divided into two facets: extrinsic satisfaction (e.g. wage level, security and safety offered by the job), and intrinsic satisfaction (e.g. opportunity to use ones own abilities, feelings of accomplishment). For the public sector sample, two additional items relating to satisfaction with the industrial relations and with the trade union were included in the extrinsic satisfaction scale.

The measure of organizational commitment taken across both samples was the BOCS (Cook and Wall, 1980), with additional items taken from Lawler and Hall (1970), Mowday et al. (1979), and Buchanan (1974). This scale produced three sub-scales each comprising four items: organizational identification (e.g. "I am proud to tell who it is I work for"), job

involvement (e.g. “As soon as the job is finished I leave work”, reversed) and loyalty (e.g. “Even if there are financial difficulties in the organization, I would be reluctant leave”). All items were scored on a 7-point scale (endpoints 1 = complete disagreement and 7 = complete agreement). Negatively worded statements were reverse coded for the purposes of analysis. One item from the job involvement scale was subsequently deleted to improve the reliability of the overall scale. Karassavidou and Markovits (1994) report on previous use and testing of these scales in Greece.

For the public sector sample, Meyer et al.’s (1993) organizational commitment scale was also included in the measurement instrument. This scale comprises 18 items, six for each of the three commitment components (Affective, Normative and Continuance Commitment). Items again were scored on a 7-point scale (endpoints 1 = complete disagreement to 7 = complete agreement).

### **Results**

Table 2 provides descriptive statistics, Cronbach’s alpha coefficients and inter-correlations for the job satisfaction and BOCS scales across the two samples. All commitment measures were significantly higher in the public than the private sector ( $p < .01$  in all cases), and levels of identification were higher than those of job involvement and loyalty. Loyalty was more prevalent in the public sector sample than involvement, whereas in the private sector sample both were equally depressed. Levels of extrinsic satisfaction did not vary significantly between the public and private sectors, whereas public sector respondents were significantly more intrinsically satisfied with their jobs.

Insert Table 2 here

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Taking the BOCS data, eight theoretically meaningful profiles were generated using median splits on each of the three commitment components (see Table 3). This procedure was carried out independently for the public and private sector samples and separate analyses are reported.

Insert Table 3 here

Profile P8 represents what is identified in Hypotheses 1(a) as total organizational commitment. Respondents with this profile are expected to demonstrate highest levels of satisfaction. All profiles to the right of the table (P5-P8, shaded grey) include high organizational identification. According to Hypothesis 1(b), these profiles should produce higher levels of satisfaction than cells P1 – P4 where organizational identification is low.

Two three-way analyses of variance were performed on each data set, with extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction as the dependent variables and level of each commitment component (high or low) as the three independent variables. These produced the results shown in Tables 4a and 4b. Figures 1a and 1b illustrate the group means.

Insert Tables 4a and b and Figures 1a and b here

While main effects for identification and loyalty and few two-way interactions were evident, these effects were qualified by the predicted significant three-way interaction. Looking first at the private sector profiles, the significance of both 3-way interaction terms indicates that variation in both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction can be interpreted on the basis of the commitment profiles. The organizational commitment profile with the highest levels of both extrinsic satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction was the totally organizationally

committed profile (P8), supporting Hypothesis 1(a). The next highest profiles were those incorporating high organizational identification and one or other component (P5 - P7), supporting Hypothesis 1(b). Employees with the non-committed profile (P1) were the least satisfied. In other words, a commitment profile containing job involvement related to low satisfaction levels, whereas a profile also containing organizational identification related to high satisfaction levels. Furthermore, high extrinsic satisfaction levels were exhibited with the commitment profile P7, incorporating both high levels of identification and loyalty, but in contrast high intrinsic satisfaction levels were found in the commitment profile P5 with high levels only of identification. Finally, all profiles that did not contain organizational identification, i.e., P1 to P4, had lower mean values for both extrinsic satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction, compared with those profiles that included the element of identification. These low satisfaction profiles tended to be relatively higher on extrinsic satisfaction than intrinsic satisfaction.

In the public sector sample, only the three-way interaction term for extrinsic satisfaction achieved significance. Again, the organizational commitment profile representing total organizational commitment (P8) was associated with the highest levels of both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction. As with the private sector sample, organizational identification makes the largest difference on the commitment profiles. Its existence in P7 and P5 created very high levels of extrinsic satisfaction. However, in this sample, profile P3, representing only high levels of loyalty, was also associated with high levels of satisfaction, particularly extrinsic satisfaction. Finally, the non-committed profile (P1) as well profiles containing job involvement but not organizational identification (P2 and P4) showed low levels of extrinsic satisfaction. These results only partially support the hypotheses since the relationships were only valid for extrinsic satisfaction. It appears however that, in contrast to the private sector results, loyalty is much more important in determining satisfaction than organizational

identification broadly supporting Hypothesis 1(c). This may be associated with the higher levels of loyalty associated with public sector employment as compared with the private sector in Greece. The requirement to swear an oath to the employer, coupled with the extensive benefits and job and career security offered by the public sector may enhance the role of loyalty for this group. Finally, job involvement had a rather negative effect on satisfaction; profiles containing this variable tended to produce lower levels of satisfaction.

Overall, these findings support the usefulness of the 'profiles' approach to interpreting organizational commitment. Eight viable profiles were identified within the sample. The totally organizationally committed profile (P8) was associated with highest levels of satisfaction, while profiles containing organizational identification all generated higher levels of satisfaction than those without identification. The existence of job involvement within a commitment profile does not appear to make people satisfied with their jobs. Profiles without identification tended to be higher on extrinsic satisfaction than intrinsic satisfaction in the private sector, but higher on intrinsic than extrinsic satisfaction in the public sector.

The final set of analyses presented here relate to Hypotheses 2(a) to (c), using the Meyer et al. (1993) measures of organizational commitment, thus replicating Gellatly et al's (2004) study. The same measures of job satisfaction were used. The descriptive statistics, reliability coefficients and inter-correlations are shown in Table 5.

Insert Table 5 here

The same procedure was used to test these hypotheses as described above. The difference here is that the eight theoretically meaningful profiles were derived from the Allen and Meyer (1990) model (see Table 6).

Insert Table 6 here

The results of the three-way analyses of variance are shown in Table 7, Figure 2 illustrating the mean values for extrinsic satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction by commitment profile.

Insert Table 7 and Figure 2 here

Using this formulation of organizational commitment, both three-way interactions were statistically significant. As in the previous analyses, totally organizationally committed employees (C8) were both the most extrinsically and intrinsically satisfied, supporting Hypothesis 2(a). Those profiles containing high affective commitment (C5 – C7) had high mean satisfaction values supporting Hypotheses 2(b). Finally, all commitment profiles containing normative commitment exhibited higher mean values for both facets of job satisfaction, than the profiles containing continuance commitment, providing support for Hypothesis 2(c).

## **Discussion**

In the present paper, we examined the relationships between organizational commitment and job satisfaction in Greece, using an approach based on exploring profiles of commitment as suggested by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001). We first identified patterns of organizational commitment and job satisfaction in the Greek private and public sectors, and went on to explore the relationships between commitment profiles and job satisfaction, using two different approaches to the measurement of organizational commitment.

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Greece is an under-research cultural context in relation to both organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The data reported here indicate that organizational commitment is significantly higher in the public than in the private sector in Greece. This contrasts with the Australian findings of Rachid (1995), and with Goulet and Frank's (2002) American study, perhaps reinforcing the contrast between Anglo and Greek cultures identified earlier, but also permitting an institutional interpretation based on the construction of Greek public life. In both the public and private sectors, organizational identification is the strongest component, reflecting the collectivistic orientation of Greek society reported initially by Hofstede (1980) but also more recently by House et al. (2004). Public sector employment conditions are more closely aligned to Greek societal values, providing job security and structured progression and development, meeting uncertainty avoidance needs. Predictable progression within the public sector reinforces the widely practiced but less socially valued power distance orientation. Private sector employment in contrast tends to be more short term and insecure, resulting in significantly lower levels of both intrinsic satisfaction and all components of organizational commitment than their public sector counterparts. This is even more prevalent at times when unemployment rates are high, currently around 10% for the total workforce and more than 25% for workers under 25 years old.

The relatively high levels of loyalty (or normative commitment) reported in the public sector again reflect the institutional collectivism orientation reported in the GLOBE study. The overt expression of loyalty to the Greek constitution required of the new entrant and national collective agreements covering wages and other benefits further reinforce this value, while in the broader society its practice is generally less apparent. Although private sector employment is covered by collective agreements, the small size of typical Greek businesses tends to promote local agreements and HR practice. The low performance orientation in

practice reported by GLOBE also tallies with the relatively lower job involvement ratings found in both sectors.

Overall therefore, it appears that the degree of congruence between sectoral and societal values and practices relates to individual outcomes of commitment and intrinsic satisfaction. Close alignment of these values may account for the significantly higher level of intrinsic satisfaction and all components of commitment within the public sector sample than in the private sector. The lack of significant difference in extrinsic satisfaction between public and private sector employees may say more about the uniqueness of Greek society. Both Karl and Sutton (1998) and Naff and Crum's (1999) work suggest that there should be significant differences between public and private sector employees on both intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction measures. The wage structure of the Greek public sector may be the counterbalance to this suggestion, however further research is needed to confirm this.

Moving on to the profiles analyses of the two samples, the results provide considerable support for this approach to the interpretation of the influence of organizational commitment on job satisfaction. Both sets of data support the view that the "totally organizationally committed" employee is likely to be more satisfied with his or her job, irrespective of where he or she worked, and that an employee who identifies with the organization (shows affective commitment) is likely to be more satisfied than one who does not, again irrespective of employment sector.

Low job satisfaction was the most likely outcome for individuals who were either uncommitted or only displayed job involvement (or continuance commitment). Perhaps most specifically for the Greek context, public sector employees were likely to be highly satisfied with their job when their commitment profile was high on loyalty or normative commitment, even if identification or affective commitment was low. This trend, while visible, was not so marked in the private sector where loyalty is neither rewarded nor offered.

This work lends support to the contention that commitment needs to be considered as a whole, irrespective of the formulation of commitment being used, and not merely broken down into constituent parts. In line with both Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) and Wasti (2005), the dominant influence of the affective component of commitment in producing organizationally positive work-related attitudes was confirmed. Both these authors have previously identified the importance of this component for the promotion of positive job-related behaviors. Our data confirm that these profiles also produce the most positive job-related attitudes.

Adopting a profiles approach to the study of organizational commitment does present a number of methodological difficulties. In particular in order to ensure sufficient distinctions between the eight proposed profiles, and to detect three-way interactions, require large samples and sufficient variability in all three commitment components. With the large data sets used here, within both samples it was possible to extract the eight proposed profiles in sufficient numbers. Only one group (C3) contained fewer than 20 respondents. The replication of findings across sectors further supports the generalisability of the results.

These findings have implications for human resource management specialists and practitioners. Primarily, the importance of seeking to develop affective commitment or organizational identification is highlighted. Initiatives that seek to emphasize the economic implications of leaving the organization (i.e. associated with continuance commitment) may be not only ineffective but actually detrimental to positive organizational outcomes. If the key variable is the extent to which the individual wants to stay in the organization, emphasizing the costs associated with leaving the organization, through for example manipulation of reward systems, may undermine the sense of emotional attachment. Thus it is the manager's job to create and develop organizational environments and jobs that will enable employees to feel attached to their organization. While the primacy of the affective aspect of commitment

appears to be universal, the significance of cultural values, in particular collectivism and uncertainty avoidance may be of more significance in impacting on normative commitment or loyalty. In the Greek context, given the importance of the loyalty component of commitment, stability of employment and career structure would seem to be significant for all employees. However, this may be difficult to achieve in a climate where unemployment rates remain high, consumption rates and patterns are rather low and the growth rates of the total Greek economy does not exceed three percent per annum. Accepting that total organizational commitment produces positive outcomes, emphasizing security and order may be a more effective lever for increasing organizational commitment in collectivist cultures high in uncertainty avoidance than in more individualist contexts.

### *Limitations of the Study*

This study related commitment profiles to job satisfaction and not to focal and discretionary behaviors, as exhibited in most of the relatively few studies conducted so far. The major limitation of this research is the cross-sectional data generated in self-reported questionnaires that raise the potential for common-method variance. However, it is difficult to envisage a way in which individual attitudes such as job satisfaction can be assessed other than through self report. This is less of a problem, however, for our hypothesized interaction effects. Common method variance cannot account for interactions but rather leads to an underestimation of statistical interactions (McClelland & Judd, 1993). Despite the mono-source design, we may therefore have some confidence in the interactions obtained.

The data were generated from convenience sampling of public and private sector employees. This also may limit the generalisability of the findings, although the large sample sizes could mediate this shortcoming. One further issue arising from this sampling approach is that the public sector sample includes supervisory and middle management employees

while the private sector sample comprises only non-supervisory participants. Therefore it could be suggested that the differences observed between public and private sector participants in fact stem from status and hierarchical variation. It is not possible to test this proposition with the data available, but it should be controlled for in future studies.

A feature that has perhaps not been sufficiently explored in this paper however is the extent to which the direct translation of scales might introduce error. While the translation processes were checked to be accurate, the interpretation of the construct under study may not be so direct. Items generated in an English-speaking frame might be interpreted differently from a Greek perspective: they might be difficult to understand or interpret for such a different audience. This may also go some way to explain the relatively modest internal reliabilities reported for the organizational identification, job involvement and loyalty sub-scales. Clearly there is a judgment to be made between identifying culturally appropriate 'emic' measures, and enabling direct comparisons of data through direct translation of measures assumed to be 'etic' (Vandenberghe, 2003). This study has opted to pursue the latter line; however underlying interpretation of the issues associated with organizational commitment in a Greek context requires further investigation.

### *Directions for future research*

This research verifies the conceptual framework developed by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), however it raises issues that need further investigation. These are: (a) an examination of commitment profiles with respect to focal and discretionary behaviors in Greece, (b) a study of the forms of commitment as predictors of more specific job attitudes, such as, satisfaction from payment or satisfaction from job security, or as predictors of employee performance, and (c) a culturally specific analysis and interpretation of the meaning of organizational commitment in Greece, as highlighted above. The first of these proposals

requires an extension of the current work in line with other published work focusing on behavioral rather than attitudinal outcomes of commitment. This would also in due course overcome the difficulties of common method variance highlighted in the previous section. The second suggestion represents an elaboration of the constructs already under study.

The third proposition however poses more significant difficulties. The local meaning of organizational commitment may not be captured by either Cook and Wall (1980) or Meyer et al. (1993) measures, however the similarities observed in the data with that reported elsewhere do provide some reassurance of the transportability of the constructs. A more comprehensive investigation of the meaning of organizational commitment in Greece will be a welcome addition to research in this field. This study provides some baseline data for such elaboration.

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**Table 1** Contrasting approaches to employment in the Greek private and public sectors

	<b>Private Sector</b>	<b>Public Sector</b>
Loyalty	To the private sector employer	To the government and the State. The new entrant gives an oath to the Greek Constitution
Employment Contract	Individual-, company- or sector-based	Government, regional government, local government-based
Employment Status	Contacted employment (mainly fixed term; rarely without time restriction)	Life-time and secured employment
Type of Employment	Full-time, part-time and flexi-time	Full-time
Hours of Work	Mainly 40 hours per week, but varies from sector to sector	37.5 hours per week
Policies and Procedures	Determined by each private sector organization	Determined by law and applied to all employees
Wages Determination	Individual, enterprise or branch collective agreements – minimum wages are not guaranteed across sector	National collective agreement – minimum wages are guaranteed everywhere in the public sector
Fringe Benefits	Not provided to everyone	Provided to everyone by law and collective agreements
Wage Progression	Determined by each private sector organization (according to merits, achievements, company needs)	Determined by seniority and educational background
Entrance Wage	Around 600 euros per month for a full-time employee	Around 900 euros for all employees
Wage Differentials by Rank	Substantial	Marginal and provided as a fringe benefit
Hierarchical Progression	Unclear, depends from each particular organization	After 12 years of public service an employee may become departmental manager
Unionization	Dependent on the industry. Generally low	Essential for everyone
Training and Development	Dependent on the company. Generally rare and unscheduled	Scheduled and organized by the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government
Performance Evaluation and Assessment	Unclear and unsystematic, dependent on organization	Typically annually

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**Table 2** Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha coefficients), Pearson correlations and t-tests for common variables by sector

Variables	Private sector N = 1119							Public sector N = 476							t-tests	
	Mean	S.D.	$\alpha$	1	2	3	4	Mean	S.D.	$\alpha$	1	2	3	4	t	p
1. Extrinsic satisfaction	4.60	.98	.83					4.62	1.00	.83					0.37	.71
2. Intrinsic satisfaction	4.59	1.10	.89	.77**				4.76	1.08	.88	.68**				2.86	<.01
3. Organizational identification	4.29	1.11	.61	.62**	.67**			4.64	1.14	.64	.61**	.58**			5.65	<.01
4. Job involvement	3.90	1.06	.55	.19**	.18**	.30**		4.18	1.06	.56	.18**	.26**	.28**		4.83	<.01
5. Loyalty	3.92	1.16	.54	.52**	.51**	.65**	.57**	4.45	1.25	.64	.51**	.48**	.64**	.38**	7.91	<.01

Note. \*\* p < .01 (two-tailed)

**Table 3** Distribution of commitment profiles (Cook and Wall, 1980)

		Organizational identification			
		Low		High	
Job involvement	Low	Low	High	Low	High
	Loyalty	Low	<b>P1</b>	<b>P2</b>	<b>P5</b>
N (pri) = 276 N (pub) = 141			N (pri) = 154 N (pub) = 35	N (pri) = 115 N (pub) = 33	N (pri) = 67 N (pub) = 23
<b>“Totally Uncommitted”</b>					
High		<b>P3</b>	<b>P4</b>	<b>P7</b>	<b>P8</b>
	N (pri) = 67 N (pub) = 36	N (pri) = 89 N (pub) = 31	N (pri) = 113 N (pub) = 75	N (pri) = 237 N (pub) = 102	
		<b>“Totally Organizationally Committed”</b>			

**Table 4a** Analysis of Variance for Private Sector (BOCS)

Variables	df	F	p	Variables	df	F	p
Extrinsic satisfaction	1	27689.04	.00	Intrinsic satisfaction	1	24047.06	.00
OI	1	206.76	.00	OI	1	298.59	.00
JI	1	.07	.80	JI	1	.23	.63
LO	1	43.85	.00	LO	1	35.94	.00
OI x JC	1	.00	1.00	OI x JC	1	2.70	.10
OI x LO	1	4.79	.03	OI x LO	1	.00	.99
JI x LO	1	.50	.48	JI x LOC	1	.00	.96
OI x JI x LO	7, 1118	9.30	.00	OI x JI x LO	7, 1119	20.78	.00

Note: OI = Organizational identification, JI = Job involvement, LO = Loyalty

**Table 4b** Analysis of Variance for Public Sector (BOCS)

Variables	df	F	p	Variables	df	F	P
Extrinsic satisfaction	1	9862.32	.00	Intrinsic satisfaction	1	8713.85	.00
OI	1	68.55	.00	OI	1	77.19	.00
JI	1	2.89	.09	JI	1	2.75	.10
LO	1	28.08	.00	LO	1	11.59	.00
OI x JC	1	1.12	.29	OI x JC	1	.25	.62
OI x LO	1	.10	.92	OI x LO	1	.17	.68
JI x LO	1	2.98	.09	JI x LOC	1	1.08	.30
OI x JI x LO	7, 476	4.92	.03	OI x JI x LO	7, 476	.48	.49

Note: OI = Organizational identification, JI = Job involvement, LO = Loyalty

**Table 5** Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha coefficients) and correlations among the Meyer et al. (1993) commitment variables (public sector)

Variables	Mean	St.dev.	$\alpha$	1	2	3	4
1. Extrinsic satisfaction	4.62	1.00	.83				
2. Intrinsic satisfaction	4.76	1.08	.88	.68**			
3. Affective commitment	4.76	1.19	.82	.42**	.53**		
4. Continuance commitment	4.82	1.03	.66	.04	.01	.05	
5. Normative commitment	4.27	1.18	.75	.36**	.34**	.66**	.23**

Note. \*\*  $p < .01$ (two-tailed)

**Table 6** Distribution of commitment profiles (Meyer et al., 1993)

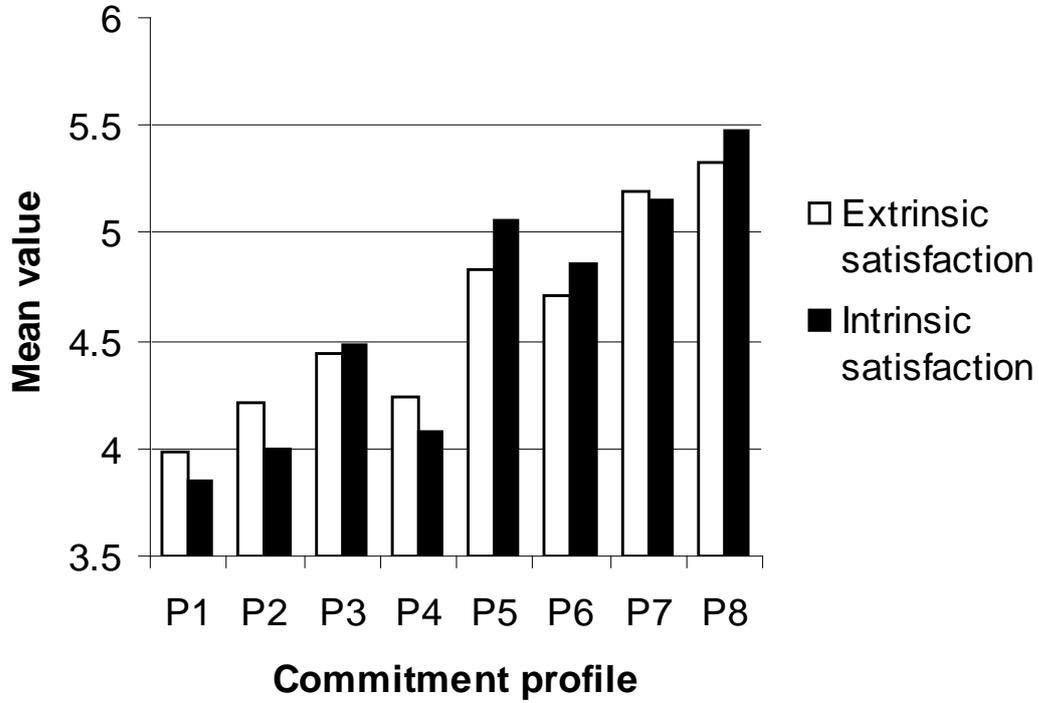
		Affective commitment			
		Low		High	
Continuance commitment	Low	Low	High	Low	High
	Normative commitment	Low	<b>C1</b> (N = 96) <b>“Totally Uncommitted”</b>	<b>C2</b> (N = 77)	<b>C5</b> (N = 42)
High		<b>C3</b> (N = 19)	<b>C4</b> (N = 39)	<b>C7</b> (N = 81)	<b>C8</b> (N = 96) <b>“Totally Organizationally Committed”</b>

**Table 7** Analysis of Variance for Public Sector (Meyer et al., 1993)

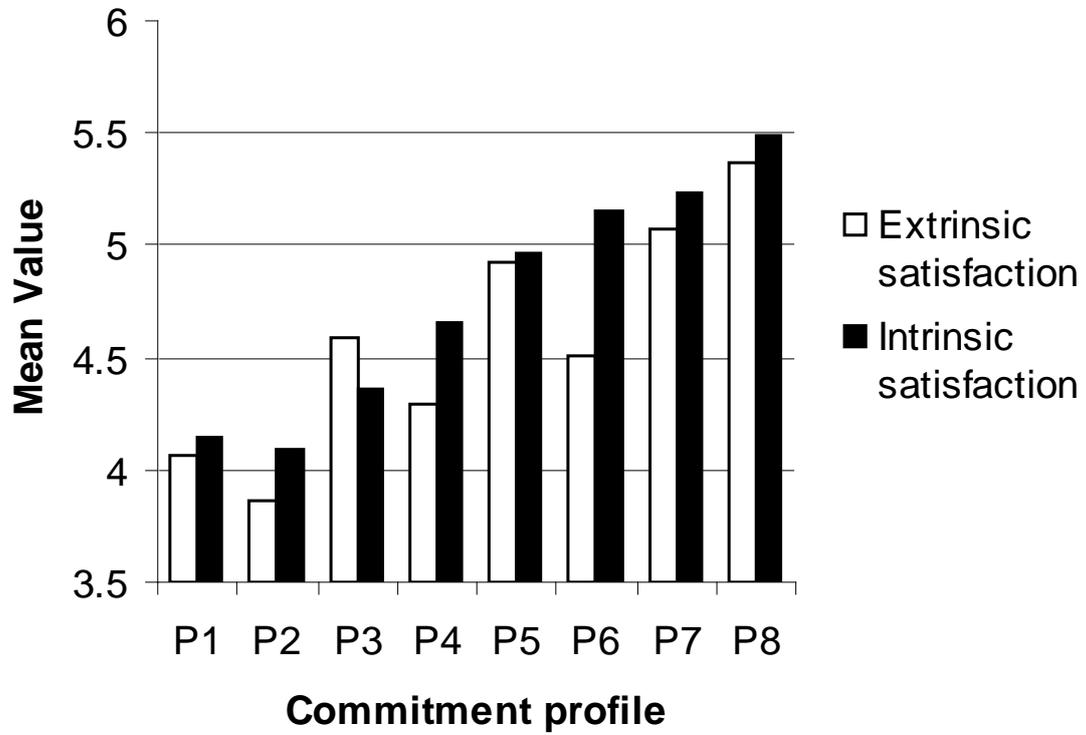
Variables	df	F	p	Variables	df	F	p
Extrinsic satisfaction	1	8396.30	.00	Intrinsic satisfaction	1	8726.23	.00
AC	1	28.96	.00	AC	1	55.79	.00
CC	1	.06	.80	CC	1	4.82	.03
NC	1	5.84	.02	NC	1	12.56	.00
AC x CC	1	.01	.91	AC x CC	1	.50	.48
AC x NC	1	.00	.99	AC x NC	1	.77	.38
CC x NC	1	.53	.47	CC x NC	1	.00	.97
AC x CC x NC	7, 476	5.19	.02	AC x CC x NC	7, 476	13.10	.00

Note: AC = Affective commitment, CC = Continuance commitment, NC = Normative commitment

**Figure 1a** Mean satisfaction values for commitment profiles in the private sector (Cook and Wall, 1980)



**Figure 1b** Mean satisfaction values for commitment profiles in the public sector (Cook and Wall, 1980)



**Figure 2** Mean satisfaction values for commitment profiles in the public sector (Meyer et al., 1993)

