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# Trust in the workplace: The importance of an employee's perspective

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Trust in the workplace: The importance of an employee's perspective

By

Behdokht Rekabdar

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
through the Department of Psychology  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts  
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2015

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Trust in the workplace: The importance of an employee's perspective

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September 8, 2015

## **DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

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## ABSTRACT

Although researchers have highlighted the importance of examining trust and its effects from both perspectives of the organizational dyadic relationship (i.e., employee-employer), trust continues to be investigated solely from the employer's perspective (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). Drawing upon organizational support theory and social exchange theory (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), a theoretical model was developed, in which perceived support, employee felt trustworthiness, and organization-based self-esteem mediated the effects of job characteristics on organizational commitment and job satisfaction. This model was tested in a cross-sectional study with a diverse sample of employees. Findings suggest that employee felt trustworthiness itself may be managed and enhanced by allowing employees to independently make decisions regarding their work. This study highlights the value of understanding the employee-employer relationship, specifically from the employee perspective. This perspective provides a clearer understanding of *how* job characteristics and forms of organization-based support can ultimately lead to positive work outcomes.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Canadian employees spend an average of 30 hours per week at work, if not more (Statistics Canada, 2014). As such, it is not surprising to find that employees develop strong attitudes about their employment or employer that develop from simply being exposed to their work environment (Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007). Researchers have shown great interest in studying workplace attitudes in the hopes of predicting job performance and employee well-being (Humphrey et al., 2007; Sonnentag & Frese, 2003). Although there is an extensive list of workplace attitudes that have been examined by industrial-organizational researchers, there are two attitudes that seem to be emphasized across the literature: job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bowling, Eschleman, & Wang, 2010; Meyer, Stanley, Jackson, McInnis, Maltin, & Sheppard, 2012). Researchers have also shown interest in job characteristics, such as autonomy and support from supervisors, which have been shown to predict both job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bowling et al., 2010; Oldham & Hackman, 2010). Employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment are of interest to both researchers and organizations due to their value in predicting organizational citizenship behaviours, work attendance, and overall job performance (Kinicki, McKee-Ryan, Schriesheim, & Carson, 2002; Russo, Vecchione, & Borgogni, 2013).

Although past research supports the strong relationship between job characteristics and workplace attitudes, the underlying explanations as to *why* these relationships exist, are still unclear. This is particularly evident in research based on the job characteristics theory. One line of research suggests that feeling supported by an

employer mediates this relationship (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Another line of research suggests that employee self-esteem mediates the relationship between job characteristics and employee attitudes (Bowling, Eschleman, Wang, Kirkendall, & Alarcon, 2010). Recently, researchers found support for both models, and that feeling supported by an employer affects employee self-esteem, which subsequently affects employee attitudes, such as organizational commitment (Chen, Aryee, & Lee, 2005; Ferris, Brown, & Heller, 2009; Lee & Peccei, 2007). In other words, the effects of job characteristics on organizational commitment are explained by its effects on employee perceptions of feeling supported by their employer and employee self-esteem. Nevertheless, this model is largely theoretical, and more empirical research is needed in order to support the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee self-esteem. This thesis aims to test the mediating effects of perceived organizational support and employee self-esteem on the relationship between job characteristics (i.e., job demands, autonomy, and job complexity) and employee attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment). Furthermore, this thesis will introduce an often ignored construct in this line of research, along with its role in this mediation model: namely, employees' perception of feeling trusted by their employer.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **Job Characteristics Theory**

Hackman and Oldham (1975) developed the job characteristics theory to help explain employee attitudes and behaviour. Specifically, this theory suggested that five job characteristics influence affective outcomes. These characteristics include the following: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Skill variety is the extent to which an employee can use an array of skills and abilities to complete an array of tasks. For example, employees in an assembly line whose sole task is to repeatedly screw together two pieces of metal are not likely to experience skill variety. Task identity is the extent to which an employee takes part in a project, from start to finish. Employees who are partially involved in a project are less likely to identify with their task, because they are only partially responsible for the completed product. Task significance is the extent to which an employee's job has a positive and influential impact on the physical or psychological well-being of others. For example, employees in the public health industry (e.g., family physicians) may think that their job is meaningful due to their contributions to improving the health of others. Autonomy is the extent to which an employee can independently make decisions regarding the process in which a task is completed. For example, school teachers are expected to follow a detailed curriculum that is strictly enforced by a school board. As such, school teachers are less likely to experience high autonomy. Feedback is the extent to which employees are informed of the effectiveness of their own performance. Feedback can be provided by supervisors, peers, or from tasks; this feedback can be either positive or negative.

According to Hackman and Oldham (1975), each of these job characteristics affects one of three “critical psychological states”. Skill variety, task identity, and task significance affect the first psychological state: meaningfulness of work. Autonomy affects the second state, responsibility for work outcomes, and feedback affects the third state, knowledge of the results of past performance. In recognition of individual differences in employees, Hackman and Oldham (1975) introduced two moderators that would determine if these psychological states would subsequently affect employee attitudes. These moderators are growth need strength (i.e., the need for personal achievement and development) and job-relevant knowledge and skills. In accordance with the job characteristics theory, employees who are exposed to the five job characteristics are more likely to experience meaningfulness of work, responsibility for their work’s outcomes, and be informed of their work’s results. If these employees are internally driven to develop at work (i.e., growth need strength), and have the tools to do so (i.e., job-relevant knowledge and skills), they are more likely to perform better and be more satisfied with their work (Oldham & Hackman, 2010). In fact, the theory suggests that these critical psychological states mediate the effect of job characteristics on four affective outcomes: internal work motivation, growth satisfaction, general satisfaction, and work effectiveness (Morgeson & Campion, 2003).

Oldham and Brass (1979) found support that perceptions of job characteristics mediate the effect of objective job characteristics on employee satisfaction and motivation. In addition to its effects on job attitudes, job characteristics, such as autonomy, are also strongly related to employee well-being (Castanheira & Chambel, 2010; Chung-Yan, 2010; Rooney, Gottlieb, & Newby-Clark, 2009). Although the job characteristics theory became “the dominant approach for research on job attitudes”

(Morgeson & Campion, 2003, p.426), the theory failed to take into consideration the affective impact of social factors, such as organizational support systems.

Organizational support systems, including support from supervisors and colleagues, have been shown to promote job satisfaction, employee motivation, engagement, and commitment (Gillet, Gagné, Sauvagère, & Fouquereau, 2013; Gillet, Huart, Colombat, & Fouquereau, 2013; Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui, 2012; Ng & Sorensen, 2008; Rooney et al., 2009). Furthermore, researchers have found that organizational support systems are negatively related to turnover intentions, job strain, burnout, and occupational stress (Fenlason & Beehr, 1994; Karatepe, 2011; Newman et al., 2012; Ng & Sorensen, 2008; Rooney et al., 2009). Overall, the literature supports the strong relationship between task and social-related factors of job characteristics and its outcomes, which include employee attitudes, behaviours, and well-being.

### **Perceived Organizational Support**

Although job characteristics and organizational support systems have been shown to significantly predict employee attitudes, it is still unclear how they shape and predict affective outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Borrowing from Hackman and Oldham's (1975) job characteristics theory, two lines of research have identified two different critical psychological states to explain the effects of job characteristics on affective outcomes. These psychological states are perceived organizational support and organization-based self-esteem.

Perceived organizational support is defined as "the degree to which employees perceive their employer to be concerned with their well-being and to value their contributions to the organization" (Aubé, Rousseau, & Morin, 2007, p.480). It is critical to note that perceived organizational support does not measure whether employers

actually support their employees: it only takes into account employees' perception of being supported by their organization. In line with organizational support research, perceived organizational support functions under the assumptions of social exchange theory and organizational support theory (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Social exchange theory suggests that the employment relationship involves the trading of effort in exchange for socioemotional benefits, such as self-esteem and caring, and concrete rewards, such as pay (Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, 1998; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). This exchange usually involves two different parties; in this case, the employee and the organization.

Subsequently, organizational support theory suggests that employees form an impression of their employer's willingness to reward their contributions and the extent to which their employer is concerned for their well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Finally, the reciprocity norm suggests that the treatment of one party by another, will be reciprocated in the opposite direction (Mowday et al., 1982). Therefore, all three theories suggest that once employees form an overall impression of their employer's estimation of them based on how their employer treats them, employees reciprocate the same treatment through their behaviour at work. In the organizational context, these theories suggest that employees who feel that they are treated well by their employer tend to work harder and are more committed to the organization.

Antecedents of perceived organizational support include, fairness, organizational rewards, job stressors, and autonomy (Baran, Shanock, & Miller, 2012; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Furthermore, perceived organizational support has been found to mediate the effects of these antecedents on motivation and engagement (Gillet et al., 2013); organizational commitment (Aubé et al., 2007; Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel,



Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001); and employee satisfaction and turnover intentions (Gillet et al., 2013).

### **Organization-Based Social Support: Moderator or Mediator?**

Because perceived organizational support is a form of social support, a review of the stress-support literature is necessary. Overall, there is a general agreement that different types of social support are linked to a number of positive health outcomes, especially during stressful events (Mitchell, Evans, Rees, & Hardy, 2014). Nevertheless, there is some debate as to how social support affects the relationship between stressors and its outcomes. One school of thought proposes that positive outcomes are a direct effect of social support, and are not dependent on the presence of stressors. This school of thought advocates for the main-effect model, in which there is no interaction between social support and stressors (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Another school of thought proposes that social support protects individuals from the negative effects of stressors. This school of thought advocates for the buffering model, in which social support interacts with different levels of stress to produce varying outcomes (Cohen & Wills, 1985). These models will be discussed in more detail, respectively.

According to Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen, and DeLongis (1986), once individuals perceive a threat in their environment, and determine that the demands required to overcome that threat exceeds their resources (i.e., primary appraisal), individuals evaluate different coping strategies (i.e., secondary appraisal). Although there are numerous coping strategies, there are two broad categories of coping strategies, which are used collectively by threatened individuals. Problem-focused coping involves strategies that directly address the threat (e.g., problem solving, altering the situation), whereas emotion-focused coping involves strategies that help regulate the emotions caused by the threat

(e.g., accepting responsibility, distancing) (Folkman et al., 1986). Seeking social support, which is characterized by the expansion of a social network, can be used as both an emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategy in order to mitigate the negative effects of perceived threats. As a problem-focused coping strategy, this expansion allows individuals to seek solutions from a larger pool of individuals that may have more experience in relevant areas. As an emotion-focused coping strategy, this expansion enables regular, positive experiences for individuals who seek such social support. These positive experiences can help individuals to establish a stable, positive role as a member within their respective social network (Cohen & Wills, 1985). These coping strategies can be used collectively because individuals can use their expanded social network to simultaneously address the perceived threat and regulate their emotions caused by the threat. For example, in anticipation for an upcoming exam, students could seek advice from their peers on how to effectively study for their exam, but can also distract themselves momentarily from the exam by watching a movie with a friend.

Furthermore, social support can provide a “recognition of self-worth” (Cohen & Wills, 1985, p. 311). In other words, social support can help improve self-esteem by enabling individuals to recognize that they are worthy of such support. By improving self-esteem, social support can subsequently affect future appraisals of threats (i.e., positive appraisals), and thus prevent future stressful experiences (Folkman et al., 1986).

According to the main-effect model, the effects of social support on positive outcomes, such as self-esteem, are not dependent on varying levels of a perceived stressor (i.e., high job demands). Instead, this model suggests that the absence of social support functions as a stressor itself, which affects subsequent outcomes (Gerich, 2014). For example, regardless if there is a perceived stressor (i.e., high or low job demands), the main-effect

model suggests that high levels of social support can directly impact (i.e., increase) levels of self-esteem.

In fact, previous studies have found significant main effects for perceived social support on depressive symptoms (Xu & Chi, 2013), psychological well-being (Bowen, Taylor, Marcus-Aiyeku, & Krause-Parello, 2012), and subjective well-being (Gerich, 2014). Furthermore, these studies found that perceived social support mediates the effects of stressors on such outcomes, and accounts for more unique variance as a mediator. Moreover, numerous studies have found that both perceived social support and self-esteem act as mediators, to affect depression (Jesse, Kim, & Herndon, 2014; Symister & Friend, 2003); subjective well-being (Kong, Zhao, & You, 2013; Liu, Li, & Lin, 2013; Yarcheski, Mahon, & Yarcheski, 2001); and life satisfaction (Kong, Ding, & Zhao, 2014). Overall, previous findings show that perceived social support is significantly related to outcomes, such as life satisfaction and psychological well-being, through its main effects and as a mediator to stressors.

In contrast to research in support of the main-effect model, there are also many empirical studies that support the buffering model (Cohen & Hoberman, 1983; Mitchell et al., 2014). In accordance with the buffering model, perceived stressors (i.e., job demands) only have a negative impact on outcomes, such as well-being, in the absence of social support. Conversely, the model suggests that the negative effects of stressors on well-being are ameliorated in the presence of social support. In fact, researchers found that higher levels of social support predicted better outcomes than lower levels of social support (Cohen & Hoberman, 1983). These results have been replicated in studies that evaluated the effects of stressors on depressive symptoms and psychological responses to injury (Fernandez, Mutran, & Reitz, 1998; Mitchell et al., 2014; Rees, Mitchell, Evans,

& Hardy, 2010). Interestingly, these studies also found differences in effect, when comparing perceived social support and actual social support. Specifically, the authors found that perceived social support moderated the effects of stressors on subsequent outcomes, whereas actual social support mediated the effects of stressors on the same outcomes (Mitchell et al., 2014; Rees et al., 2010).

Despite these conflicting results, it should be noted that these studies were not conducted in the organizational context and instead, focused solely on health-related outcomes. A review of the social support literature in the organizational context is necessary as it serves as a reference for the current study. Simply put, due to the fact that the current study is embedded in an organizational context, a review of relevant research that examines the relationship between similar predictors and outcomes may be more informative than research that examines different outcomes (i.e., health-related outcomes). Ultimately, existing literature in the organizational context reveals a much clearer relationship between perceived social support, autonomy, and their effects on employee outcomes. Specifically, the job demands-control-support model (Karasek, 1979; Johnson & Hall, 1988) has been frequently studied by researchers. In the job demands-control-support model, job demands function as stressors that could threaten employee outcomes, such as well-being, attitudes, and behaviour (i.e., performance) (McClenahan, Giles, & Mallett, 2007). Control and social support, however, can buffer or moderate the effects of job demands on such outcomes. The rationale behind the job demands-control-support model is that employees must have enough resources (i.e., control and support) in order to cope with their job demands (McClenahan et al., 2007). In other words, negative employee outcomes, such as job strain or job dissatisfaction, can be prevented by matching levels of control and social support with levels of job demands.

Overall, the model suggests that employees with jobs characterized by high demands, low social support, and low control are more likely to experience job strain and job dissatisfaction, than employees with other jobs (Johnson & Hall, 1988). Furthermore, the model suggests that interactions between job demands, control, and social support are more predictive of employee outcomes than their respective main or additive effects (Johnson & Hall, 1988), however, this model has received limited and contradictory support (Taris, 2006). In fact, numerous studies found no significant two-way or three-way interactions between job demands, control, and social support. Instead, researchers only found significant main and additive effects of job demands, control, and social support on employee outcomes, such as burnout, psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Luchman & Gonzalez-Morales, 2013; McClenahan et al., 2007; Melamed, Kushnir, & Meir, 1991; Rodriguez, Bravo, Peiro, & Schaufeli, 2001; Sawang, 2010; Schaubroeck & Fink, 1998). In addition, it should be noted that these researchers all measured *perceived* social support in their respective studies. These findings are consistent with the organizational support literature, in which perceived organizational support is found to mediate the effects of job characteristics on employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. As such, the current study tested perceived organizational support as a mediator in the proposed model.

### **Perceived Supervisor Support**

A construct similar to perceived organizational support has also been noted by researchers: perceived supervisor support. Perceived supervisor support is defined as the degree to which employees perceive their supervisor to be concerned for their well-being and value their contributions to the organization (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber,

Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002). The reason for the interest in perceived supervisor support is due to the influential role of supervisors. Because supervisors are largely responsible for enforcing organizational policies and procedures, as well as distributing work and evaluating performance, supervisors are viewed by their employees to be representative of their organization (Eisenberger et al., 2002).

In the context of support, if employees perceive their supervisor to value their contributions, they are more likely to perceive their organization to also value their contributions. In fact, perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support have been found to be strongly correlated, however, the extent to which perceived supervisor support correlates to perceived organizational support depends on three conditions (Eisenberger et al., 2002). First, employees must perceive their supervisor to be valued and well-treated by their organization. Second, employees must perceive their supervisor to have influence in important organizational decisions, and third, employees must perceive their supervisor to have enough autonomy and authority to do their jobs efficiently. When these conditions are met, employees are more likely to perceive their supervisor to be representative of their organization.

The two forms of perceived social support are theoretically similar; nevertheless, perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support are distinguishable constructs (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Furthermore, results from a preliminary, longitudinal study suggest that perceived supervisor support precedes perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 2002). This relationship can be explained by the direct contact that employees and supervisors may experience frequently. As previously mentioned, under certain conditions, employees perceive their supervisors to be representative of their organization. Therefore, employees expect their supervisors to

act in a manner that is in accordance with their organization. In other words, any action of the supervisor is perceived to be on behalf of the organization. Through direct interactions with their supervisors, employees begin to develop perceptions of their organization, such as the degree to which they are valued by their employer (i.e., perceived organizational support). These interactions are influential in shaping perceived organizational support because employees may not directly interact with their organization at all. In contrast, supervisors are the first and sometimes, sole line of direct contact with an organization. Due to these direct interactions, perceived supervisor support is theorized to be an antecedent of perceived organizational support.

Similar to perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support is a strong predictor of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Ng & Sorensen, 2008). As such, perceived supervisor support was measured and incorporated in the current study. This was done for a number of reasons. First, organizational support may carry different meanings across different employees. For example, one employee may think that the “organization” consists of every single individual who works within the organization, whereas another employee may think that the “organization” consists of every individual in their department. Due to the different connotations that “organization” can carry, the way in which employees complete the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support may differ as well. In contrast, “supervisor” has a much clearer definition, therefore employees are more likely to clearly identify a “supervisor”. As a result, employees that complete the Survey of Perceived Supervisor Support are more likely to have a similar definition of a “supervisor”.

Second, as mentioned above, employees directly interact with their supervisors, whereas employees may not have such interactions with their organization. Due to the

direct interaction between employees and supervisors, employees can refer to specific events or instances when answering questions regarding supervisor support. In contrast, employees are less likely to refer to concrete experiences when trying to answer questions from the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (e.g., “My organization shows a lot of concern for me”).

### **Job Characteristics: Job Demands, Job Complexity, and Autonomy**

As previously mentioned, antecedents of perceived organizational support include job characteristics such as job stressors and autonomy (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). As such, this study will include job demands, job complexity, and autonomy as three job characteristics in the current model. Job demands is defined as the extent to which a job requires a heavy workload and insufficient time to complete it (Luchman & Gonzalez-Morales, 2013). Job complexity is defined as to the degree to which a job’s tasks are complex and difficult to complete (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Because complex tasks require acute skills for successful completion, they can be mentally demanding (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). In other words, as job complexity increases, it can function as a job stressor. Autonomy, as mentioned above, is defined as the degree to which workers are allowed to independently make decisions regarding the way in which tasks are completed, however this definition can also include the freedom to independently make decisions regarding work scheduling (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006).

Job demands, job complexity and autonomy are included in the study for two reasons. First, job complexity and autonomy have been frequently researched in the work (re)design and organizational support literature (Humphrey et al., 2007; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Consequently, previous studies have supported the strong



relationship between job complexity and autonomy and employee attitudes and behaviours. Second, autonomy and job demands have been frequently researched under the job demands-control-support model and have been found to be strongly related to employee well-being (Rooney et al., 2009). Although job complexity has not been largely studied in the job demands-control-support literature, it has been suggested that job complexity and autonomy are more conceptually matched in terms of their corresponding functions and effects on employees, especially in comparison to the more frequently studied job demands (Chung-Yan, 2010). Specifically, the job demands-control-support model is frequently tested using measures of job demands and autonomy (as a form of control). As mentioned above, the rationale behind the job demands-control-support model is that jobs with high demands, low control, and low social support are more likely to increase job strain. In order to prevent or decrease job strain, employees must have enough control and social support in order to cope with their level of job demands. Simply put, job strain can be prevented by matching levels of control and social support with levels of job demands, however it has been argued that control does not always function as a resource to cope with levels of job demands (Chung-Yan, 2010). For example, assembly line workers are faced with high job demands that require simple, routine work, however, they may not need control over the procedures used to complete their job (Chung-Yan, 2010). In contrast, employees with complex jobs that are lacking in structure and set procedures can benefit more from exercising judgement and decision-making (Chung-Yan, 2010). As such, job complexity and autonomy are more complementary than job demands and autonomy.

Due to previous empirical findings that job stressors are negatively related to perceived organizational support, it is expected that job complexity and job demands will

be negatively related to perceived organizational support. Similarly, it is expected that autonomy will be positively related to perceived organizational support due to previous empirical findings that the two are positively related. Furthermore, due to empirical findings that perceived supervisor support and perceived organizational support have a strong, positive correlation and the theorized predictive relationship between the two forms of perceived support, it is expected that perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of job complexity, job demands, and autonomy on perceived organizational support. The following proposed hypotheses are presented in Figure 1.

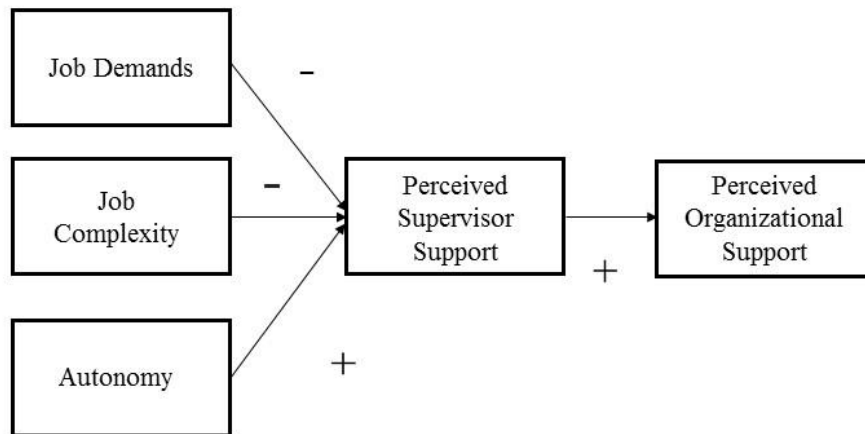


Figure 1. Visual presentation of hypotheses 1 through 2.

*Hypothesis 1a):* Job demands will be negatively associated with perceived supervisor support.

*Hypothesis 1b):* Job complexity will be negatively associated with perceived supervisor support.

*Hypothesis 1c):* Autonomy will be positively associated with perceived supervisor support.

*Hypothesis 2a):* Perceived supervisor support will be positively associated with perceived organizational support.

*Hypothesis 2b):* Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of job demands on perceived organizational support.

*Hypothesis 2c):* Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of job complexity on perceived organizational support.

*Hypothesis 2d):* Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of autonomy on perceived organizational support.

### **Organization-Based Self-Esteem**

Perceived supervisor and organizational support both provide insight into the relationship between job characteristics and employee attitudes, however, this line of research is criticized by the fact that it does not take into account the socioemotional benefits of the employee-employer relationship, such as self-esteem, that is highlighted in social exchange theory. In order to address this criticism, researchers have introduced a second psychological state that helps to clarify the role of perceived organizational support in the relationship between job characteristics and employee attitudes: organization-based self-esteem.

Currently, one line of research suggests that organization-based self-esteem mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee attitudes, such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Organization-based self-esteem is defined as an employee's self-worth as a competent organizational member (Bowling et al., 2010). Organization-based self-esteem also functions under the assumptions of social exchange theory and organizational support theory. In the organizational context, employees' impression of their employer's estimation of them based on how their employer treats them is internalized and subsequently affects the employee's feelings of self-worth, and thus, self-esteem (McAllister & Bigley, 2001). This is because the self-concept actively interprets environmental cues, in order to guide future responses (Van Dyne, Vandewalle, Kostova, Latham, & Cummings, 2000). Therefore, employees who do not feel supported by their employer or organization may feel unworthy of such support, whereas employees who do feel supported by their employer, may have more positive feelings in regards to their self-worth. Interestingly, this rationale is in accordance with the main-effect model (mentioned above), in which perceived social support mediates the effects of stressors on self-esteem (Kong et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2013). For these employees, these positive feelings eventually become part of their self-concept (Chen et al., 2005). In fact, high scoring organization-based self-esteem employees are more likely to base their self-concept on organizational membership and are more likely to feel like trusted, contributing members of the organization (Chen et al., 2005). In order to maintain their enhanced sense of self-worth as organizational members (i.e., organization-based self-esteem), employees subsequently begin to perform in a manner that reflects their perception of being capable and willing employees. In fact, organization-based self-esteem has been shown to mediate the effects

of perceived organizational support in predicting organizational commitment (Chen et al., 2005; Ferris et al., 2009; Lee & Peccei, 2007). As such, it is expected that organization-based self-esteem will be positively related to organizational commitment. Furthermore, because organization-based self-esteem has a strong positive relationship with job satisfaction (Bowling et al., 2010), it is expected that organization-based self-esteem will be positively related to job satisfaction. The following proposed hypotheses are presented in Figure 2.

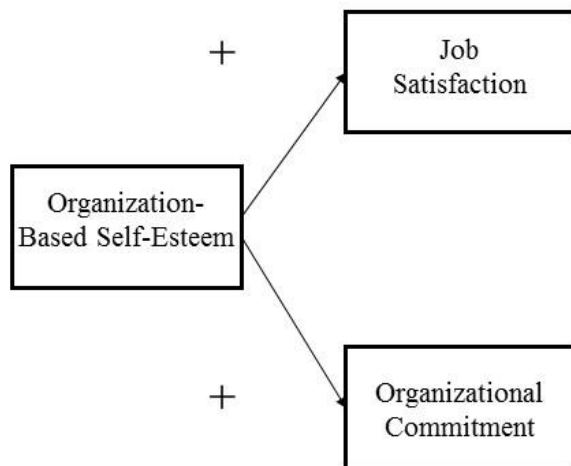


Figure 2. Visual presentation of hypotheses 3a) and 3b).

*Hypothesis 3a*): Organization-based self-esteem will be positively associated with organizational commitment.

*Hypothesis 3b*): Organization-based self-esteem will be positively associated with job satisfaction.

### **Employee Felt Trustworthiness**

Although organization-based self-esteem helps to bridge the gap between perceived organizational support and employee attitudes, it assumes that employees feel trusted as organizational members due to how they perceive they are treated by their employer, however this relationship has never been empirically tested. Therefore, this thesis aims to test Chen et al.'s (2005) assumption that high scoring organization-based self-esteem employees are more likely to feel as trusted members of their organization, as a result of their perceived organizational support. More specifically, this study will test if employee felt trustworthiness mediates the effects of perceived organizational support on organization-based self-esteem.

It is at this point in which the concept of *trusting* and *feeling trusted* must be differentiated. Trusting involves the willingness to take risks in a relationship, with the hopes of beneficial outcomes (Lau, Lam, & Wen, 2014; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Similar to perceived organizational and supervisor support, the concept of trust functions under the assumptions of social exchange theory and the reciprocity norm (Lester & Brower, 2003). In the organizational context, when employers invest in their employees, they *trust* that their investment will be reciprocated by the employees, in some shape or form. Specifically, employers may financially invest in their employees by providing sufficient resources, generous pay/salary, and benefits. In exchange, these employers expect their employees to perform at an optimal level and to meet

predetermined goals (e.g., target sales), with the intent of producing profits for the organization. In other words, by investing in their employees in the present time with the expectation of optimal future performance, these employers are taking risks and thus, are displaying trust in their employees. It should be noted, however, that employers' assumed risk and/or expectations may not be realized by their employees. Furthermore, employees may misinterpret the intentions of such displays of trust (Lau et al., 2014). As such, feeling trusted involves the trustee's (i.e., employee) perception of the truster's (i.e., employer) willingness to take such risks (Lau et al., 2014, p. 114). Returning to the organizational example, feeling trusted is measured from the employee's perception of the truster-trustee relationship. Conversely, feeling trusted does not take into account if an organization or employer actually trusts their employees: feeling trusted is a subjective experience, across all contexts.

It is noteworthy that existing literature on trust within industrial-organizational psychology differentiates between two different but related concepts of trust. The first concept, which was presented above, characterizes trust as the willingness to be vulnerable to risk for another party: within this framework, this concept is characterized as a decision or intention to trust (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006). A second concept of trust however, is characterized as a subjective set of beliefs about another party's trustworthiness (i.e., the degree to which another person's actions will have positive consequences for oneself) (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006, p. 558).

Although there is some debate over the exact dimensions underlying trustworthiness, most scholars agree that trustworthiness is characterized by three factors: ability, benevolence, and integrity (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006). Ability is defined as a set of skills, competencies, and characteristics that foster a sense of influence in a specific

domain (Mayer et al., 1995). Benevolence is defined as the degree to which the trustee genuinely cares for the trustor, with no egocentric motive (Mayer et al., 1995). Finally, integrity is defined as the degree to which the trustee behaves in a way that is in line with the trustor's norms and morals (Mayer et al., 1995).

The concepts of trusting/feeling trusted and trustworthiness/felt trustworthiness are distinct constructs (Mayer et al., 1995) and are not mutually inclusive: supervisors may perceive their staff to be trustworthy, but may not trust their staff regardless (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006). Despite this distinction, trustworthiness has been found to predict trusting behaviour (Nooteboom, Berger, & Noorderhaven, 1997). In other words, supervisors that perceive their staff to be trustworthy are likely to display trusting behaviour. A review of the existing literature on trust in the organizational context reveals that the majority of past research has focused on trustworthiness instead of trust (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006). By extension, measures of trustworthiness have been more frequently used and thus validated over time. In contrast, measures of trust or felt trust are inconsistent in regards to their operationalization of trust (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006). As such, a validated measure of trustworthiness will be used in the current study as a manifest variable of felt trust in the proposed model. This measure was originally developed to measure employee trustworthiness but was later adapted to measure employee *felt* trustworthiness.

The concepts of felt trustworthiness and feeling trusted are largely understudied, however, a preliminary study found that employees who felt trusted by their managers are more likely to experience an increase in felt responsibility (Salamon & Robinson, 2008). Felt responsibility is defined as the recognition of the importance of accepting responsibility for organizational outcomes (Salamon & Robinson, 2008). Accordingly, felt responsibility incorporates two components. The first component is the voluntary



acceptance of obligations to organizational outcomes, whereas the second component is the voluntary acceptance of accountability for organizational outcomes (Salamon & Robinson, 2008). Therefore, employees who feel trusted are more likely to feel obligated to behave in a way that will help the organization achieve its goals, and believe that their organizations' outcomes were caused by employees (Salamon & Robinson, 2008).

Interestingly, researchers found a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and felt obligation (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Furthermore, felt obligation was found to mediate the effects of perceived organizational support on organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 2001). The reasoning for this mediated relationship follows that once employees recognize favourable job conditions, they will perceive that their organization is willing to assume risks for their employees. Take, for example, an organization that invests in its employees with frequent pay increases. This investment can be interpreted by employees as a willingness to assume financial risk with the expectation of continued optimal performance. As such, these employees are likely to experience felt trust. Therefore, due to previous findings, it is expected that perceived organizational support will be positively related to employee felt trustworthiness. The following proposed hypotheses are presented in Figure 3.

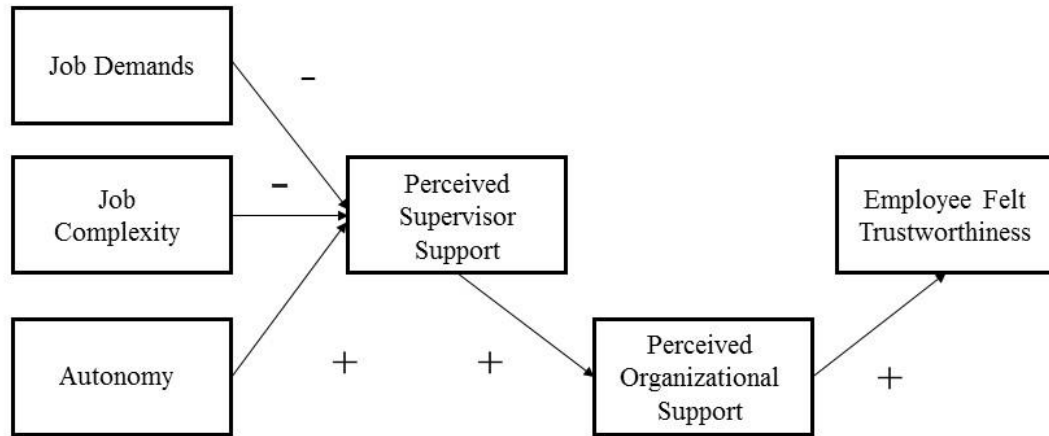


Figure 3. Visual presentation of hypotheses 1 through 2 and 4.

*Hypothesis 4a*): Perceived organizational support will be positively associated with employee felt trustworthiness.

*Hypothesis 4b*): Perceived organizational support will mediate the effects of perceived supervisor support on employee felt trustworthiness.

Another preliminary study found that the effects of feeling trusted were predictive of work performance and organizational citizenship behaviour in a large sample of teachers in Macau, China (Lau et al., 2014). Furthermore, investigators found that organization-based self-esteem mediated this relationship. The rationale behind this relationship can be explained by recalling that employees who feel trusted are more likely to experience increased felt responsibility for their organization's outcomes. This increase

in felt responsibility (i.e., obligation to and accountability for organization's outcomes) is then internalized into their self-concept as capable and willing organizational members. As mentioned above, employees subsequently adjust their behaviour and attitudes in order to maintain their re-evaluated self-concept as contributing organizational members. Due to previous findings by Lau, Lam, and Wen, (2014), it is, therefore, expected that felt trustworthiness will be positively related to organization-based self-esteem and that organization-based self-esteem will mediate the effects of employee felt trustworthiness on both organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 5a):* Employee felt trustworthiness will be positively associated with organization-based self-esteem.

*Hypothesis 5b):* Employee felt trustworthiness will mediate the effects of perceived organizational support on organization-based self-esteem.

*Hypothesis 6a):* Organization-based self-esteem will mediate the effects of employee felt trustworthiness on organizational commitment.

*Hypothesis 6b):* Organization-based self-esteem will mediate the effects of employee felt trustworthiness on job satisfaction.

Therefore, this study aims to combine the theoretical models of Chen et al. (2005) and Lau et al. (2014), in which employee felt trustworthiness will be used to test if perceived organizational support directly or indirectly effects organization-based self-esteem, and subsequently, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This new model is presented in Figure 4. A summary of all the proposed hypotheses is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*Summary of Proposed Hypotheses*

Hypotheses ( <i>H</i> )	Page Number
<i>H 1a</i> ): Job demands will be negatively associated with perceived supervisor support.	17
<i>H 1b</i> ): Job complexity will be negatively associated with perceived supervisor support.	17
<i>H 1c</i> ): Autonomy will be positively associated with perceived supervisor support.	17
<i>H 2a</i> ): Perceived supervisor support will be positively associated with perceived organizational support.	17
<i>H 2b</i> ): Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of job demands on perceived organizational support.	17
<i>H 2c</i> ): Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of job complexity on perceived organizational support.	17
<i>H 2d</i> ): Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of autonomy on perceived organizational support.	17
<i>H 3a</i> ): Organization-based self-esteem will be positively associated with organizational commitment.	20
<i>H 3b</i> ): Organization-based self-esteem will be positively associated with job satisfaction.	20
<i>H 4a</i> ): Perceived organizational support will be positively associated with employee felt trustworthiness.	24
<i>H 4b</i> ): Perceived organizational support will mediate the effects of perceived supervisor support on employee felt trustworthiness.	24
<i>H 5a</i> ): Employee felt trustworthiness will be positively associated with organization-based self-esteem.	25
<i>H 5b</i> ): Employee felt trustworthiness will mediate the effects of perceived organizational support on organization-based self-esteem.	25
<i>H 6a</i> ): Organization-based self-esteem will mediate the effects of employee felt trustworthiness on organizational commitment.	25
<i>H 6b</i> ): Organization-based self-esteem will mediate the effects of employee felt trustworthiness on job satisfaction.	25

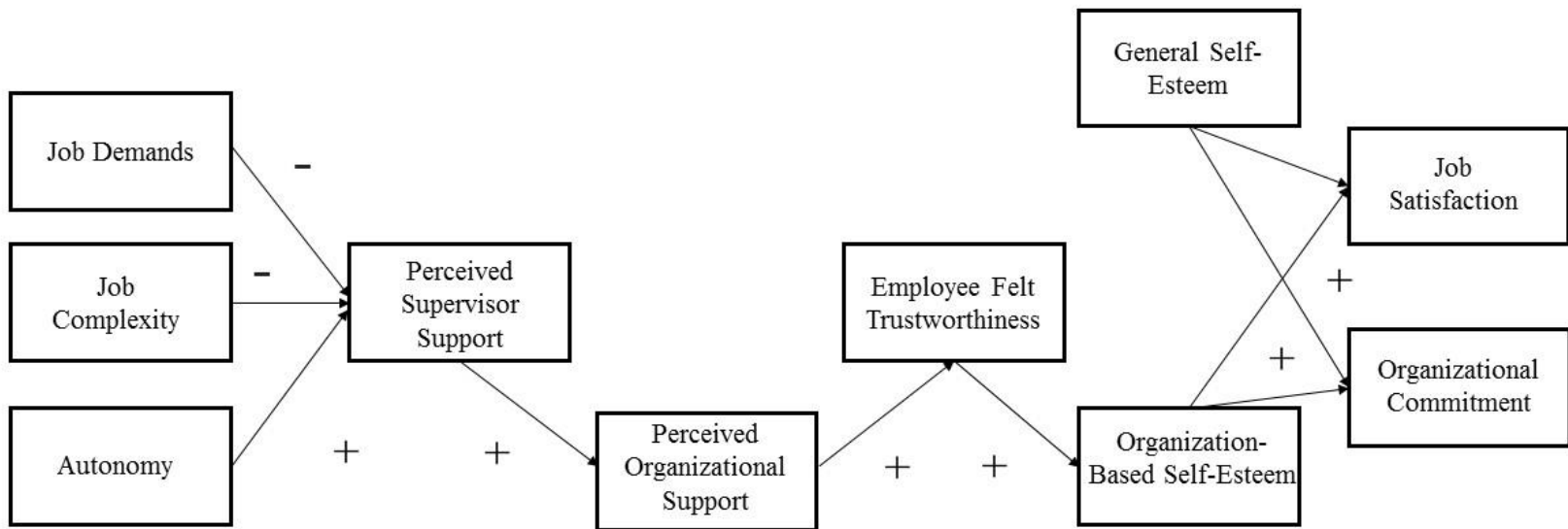


Figure 4. Proposed multiple mediation model.

## **Employee Outcomes: Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment**

A multitude of employee attitudes have been researched among industrial-organizational psychologists, however job satisfaction and organizational commitment have been the most frequently studied (Kinicki et al., 2002; Meyer, Stanley, Hersecovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). This focus may be due to the fact that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are strongly related to several positive outcomes which include, but are not limited to: motivation, organizational citizenship behaviours, work attendance, and overall job performance (Darden, Hampton, & Howell, 1989; Kinicki et al., 2002; Russo et al., 2013). Conversely, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are negatively related to absenteeism, turnover, psychological withdrawal, and lateness (Kinicki et al., 2002; Hulin & Judge, 2003). In addition to positive work outcomes, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are also related to employee well-being (Bowling et al., 2010; Judge & Locke, 1993; Knudsen, Roman, & Abraham, 2013).

Generally, job satisfaction can be defined as a “positive attitude or emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience” (Landy & Conte, 2007, p.378). According to this definition, job satisfaction is mediated by the employee’s perception of his/her work environment. The strong relationship between job satisfaction and subjective well-being (i.e., the rating of one’s own quality of life) can be explained by the “spillover” effects of one dimension of satisfaction on another. For example, when job satisfaction increases, its effects can contribute to a broader domain of satisfaction, such as life satisfaction. Because subjective well-being is comprised of affective (e.g., happiness) and cognitive dimensions, such as life satisfaction, increases in job satisfaction

can increase life satisfaction, and subsequently subjective well-being (Bowling et al., 2010).

Job satisfaction is strongly correlated to organizational commitment (Kinicki et al., 2002). According to Meyer and Allen (1991), there are three types of organizational commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment occurs when employees stay with an organization because they are emotionally attached to and identify with their organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). In other words, employees go to work because they *want* to. Continuance commitment occurs when employees stay with an organization because of the perceived cost associated with leaving the organization, such as lost pay or benefits (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Normative commitment occurs when employees stay with their employer because they feel obligated to do so (Meyer & Allen, 1991). In this case, employees may feel that they are indebted to their employer, which usually prevents them from applying elsewhere.

Meyer, Stanley, Hersecovitch, and Topolnytsky (2002) found significant differences in antecedents, correlates, and effects of all three forms of organizational commitment. Investigators found that perceived organizational support was the strongest antecedent to affective commitment and that job satisfaction was the strongest correlate to affective commitment (Meyer et al., 2002). Furthermore, affective commitment was found to have the strongest negative correlation to turnover, withdrawal cognitions (i.e., intention to quit and searching for another job), and absenteeism (Meyer et al., 2002). Similarly, affective commitment was found to have the strongest positive correlation to desired work outcomes, such as job performance and organizational citizenship behaviour

(Meyer et al., 2002). Moreover, only affective commitment was negatively correlated to self-reported stress and work-family conflict (Meyer et al., 2002).

Affective organizational commitment has strong relationships with such beneficial work outcomes because when employees are affectively committed to their organization, they identify more strongly with their organization (Mowday et al., 1982). As such, employees begin to accept their organization's goals and values as their own. In order to maintain their membership in the organization, employees become more willing to behave in accordance with those values, and to work harder, in order to achieve those goals (Mowday et al., 1982).

Despite the overwhelming evidence that affective commitment has the strongest relationship with employee outcomes, researchers have recently shifted their focus from studying different *types* of organizational commitment, to studying different *profiles* of organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 2012; Somers, 2009; Wasti, 2005).

Specifically, this research identifies different profiles of organizational commitment where each profile is composed of varying levels of affective, normative, and continuance commitment. For example, individuals characterized under the *highly committed* profile are those who score high on all three types of commitment. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) highlighted eight theoretical profiles. The first profile, the *highly committed*, is contrasted by the second profile, the *uncommitted*, where individuals score low on all three types of commitment. The next three profiles highlight dominance of one type of commitment over the other two: *affective dominant*, *normative dominant*, and *continuance dominant*. In these profiles, individuals score high in the dominant type of commitment but score low on the other two. The last three profiles highlight dominance of two types of commitment over the third: *affective-normative dominant*, *affective-*



*continuance dominant*, and *normative-continuance dominant*. In these profiles, individuals score high in the two dominant types of commitment but score low in the third one. In accordance with this shift in focus, numerous researchers have tested the relationship between profiles of organizational commitment and employee outcomes, such as turnover intentions, turnover, absenteeism, organizational citizenship behaviours, and job stress (Somers, 2009; 2010; Wasti, 2005). Researchers found that although the *affective dominant* profile had a strong relationship with employee outcomes, the *affective-normative dominant* profile had the strongest relationship with such outcomes. In explaining this relationship, the researchers suggested that when high affective commitment is coupled with high normative commitment, employees not only experience an emotional attachment and identification with their employer, but also a moral obligation to reciprocate (Somers, 2010; Wasti, 2005). This explanation is particularly relevant to the idea of felt trust. Specifically, the idea that felt trust promotes a sense of moral obligation in employees to reciprocate and contribute to their organization. Due to this rationale, coupled with empirical findings supporting the strong relationship between the *affective-normative dominant* profile and employee outcomes, this study will focus on both affective and normative organizational commitment as outcome variables. Therefore, it should be noted that hypotheses regarding organizational commitment will be characterized by both affective and normative organizational commitment. For example, *hypothesis 3a*) predicts that organization-based self-esteem will be positively associated with organizational commitment. This hypothesized relationship extends to both affective and normative organizational commitment.

In regards to the current study, job satisfaction and organizational commitment will be included in the proposed model as outcome variables for two reasons. First, job

satisfaction and organizational commitment improve the employee experience where individuals develop positive attitudes towards their employment and employer.

Furthermore, as mentioned above, both job satisfaction and organizational commitment lead to a number of outcomes that can have practical implications for organizations (e.g., turnover, absenteeism, job performance). Therefore, job satisfaction and organizational commitment benefits both parties involved in the employee-employer relationship.

Second, previous studies, which the current study is based on, have similarly focused on job satisfaction and organizational commitment as dependent variables (Bowling et al., 2010; Chen et al., 2005; Lau et al., 2014; Lee & Peccei, 2007).

### **Covariates: General Self-Esteem and Organizational Tenure**

Similar to organization-based self-esteem, dispositional traits such as core self-evaluations have been linked to job satisfaction, job performance, and psychological well-being (Judge & Locke, 1993). Core self-evaluations are dispositional traits that are fairly stable across time, and include the following: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and low neuroticism. Self-esteem is defined as the degree of an individual's self-worth: this definition is similar to organization-based self-esteem, except that it is on a global scale, generalized across different contexts. Generalized self-efficacy is the degree to which an individual believes in their own ability to cope and succeed in situations. Locus of control is the degree to which individuals attribute life events to occur as a cause of their own actions (i.e., internal locus of control) or by forces beyond their control (i.e., external locus of control). Low neuroticism is characterized by emotional stability, in which individuals are not easily made to experience negative emotions, such as anger and anxiety.

Considering the theoretical similarities between organization-based self-esteem and general self-esteem, it is not surprising that general self-esteem has also been shown to predict job satisfaction and job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001; Bono & Judge, 2003; Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000). This leads to the question of whether high scoring organization-based self-esteem employees are satisfied with or committed to their employer because of the way they perceive to be treated by their employer, or because they already have high general self-esteem. In order to address this question, general self-esteem will be measured and used as a covariate in the proposed model. Research has shown that general self-esteem is correlated to organization-based self-esteem, but that organization-based self-esteem serves as a stronger predictor of work-related outcomes than general self-esteem (Bowling et al., 2010). Although adding general self-esteem in the model as a covariate does not directly test the question of causation of organization-based self-esteem, it will help to determine if the model can be supported while controlling for the effects of general self-esteem.

Research shows that organizational tenure is not significantly correlated to organization-based self-esteem or perceived organizational support (Bowling et al., 2010; Eisenberger et al., 2002). However, when organizational tenure is controlled, investigators found stronger links between perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Eisenberger et al., 2002; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Furthermore, felt trust has shown to be significantly correlated to organizational tenure (Lau et al., 2014). Therefore, organizational tenure will be incorporated into the proposed model as a covariate.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHOD**

#### **Overview**

The proposed model was tested in a cross-sectional study in which participants were asked to complete an online survey. The model was tested using a sample of employees who were employed under different occupations, across different industries. This sample was recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk, an online crowdsourcing service that allows individuals to complete tasks online (i.e., surveys). Researchers have found support for the measurement equivalence of web-based organizational attitude surveys, in comparison to paper-and-pencil alternatives (Wolf, Hattrup, & Mueller, 2011). Specifically, no significant differences were found between the two modes of measurement across tests of configural, metric, and scalar equivalence (Wolf et al., 2011).

In exchange for completing the survey, each participant was paid \$1 as a token of appreciation. Researchers found that the average Amazon Mechanical Turk worker is willing to work for \$1.38, per hour (Mason & Suri, 2012). The survey (see Appendices A to L) took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete, which placed the offered incentive above the generally accepted rate. Although participants were paid for their participation, research has shown that the majority of Amazon Mechanical Turk workers are not monetarily motivated but view tasks as a productive way to spend free time (Mason & Suri, 2012; Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010).

#### **Sample**

In order to be included in the study, participants met the following criteria: 1) must work a minimum of 30 hours per week, 2) must be paid for their work, 3) must be employed by only one organization, 4) must be employed under one position (i.e., job

title) in their respective organization, 5) must have worked in their current organization for a minimum of two years (while working a minimum of 30 hours per week), and 6) must be working in the United States or Canada.

A total of 390 participants completed the online survey. Upon closer inspection of the initial sample, it was discovered that 31 participants' IP addresses were traced back to India. In order to ensure that all participants met the inclusion criteria (i.e., must be working in the United States or Canada), these participants were excluded from any subsequent analyses. Furthermore, 31 participants had completed the survey in five minutes or less. It should be noted that a pilot of the survey was implemented to just under a dozen individuals, and their average fastest completion time was just over five minutes. As such, it was assumed that participants who completed the survey in less than five minutes did not take enough time to answer survey items attentively: these participants were similarly excluded from further analyses. The final sample consisted of 328 participants (185 men and 143 women). The majority of participants identified as Caucasian ( $n = 258$ ) and resided in the United States ( $n = 326$ ). Ages ranged from 19 to 68 years ( $M = 34.97$ ,  $SD = 9.85$ ) and job tenure ranged from 24 to 900 months ( $M = 70.49$ ,  $SD = 74.53$ ). Tables 2 and 3 present the demographic characteristics of this sample. The jobs represented in the sample, as presented in Table 4, were varied across a number of different occupational training categories, however two categories were largely represented: "Sales" and "Business and Financial Operations".

## **Procedures**

When participants clicked on the Human Intelligence Task, they were provided with a link that directed them to an external website that was housed on FluidSurvey servers. Once participants clicked on the link, they were directed to a consent form. In the

consent form, participants were informed of the general purpose of the research study and notified that they may exit from the study at any time. Furthermore, they were notified that their participation and their answers will be kept confidential. Finally, participants were provided with the investigator's contact information for any additional information that they may have required.

Table 2  
*Sample Demographics*

Demographic Variable	Statistics
Total study participants	$N = 328$
Sex	43.6% women ( $n = 143$ ); 56.4 % men ( $n = 185$ )
Age range	19-68 years ( $M = 34.97$ , $SD = 9.85$ )

Table 3  
*Ethnic Background of Sample*

Ethnicity	$n$ (% of sample)
Asian	10 (3%)
Black	24 (7.3%)
Caucasian	258 (78.7%)
Caribbean	1 (0.3%)
East Asian	10 (3%)
Hispanic	15 (4.6%)
Native American	1 (0.3%)
Pacific Islander	1 (0.3%)
Southeast Asian	2 (0.6%)
Other	2 (0.6%)

Table 4  
*Standard Occupational Classification*

Occupation	<i>n</i> (% of sample)
Business and Financial Operations	37 (11.3%)
Computer and Mathematical	31 (9.5%)
Architecture and Engineering	8 (2.4%)
Life, Physical, and Social Science	11 (3.4%)
Community and Social Service	5 (1.5%)
Legal	11 (3.4%)
Education, Training, and Library	19 (5.8%)
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	21 (6.4%)
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	14 (4.3%)
Healthcare Support	16 (4.9%)
Protective Service	4 (1.2%)
Food Preparation and Serving Related	18 (5.5%)
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	2 (0.6%)
Personal Care and Service	5 (1.5%)
Sales and Related	55 (16.8%)
Office and Administrative Support	28 (8.5%)
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	3 (0.9%)
Construction and Extraction	12 (3.7%)
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	5 (1.5%)
Production	6 (1.8%)
Transportation and Material Moving	5 (1.5%)
Military	4 (1.2%)
Other	6 (1.8%)

Once consent was obtained, participants were re-directed to a page where they were required to answer a number of questions, in order to determine their eligibility to participate in the study (see Appendix K). Participants who did not meet the inclusion criteria were notified that they were not eligible to participate and thanked for their time. Participants who were eligible to participate were re-directed to another page to complete the survey and then provide demographic information. The list of demographic information required for completion included the following: age, gender, ethnicity, highest education achieved, household income, job title, and the industry in which they work (see Appendix L). On this page, participants were also be asked to answer the same questions used to determine eligibility for participation (see Appendix K). This served as a check that ensured that participants met all the inclusion criteria. After the survey was completed, participants were re-directed to a final page where they were debriefed about the purpose of the study and once again, provided with the investigator's contact information. On this page, participants were able to submit their completed task, in order for any payment to be processed.

## **Measures**

The online survey included 10 different measures: 1) the Survey of Perceived Supervisory Support (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988), 2) the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986), 3) the Organization-Based Self-Esteem Scale (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, & Dunham, 1989), 4) the affective and normative subscales of Meyer and Allen's (1997) measure of organizational commitment, 5) the Global Job Satisfaction scale (Warr, Cook, & Wall, 1979), 6) an adaptation of Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis' (1996) trustworthiness scale, 7) the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), 8) the job demands subscale from the Job Demands and



Decision Latitude scale (Karasek, 1979), 9) the job complexity subscale from the Work Design Questionnaire (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006), and 10) two autonomy subscales from the Work Design Questionnaire (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006).

**Perceived supervisor support.** Perceived supervisor support was measured using an adapted version of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). This Likert-type scale is identical to the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support, however the word “organization” is replaced by “supervisor” Respondents were required to state their agreement with 16 items; responses ranged from (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree*. Sample items include “My supervisor really cares about my well-being” and “Help is available from my supervisor when I have a problem” (see Appendix A for complete scale). Cronbach’s alpha for the scale is .98 in the existing literature.

**Perceived organizational support.** Perceived organizational support was measured using the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Cronbach’s alpha for the scale (see Appendix B) is .91 in the existing literature.

**Organization-based self-esteem.** Organization-based self-esteem was measured using the Organization-Based Self-Esteem Scale (Pierce et al., 1989). Respondents were required to state their agreement with 10 items; responses ranged from (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree*. Sample items of this Likert-type scale include “I count around here” and “I am taken seriously around here” (see Appendix C). Cronbach’s alpha is .91 in the existing literature.

**Organizational commitment.** A multidimensional scale of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997) was used to measure organizational commitment (see Appendix D). This Likert-type scale consists of three subscales where each scale

measures one of the three types of organizational commitment. The current study used two of these subscales in order to measure affective and normative organizational commitment. Each scale consisted of 8 items where respondents were required to state their agreement with each item; responses ranged from (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree*. In the existing literature, Cronbach's alpha ranges from .77 to .88 for the affective commitment subscale and from .65 to .86 for the normative commitment subscale. Sample items include "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own" (affective commitment) and "I think that people these days move from company to company too often" (normative commitment).

**Job satisfaction.** The Global Job Satisfaction scale (see Appendix E) was used to measure job satisfaction (Warr, Cook, & Wall, 1979). This Likert-type scale was selected because respondents could state their satisfaction across different topics, such as working conditions and chances of promotion. This scale measures two subscales pertaining to aspects of a job: intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. Respondents were required to state their agreement with 15 items; responses ranged from (1) *I'm extremely dissatisfied* to (7) *I'm extremely satisfied*. Sample items include "The physical work conditions" (intrinsic) and "Your rate of pay" (extrinsic). Cronbach's alpha ranges from .80 to .91 in the existing literature.

**Employee felt trustworthiness.** Employee felt trustworthiness was measured using an adapted version of a trustworthiness scale (see Appendix F). Originally developed by Schoorman et al. (1996), the trustworthiness scale was adapted by Lester and Brower (2003) to measure *felt* trustworthiness. This Likert-type scale measures three different but correlated factors of felt trustworthiness: ability, benevolence, and integrity. Respondents were required to state their agreement with all 17 items; responses ranged

from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*. Sample item includes “My supervisor thinks I have a strong sense of justice” and “My supervisor feels very confident about my skills”. Cronbach’s alpha is .94 in the existing literature.

**Self-esteem.** General self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (see Appendix G). Respondents were required to state their agreement with 10 items; responses ranged from (1) *strongly disagree* to (4) *strongly agree*. Sample items of this Likert-type scale include “I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others” and “I am able to do things as well as most other people”. Cronbach’s alpha for this scale ranges from .77 to .88 in the existing literature.

**Job demands.** The Job Demands subscale (see Appendix H) was used to measure potential psychological stressors at work (Karasek, 1979). Respondents were required to indicate the extent to which they experience job demands. Responses for the 7-item Likert-type subscale ranged from (1) *never* to (5) *extremely often*. Cronbach’s alpha ranges from .79 to .88 in the existing literature. Sample items include “To what extent does your job require your working fast?” and “To what extent does your job require your working hard?”.

**Job complexity.** The job complexity subscale from the Work Design Questionnaire (see Appendix I) was used to measure a potential psychological stressor at work (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Respondents were required to indicate the extent to which they experience job complexity. Responses for the 4-item subscale ranged from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*. Cronbach’s alpha is .87 in the existing literature. Sample items of this Likert-type subscale include “The job requires that I only do one task or activity at a time” and “The tasks on the job are simple and uncomplicated”.

**Autonomy.** Two autonomy subscales from the Work Design Questionnaire were used to measure potential stressors at work (see Appendix J). Respondents were required to state their agreement with 3 items for each subscale; responses ranged from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*. Sample items of these Likert-type subscales include “The job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own” and “The job allows me to decide on my own how to go about doing my work”. Cronbach’s alpha is .94 in the existing literature.

**Organizational tenure.** Organizational tenure was obtained from the preliminary survey in which employees were screened for eligibility to participate (see Appendix K).

### **Data Cleaning and Diagnostics**

In structural equation modeling, “exogenous” and “endogenous” are terms often used to refer to predictor and outcome variables, respectively. It should be noted that in the proposed model, there are variables that serve as both predictors and outcome variables, however exogenous variables are those that serve strictly as predictors (i.e., in the path diagram, they have no arrows pointing to them). In the proposed model, job characteristics (i.e., job demands, job characteristics, and autonomy) serve as exogenous variables. Although organizational tenure and general self-esteem serve as covariates in the proposed model, they can also be categorized as exogenous variables, as they do not have any arrows pointed to them within the model. In contrast, endogenous variables are those that have arrows pointing to them, as they serve as outcome variables of a predictor. The following variables serve as endogenous variables in the current model: perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, employee felt trustworthiness, organization-based self-esteem, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 was used for the following analyses: identify and diagnose missing data, diagnose outliers, test assumptions of structural equation modeling, and test measure reliability. The proposed model was tested using Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) 22.0. It should be highlighted that all statistical analyses were conducted with a significance (alpha) level of .05, unless otherwise specified. This decision was based on previous studies, which tested the relationships of similar constructs (e.g., perceived organizational support, job satisfaction) at a similar alpha level. Since the proposed model is based on these previous studies, it is necessary to conduct statistical analyses that are comparable to previously tested models.

### **Missing Data**

Missing data was diagnosed using Little's MCAR test which proved to be statistically non-significant,  $\chi^2(9127) = 9041.45, p < .74$ . A non-significant test demonstrated that any missing data was missing completely at random. Approximately 0.35% of the values across the dataset were missing. The average amount of missing data per incomplete case was 1.17%. Overall, few missing data across a large sample was not of particular concern, especially since the missing data was diagnosed as missing completely at random (Kline, 2011). In such cases, researchers agree that different methods of handling missing data do not result in significant differences. Ultimately, hot deck imputation was used to address instances of missing data. Specifically, hot deck imputation ensures that any cases with missing items are replaced with values that are already found in the dataset. These values are chosen by other "donor" cases that share similar scores on other variables that are not missing. This method for handling missing data was chosen for two reasons. First, hot deck imputation was originally intended to

handle missing data in survey research (McKnight, McKnight, Sidani, & Figueredo, 2007). Second, hot deck imputation replaces missing items with values that are consistent with their respective measure's scale. For example, missing data for items of a measure with a Likert-type scale from 1 to 5 will impute a value of 4, instead of a 3.8.

### **Outliers**

The dataset was screened for multivariate outliers, which are characterized as extreme scores on two more variables (Kline, 2011). Cook's distance and Mahalanobis distance ( $D$ ) were used to diagnose any multivariate outliers. Cook's distance measures the effect of each case on the model to be tested (Field, 2012). Any cases with values greater than 1 are generally diagnosed as outliers. The highest value of Cook's distance in the current sample was .03. Mahalanobis'  $D$  measures the distance (in standard deviations) between a set of scores for each individual case and the sample means for all variables, while correcting for inter-correlations (Kline, 2011). Mahalanobis'  $D$  is computed on a chi-square distribution,  $\chi^2(10) = 29.59, p < .001$ . Using this critical value, 8 outliers were identified. Subsequent analyses of structural equation modeling assumptions were conducted twice: once with outliers and once with the outliers excluded. Results show that the exclusion of outliers had no statistically significant effect on testing assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and collinearity. As such, outliers were included in the final dataset and in subsequent analyses, reported below. Once all missing values were imputed and outliers retained, means were calculated for each variable in the current model, and used in subsequent analyses. Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics, correlations, and internal reliability coefficients for all the endogenous and exogenous variables in the proposed model.

## **Assumptions of Structural Equation Modeling**

### *Collinearity*

Collinearity can occur when seemingly different variables actually measure the same construct. As a result, this suggests that including both variables within a model is redundant since they both measure the same thing. It is necessary to test for collinearity when three or more exogenous variables are proposed to predict one endogenous variable (Kline, 2011). In the current model, job demands, job complexity, and autonomy were tested for collinearity using three indexes. First, squared multiple correlations were computed between all three variables. Specifically, three different multiple regressions were conducted with one job characteristic (e.g., job demands) as the dependent variable and the other two as the predictors (e.g., job complexity and autonomy). An  $R^2$  value greater than .90 for any of the regressions suggests multivariate collinearity. All three regressions calculated  $R^2$  values smaller than .20. The tolerance statistic was also used to detect multivariate collinearity. The tolerance statistic calculates the proportion of total standardized variance that is not explained by other predictors (Kline, 2011). Tolerance values smaller than .10 suggests multivariate collinearity. All three tolerance values were greater than .89. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was also inspected to detect collinearity. This statistic calculates the ratio of the total standardized variance over unique variance (Kline, 2011). Values greater than 10 suggest multivariate collinearity. All calculated VIF values were smaller than 1.13. Using the aforementioned three indexes, results suggest that the dataset did not violate the assumption of multivariate collinearity and that none of the three job characteristics served as redundant variables in the current model.

Table 5  
 Descriptive Statistics, Zero Order Correlations, and Alphas

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>K</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
1. Age	34.97	9.85	1.03	.50	-																	
2. Gender	.44	.50	-	-	.10	-																
3. Tenure (months)	70.49	74.53	5.61	50.09	.44**	.05	-															
4. Job Demands	3.36	.76	-.24	.30	.01	.02	.01	<b>.85</b>														
5. Job Complexity	3.40	1.08	-.28	-.74	.12*	-.01	.15**	.34**	<b>.88</b>													
6. Autonomy	3.67	.99	-.87	.41	.09	-.05	.14*	-.02	.23**	<b>.95</b>												
7. PSS	5.13	1.37	-.81	.12	.06	.00	.04	-.03	.09	.49**	<b>.97</b>											
8. POS	4.57	1.47	-.39	-.58	.04	-.01	.01	-.06	.01	.47**	.74**	<b>.97</b>										
9. Trust	4.06	.59	-.45	.35	.15**	.13*	.11	.09	.13*	.44**	.71**	.50**	<b>.94</b>									
10. OBSE	5.81	1.06	-.99	.81	.15**	.07	.12*	.11*	.13*	.47**	.68**	.64**	.72**	<b>.94</b>								
11. General Self-Esteem	3.25	.62	-.87	.62	.15**	.06	.09	.03	.07	.23**	.37**	.35**	.48**	.50**	<b>.93</b>							
12. OC	4.01	1.25	-.13	-.59	.09	.09	.14**	.05	.08	.45**	.62**	.73**	.47**	.58**	.27**	<b>.92</b>						
13. AC	4.27	1.49	-.23	-.82	.10	.06	.14*	.00	.15**	.47**	.69**	.77**	.53**	.63**	.31**	.93*	<b>.91</b>					
14. NC	3.74	1.26	.01	-.37	.07	.12*	.13*	.09	-.01	.34**	.41**	.56**	.32**	.41**	.18**	.90*	.67	<b>.86</b>				
15. Job Satisfaction	4.94	1.08	-.45	-.18	.12*	.02	.10	-.06	.07	.58**	.78**	.79**	.66**	.72**	.42**	.72*	.76	.53*	<b>.93</b>			
16. Intrinsic	5.16	1.07	-.65	.24	.13*	.02	.13*	-.02	.15**	.65**	.71**	.70**	.64**	.71**	.41**	.66*	.71	.48*	.95*	<b>.86</b>		
17. Extrinsic	4.75	1.18	-.38	-.29	.09	.02	.06	-.08	-.00	.49**	.78**	.80**	.63**	.68**	.40**	.71*	.74	.53*	.97*	.84*	<b>.88</b>	

Note. PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; AC = affective commitment; NC = normative commitment; trust = employee felt trustworthiness; intrinsic = intrinsic job satisfaction; extrinsic = extrinsic job satisfaction. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .001$ .



### *Multivariate Normality*

Structural equation modeling makes four assumptions regarding multivariate normality of all endogenous variables: 1) individual univariate distributions are normal, 2) bivariate distributions are normal, 3) bivariate scatterplots are linear, and 4) the distribution of residuals is homoscedastic (Kline, 2011). Although there are statistical tests that can be used to directly assess multivariate normality, they are less reliable (i.e., overly sensitive) when used on large samples that are slightly non-normal (Kline, 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). As such, multivariate normality was tested indirectly in accordance with expert recommendations, through an assessment of univariate distributions and bivariate scatterplots (Kline, 2011).

A visual inspection of univariate distributions (i.e., histograms) for each endogenous variable suggested that numerous variables were negatively skewed. These variables included the following: perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, organization-based self-esteem, and employee felt trustworthiness. The remaining endogenous variables in the model (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) were normally distributed. Skewness and kurtosis values (see Table 5) support conclusions drawn from visual inspections of univariate distributions, however it should be noted that all of the values fell within the normality range of skewness and kurtosis (-2 to 2 and -3 to 3, respectively). Shapiro-Wilk's statistic was computed to test for univariate normality. This statistic compares the scores in the sample for any given variable to a normally distributed set of comparable scores, with the same mean and standard deviation (Field, 2013). All variables were found to be statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ), which suggests that all the variables failed the assumption of univariate normality. However, it should be noted that significance tests are likely to be statistically

significant in large samples, even in instances when skewness and kurtosis are slightly non-normal (Field, 2013). Visual inspections of bivariate scatterplots suggested linear relationships between various pairs of variables in the proposed model.

Overall, visual inspections of univariate distributions of numerous endogenous variables demonstrate that the dataset may have violated the assumption of multivariate normality. However, any violations are not concerning as their respective skewness and kurtosis values remained within the normality range. Bivariate scatterplots that were linear in nature also suggest that any violations may not be overly concerning in the current dataset.

As an exploratory endeavour, univariate distributions and bivariate scatterplots of exogenous variables were visually inspected in order to determine if multivariate normality was similarly violated. Visual inspections of histograms were normally distributed for both job demands and job complexity. In contrast, histograms were negatively skewed for autonomy and general self-esteem. Organizational tenure however, was positively skewed. Skewness and kurtosis values were within the normal range for all exogenous variables, with the exception of organizational tenure (5.61 and 50.10, respectively). Shapiro-Wilk's statistic was statistically significant for all five exogenous variables ( $p < .0001$ ). Bivariate scatterplots revealed no linear relationships between any variable paired with job demands, job complexity, or organizational tenure. Scatterplots revealed moderate linear relationships between variables paired with autonomy and general self-esteem. Bivariate correlations support conclusions drawn from visual inspections of bivariate scatterplots.

In light of these findings, it was not surprising that organizational tenure had weak or statistically non-significant bivariate correlations to other variables in the model,

however it was expected that tenure would be significantly correlated to employee felt trustworthiness due to previous research (Lau et al., 2014). Considering the fact that tenure was the only variable that failed all tests of normality and linearity, values of organizational tenure were transformed using inverse transformation, which proved to be most effective in normalizing the univariate distribution. Transformed values of tenure were tested for multivariate normality and linearity in order to determine if transformations would improve bivariate correlations and subsequent analyses. Results showed that transformed values of tenure also failed to meet the assumptions of normality and linearity. Due to this finding, it was decided to exclude organizational tenure from subsequent analyses, as its inclusion was based on the assumption that it was related to variables in the current model.

### ***Linearity and Homoscedasticity***

Linearity and homoscedasticity assume that there are no systematic relationships between the values of the residuals (i.e., errors) in the model and the values of the outcome predicted by the model (Field, 2013). Both linearity and homoscedasticity can be tested by a visual inspection of a scatterplot of the two sets of values (i.e., standardized residuals against standardized predicted scores). A scatterplot that displays values that are evenly distributed around the zero line suggest that linearity and homoscedasticity have been met (Kline, 2011). A visual inspection of the residuals of the current model indicate that the assumptions have been met. It should be noted that heteroscedasticity (i.e., violation of homoscedasticity) may be due to non-normality in the dataset (Kline, 2011). However, the slight violations in univariate normality, as highlighted above, were not severe enough to negatively affect homoscedasticity.

### *Transformations*

Although multivariate normality could not be assumed due to minor violations of univariate normality, transformations were not used to normalize the dataset. This decision was based on a number of reasons. First, cases of non-normality are of particular concern only when the dataset is non-normal in different ways (Byrne, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). For example, in cases when some univariate distributions are severely positively skewed, while others are negatively skewed. Although some univariate distributions in the current dataset were non-normal, their non-normality was in the same direction (i.e., negatively skewed). In such cases, transformations only marginally improved subsequent analyses (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Second, as mentioned above, linearity and homoscedasticity are sensitive to non-normality. In the current dataset, violations of normality were not severe enough to negatively impact linearity and homoscedasticity. Third, transformations may not improve subsequent analyses in cases where the range of responses (i.e., scores of a scale/measure) is low (Hoaglin, Mosteller, & Tukey, 2000). In regards to the current dataset, responses range from a 4-point Likert-type scale (e.g., Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) to 7-point Likert-type scales (e.g., Global Job Satisfaction Scale). As such, any transformations may not prove helpful in addressing slight non-normality. Finally, because transformations change the scale or units of measurement of variables, subsequent results are difficult to interpret (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2010; Hoaglin et al., 2000). This is because transformed values or data no longer measure the construct that was originally measured during data collection (Field, 2013).

### ***Measure Reliability***

Internal reliability coefficients (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) were computed for all endogenous and exogenous variables within the proposed model. Reliability coefficients are generally considered "adequate" around .70, "very good" around .80, and "excellent" around .90 (Kline, 2011). All computed internal reliability coefficients were above .85.

A principal component factor analysis was conducted on each measure in order to ensure that all items loaded on their respective factors and measures. All factor analyses were conducted with an oblique rotation (i.e., direct oblimin), which allowed items of each respective measure to correlate. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) verified the sampling adequacy for each analysis: KMO was greater than .81 across all analyses. This value was well above the acceptable guideline of .60 (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). All KMO values for individual items of each respective measure were greater than .76, which was above the acceptable limit of .50 (Field, 2013). Factors were retained based on assessments of factor loadings, scree plots, and Kaiser's criterion (i.e., retaining eigenvalues greater than 1). With one exception, all items loaded onto their respective factors and measures. Specifically, the following measures were found to be unidimensional, as expected: Survey of Perceived Supervisor Support, Survey of Perceived Organizational Support, Organization-Based Self-Esteem scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale, the job complexity subscale of the Work Design Questionnaire, and the autonomy subscales of the Work Design Questionnaire. Items from the Global Job Satisfaction scale and Meyer and Allen's (1997) measure of organizational commitment each loaded on two factors, as expected (i.e., intrinsic versus extrinsic and affective and normative, respectively). Items from Schoorman et al's (1996) adapted measure of felt

trustworthiness loaded on three factors, as expected. These factors reflected the three aspects of trustworthiness: benevolence, ability, and integrity (Schoorman et al., 1996).

Unexpectedly, a factor analysis of the Job Demands subscale did not reflect a unidimensional measure. An initial analysis to obtain eigenvalues extracted two factors with values greater than 1 and in combination explained 71.24% of the variance. Specifically, items 1 to 3 loaded onto one factor which explained 53.20% of the variance, whereas items 4 to 7 loaded onto the second factor, which explained 18.04% of the variance.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

Maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) was used to conduct all analyses. MLE calculates parameter coefficients that maximizes the probability that the observed data was drawn from this population (Kline, 2011). In other words, it estimates coefficients that have the greatest chance in reproducing the observed data. Although MLE assumes multivariate normality, it is robust to mild violations of multivariate normality (Jackson, Gillaspay, & Purc-Stephenson, 2009). Alternative estimation procedures that do not assume multivariate normality require larger sample sizes than that found in the current study (Jackson et al., 2009). In calculating parameter estimates, the covariance matrix, as opposed to the correlation matrix, was used as input in the following analyses. This decision is widely recommended as model test statistics (e.g., model chi-square) assume the input of covariance matrices (Kelloway, 1998; Kline, 2011). Furthermore, previous comparable studies have used similar estimation methods.

The following will be inspected in assessing model fit: model chi-square, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), residual covariance matrices (standardized and unstandardized), and path coefficients (standardized and unstandardized). These values were evaluated due to the fact that they all assess different aspects of model fit (e.g., comparative fit, absolute fit), which cumulatively help to determine if the existing model should be retained. Furthermore, these values are widely recommended for assessing model fit (Kelloway, 1998; Kline, 2011) and have been previously used in comparable studies.

A power analysis was conducted to help determine if the sample size was sufficient to test the proposed model. This analysis was based on the following criteria: 1) an alpha level (i.e., level of significance) of .05, 2) 29 degrees of freedom, 3) a desired power of .80, 4) a null Root Mean Square Error Approximation (RMSEA) of .08, and 5) an alternate RMSEA of .05. The power analysis indicated that at least 327 participants were needed to test the proposed model. The current sample size ( $N = 328$ ) was large enough to meet the assumptions for structural equation modeling (Kline, 2011).

### **Path Analysis**

A path analysis on the proposed model (see Figure 4) was conducted in order to test proposed hypotheses. In this analysis, all three job characteristics (i.e., job demands, job complexity, and autonomy) were allowed to correlate with one another, however general self-esteem was not allowed to correlate with any of the job characteristics. This correlation was restricted since previous studies did not indicate a statistically or theoretically significant relationship between job characteristics and general self-esteem. Bivariate correlations (see Table 5) further demonstrate a weak relationship between job characteristics and general self-esteem.

### **Model Fit**

The model chi-square statistic is a model test statistic that determines if the observed covariance matrix is significantly different from the predicted covariance matrix. The model chi-square was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(32) = 781.92, p < .0001$ , thus failed the exact-fit test. Specifically, a non-significant chi-square indicates that the model is not consistent with the observed data (i.e., covariance matrix). The model chi-square test has a few limitations and as a result, its statistic was cautiously interpreted. First, as with all hypothesis testing in structural equation modelling, the statistic assumes multivariate



normality (Kline, 2011). Any violations of normality are likely to influence (i.e., decrease or increase) values of chi-square, thus affecting the corresponding significance test.

Second, the model chi-square test is sensitive to sample size (Kline, 2011). In the case of large sample sizes, it is possible to attain a statistically significant chi-square value, even when small differences exist between observed and predicted covariances. Finally, in calculating the test statistic, covariance residuals and parameter estimates are not taken into consideration (Kline, 2011). These limitations were addressed by examining indexes of approximate fit (i.e., TLI, SRMR, and RMSEA).

The Tucker-Lewis index compares the fit of the model to the independence model, which assumes no relationships between all the variables within the model. In other words, the independence model is identical to the hypothesized model, except that it assumes no relationships (i.e., parameter estimates = 0) between endogenous and exogenous variables. This index ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better fit; values above .95 indicate good fit whereas values below .90 suggest a need to respecify the model (Kline, 2011). The TLI for the existing model was .43 (i.e., the fit of the existing model was only a 43% improvement over that of the independence model), indicating poor comparative fit.

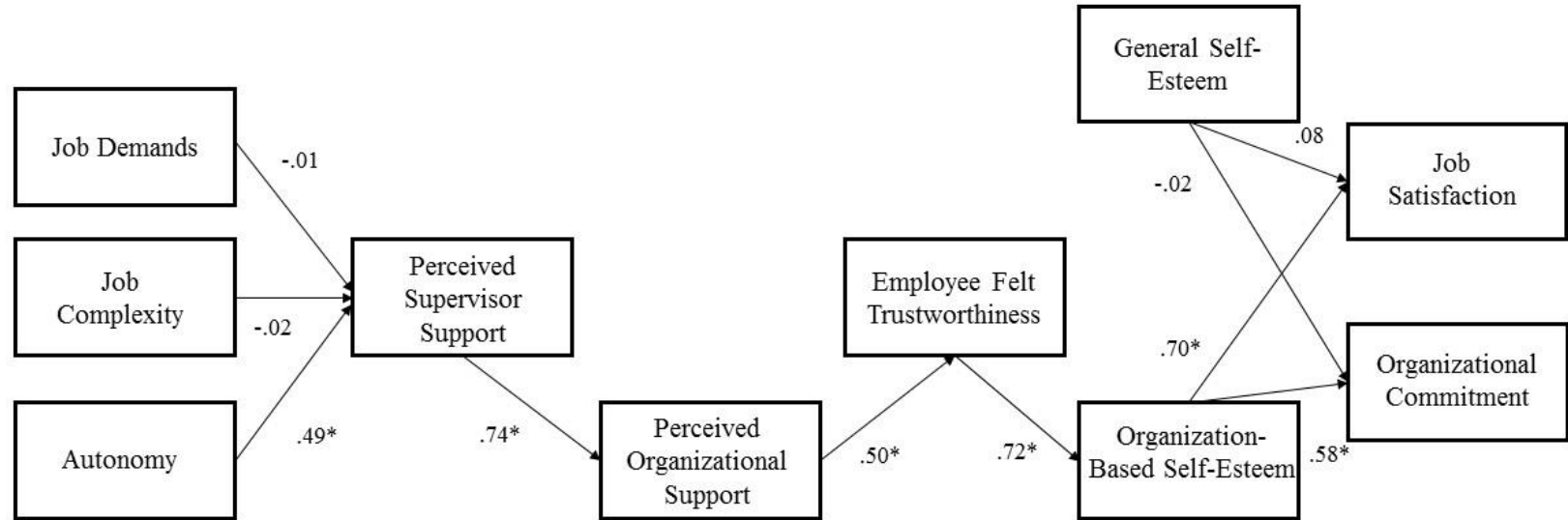


Figure 5. Standardized path coefficients of proposed model.  
 Note.  $*p < .05$ .

The standardized root mean square residual calculates the mean difference between the predicted and observed covariances in the existing model. This index ranges from 0 to 1, with values closer to 0 indicating better fit; values below .08 suggest adequate fit whereas values below .05 indicate good fit (Kelloway, 1998). The SRMR for the existing model was .24, indicating poor absolute fit. It is widely recommended to pair the SRMR with an inspection of residual covariance matrices (standardized and unstandardized) (Kline, 2011). Specifically, assessing patterns of residuals can help diagnose misspecification of the model. In other words, they can help explain why the model failed the chi-square test and how the model's fit could be improved. Large residuals suggest a better fit if corresponding paths are added to the existing model. Values above .10 (standardized) or 2.58 (unstandardized) are considered to be large for residual covariances (Byrne, 2010). Standardized and unstandardized residuals are large for a number of paired variables, particularly with general self-esteem, autonomy, perceived organizational support, and perceived supervisor support (see Appendices M1 and M2). These values suggest that numerous paths involving these variables may improve model fit.

A second index of absolute fit included the root mean square error of approximation. Similar to the SRMR, the RMSEA assesses differences between predicted and observed covariances however unlike the SRMR, it also reports 90% confidence intervals (CI) for the point estimate. RMSEA values that are equal to or below .05, with a lower CI bound that equals 0, suggests a good fit (Kline, 2011). Another advantage of the RMSEA is that it tests whether the point estimate is significantly different from .05: a failed test ( $p > .05$ ) indicates a good fit. The point estimate for the RMSEA was .27, which was statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ), suggesting poor fit.

## Bootstrapping

Violations of multivariate normality can overestimate chi-square values, underestimate TLI values, and underestimate standard errors, which can subsequently result in statistically significant path coefficients, even when they are not significant in the population (Byrne, 2010). Bootstrapping is a statistical analysis used to address such implications of non-normal data and calculates estimates that are less biased than those calculated by MLE. Due to the fact that the current dataset violated the assumption of multivariate normality, path coefficients (standardized and unstandardized) and squared multiple correlations were bootstrapped with a bias-corrected confidence interval of 95.

As presented in Table 6, the bootstrap estimates of the standard error (*S.E.*) for unstandardized path coefficients were larger than those originally calculated through MLE (*MLE Estimate*), which suggests that the distribution of these parameter estimates is wider than originally expected. The standard error of the bootstrap standard error (*S.E. – S.E.*) was small, as expected. The mean parameter estimates that were calculated across all 1000 samples (*Mean*) were close to their respective path coefficients that were originally calculated through MLE. In fact, the difference between the two estimates (*Bias*) was very small as were their respective standard errors (*S.E. Bias*). Cumulatively, along with confidence intervals, results suggest that unstandardized path coefficients were statistically significant despite the violation of multivariate normality (Byrne, 2010). As presented in Table 7, a similar pattern of bootstrap estimates were calculated in regards to standardized path coefficients. Finally, bootstrap estimates of squared multiple correlations (see Appendix M3) suggest that a moderate proportion of variance in each endogenous variable was explained by its respective predictor(s).

Table 6  
*Unstandardized Path Coefficients (Proposed Model)*

Path	Estimate (MLE)	S.E. (MLE)	Critical Ratio (MLE)	S.E.	S.E. – S.E.	Mean	Bias	S.E. Bias	C.I. (Low 95)	C.I. (High 95)
Job Complexity -> PSS	-.03	.07	-.45	.08	.002	-.02	.006	.002	-.19	.13
Job Demands - > PSS	-.02	.09	-.24	.11	.002	-.02	-.001	.003	-.24	.19
Autonomy -> PSS	.68*	.07	9.89	.09	.002	.68	-.001	.003	.51	.87
PSS -> POS	.79*	.04	19.75	.04	.001	.79	-.001	.001	.71	.86
POS -> Trust	.20*	.02	10.54	.02	.001	.20	.001	.001	.16	.25
Trust -> OBSE	1.29*	.07	18.73	.07	.002	1.29	.000	.002	1.16	1.45
OBSE -> Job Satisfaction	.70*	.05	15.59	.04	.001	.70	.000	.001	.61	.78
OBSE -> OC	.70*	.06	11.24	.06	.001	.70	.000	.002	.58	.82
Gen. Self- Esteem -> Job Satisfaction	.13	.08	1.72	.09	.002	.13	.000	.003	-.05	.32
Gen. Self- Esteem -> OC	-.04	.11	-.39	.11	.002	-.04	-.001	.003	-.26	.17

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; Trust = employee felt trustworthiness. \* $p < .05$ .

Table 7  
*Standardized Path Coefficients (Proposed Model)*

Path	Estimate (MLE)	S.E.	S.E. – S.E.	Mean	Bias	S.E. Bias	C.I. (Low 95)	C.I. (High 95)
Job Complexity -> PSS	-.02	.06	.001	-.02	.005	.002	-.15	.10
Job Demands -> PSS	-.01	.06	.001	-.01	.000	.002	-.13	.11
Autonomy - > PSS	.49*	.06	.001	.49	-.002	.002	.38	.61
PSS -> POS	.74*	.04	.001	.74	.000	.001	.65	.80
POS -> Trust	.50*	.04	.001	.50	.000	.001	.41	.59
Trust -> OBSE	.72*	.03	.001	.72	.000	.001	.64	.77
OBSE -> Job Satisfaction	.70*	.04	.001	.70	.000	.001	.63	.76
OBSE -> OC	.58*	.04	.001	.58	-.001	.001	.50	.65
General Self-Esteem -> Job Satisfaction	.08	.06	.001	.08	.001	.002	-.03	.20
General Self-Esteem -> OC	-.02	.05	.001	-.02	.001	.002	-.12	.08

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; Trust = employee felt trustworthiness. \* $p < .05$ .

## **Hypothesis Testing**

Indices of model fit are useful in determining the overall fit of all relationships or paths within a proposed model. However, due to the simultaneous testing of all proposed paths, indexes of model fit fail to differentiate between specific paths that are statistically significant and those that are not. As such, unstandardized path coefficients of direct and indirect effects were assessed to provide a clearer understanding of the relationships between variables in the model, and were ultimately used to address proposed hypotheses. Table 8 indicates whether the results provide support for the proposed hypotheses. Across all three job characteristics, only autonomy was significantly associated with perceived supervisor support and was found to have indirect relationships with all the variables within the proposed model. Both perceived supervisor and organizational support were found to mediate the effects of autonomy on employee felt trustworthiness, organization-based self-esteem, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Employee felt trustworthiness and organization-based self-esteem also significantly mediated the effects of perceived support on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Squared multiple correlations (see Appendix M3) indicate that a moderate proportion of variance in each endogenous variable was explained by its respective predictor.

Table 8  
*Summary of Supported Hypotheses*

Hypotheses ( <i>H</i> )	Support
<i>H 1a</i> ): Job demands will be negatively associated with perceived supervisor support.	No
<i>H 1b</i> ): Job complexity will be negatively associated with perceived supervisor support.	No
<i>H 1c</i> ): Autonomy will be positively associated with perceived supervisor support.	Yes
<i>H 2a</i> ): Perceived supervisor support will be positively associated with perceived organizational support.	Yes
<i>H 2b</i> ): Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of job demands on perceived organizational support.	No
<i>H 2c</i> ): Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of job complexity on perceived organizational support.	No
<i>H 2d</i> ): Perceived supervisor support will mediate the effects of autonomy on perceived organizational support.	Yes
<i>H 3a</i> ): Organization-based self-esteem will be positively associated with organizational commitment.	Yes
<i>H 3b</i> ): Organization-based self-esteem will be positively associated with job satisfaction.	Yes
<i>H 4a</i> ): Perceived organizational support will be positively associated with employee felt trustworthiness.	Yes
<i>H 4b</i> ): Perceived organizational support will mediate the effects of perceived supervisor support on employee felt trustworthiness.	Yes
<i>H 5a</i> ): Employee felt trustworthiness will be positively associated with organization-based self-esteem.	Yes
<i>H 5b</i> ): Employee felt trustworthiness will mediate the effects of perceived organizational support on organization-based self-esteem.	Yes
<i>H 6a</i> ): Organization-based self-esteem will mediate the effects of employee felt trustworthiness on organizational commitment.	Yes
<i>H 6b</i> ): Organization-based self-esteem will mediate the effects of employee felt trustworthiness on job satisfaction.	Yes



Table 9

*Unstandardized Coefficients of Indirect Effects (Proposed Model)*

Path	Estimate	S. E.	C. I. (Low 95)	C. I. (High 95)
<b>Autonomy -&gt; POS</b>	<b>.54**</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.71</b>
Autonomy -> Trust	.11**	.02	.08	.16
Autonomy -> OBSE	.14**	.03	.09	.21
Autonomy -> OC	.10**	.02	.06	.16
Autonomy -> Job Satisfaction	.10**	.02	.07	.16
<b>Job Complexity -&gt; POS</b>	<b>-.02</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>-.15</b>	<b>.10</b>
Job Complexity -> Trust	-.01	.01	-.03	.02
Job Complexity -> OBSE	-.01	.02	-.04	.03
Job Complexity -> OC	-.004	.01	-.03	.02
Job Complexity -> Job Satisfaction	-.004	.01	-.03	.02
<b>Job Demands -&gt; POS</b>	<b>-.02</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>-.19</b>	<b>.15</b>
Job Demands -> Trust	-.004	.02	-.04	.03
Job Demands -> OBSE	-.01	.02	-.05	.04
Job Demands -> OC	-.003	.02	-.04	.03
Job Demands -> Job Satisfaction	-.003	.02	-.04	.03
<b>PSS -&gt; Trust</b>	<b>.16*</b>	<b>.02</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>.20</b>
PSS -> OBSE	.21*	.03	.15	.27
PSS -> OC	.14*	.02	.10	.19
PSS -> Job Satisfaction	.15*	.02	.10	.20
<b>POS -&gt; OBSE</b>	<b>.26*</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.19</b>	<b>.33</b>
POS -> OC	.18*	.03	.13	.24
POS -> Job Satisfaction	.18*	.03	.13	.24
<b>Trust -&gt; OC</b>	<b>.90*</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>.74</b>	<b>1.07</b>
<b>Trust -&gt; Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>.91*</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.76</b>	<b>1.05</b>

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; trust = employee felt trustworthiness. Paths in bold text highlight the proposed hypotheses of mediation.

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

## **Model Respecification**

Cumulatively, the model statistic, the TLI, the SRMR, and the RMSEA suggest that the predicted model did not fit the observed data, and that respecification was necessary to improve model fit. In respecifying the existing model, it is recommended to consult modification indices and chi-square difference tests. Respecification of a model involves two steps: model-building and model trimming (Kelloway, 1998; Kline, 2011). Model building involves adding paths to the existing model, as determined by modification indices. Modification indices estimate the amount by which the chi-square statistic would decrease (thus improving model fit) if its corresponding path was added to the model. Although there are no cutoff values that suggest adding a path, larger values usually indicate the benefit in adding its corresponding path (Kline, 2011). It is strongly recommended that paths only be added if they are theoretically justifiable, in order to prevent any capitalization on chance (Kline, 2011). Furthermore, it is recommended to add paths one at a time and to reassess its estimates and indexes in order to determine any corresponding changes to model fit (Kelloway, 1998; Kline, 2011). Specifically, when a path is added to the existing model, a chi-square difference test is conducted in order to determine if there is a significant difference between the chi-square values of the existing model and the revised model (i.e., with the added path). If there is no statistically significant difference between the two models, the more parsimonious (i.e., existing) model is retained. Alternatively, if there is a statistically significant difference between the two models, the better fitting (i.e., revised) model with the added path is usually retained.

Model building concludes with an overidentified model that may require trimming. Model trimming requires the removal of non-significant paths, as indicated by

path coefficients and chi-square difference tests. When a non-significant path is removed from an existing model, a chi-square difference test is used to test if there is a significant difference between the chi-square values of the retained model and the trimmed model (i.e., nested) model. If there is no statistically significant difference between the two models, the more parsimonious (i.e., trimmed) model is retained. Alternatively, if there is a statistically significant difference between the two models, the better fitting model (i.e., less parsimonious) is usually retained. As with model-building, it is recommended that paths be deleted one at a time in order to assess its effects on model fit. Most importantly however, decisions to delete any paths must be theoretically driven.

Table 10 presents modification indices (labelled “M.I.”) and the estimated change to corresponding path coefficients (labelled “Par Change”). Modification indices and values of parameter change suggested a number of paths to be added to the existing model. Only the following six paths were individually added to the existing model: 1) perceived organizational support to job satisfaction; 2) perceived organizational support to organizational commitment; 3) perceived supervisor support to job satisfaction; 4) perceived organizational support to organization-based self-esteem; 5) perceived supervisor support to felt trustworthiness; and 6) perceived supervisor support to organizational commitment. These paths were added to the existing model on the basis that they indicated partial mediation as opposed to full mediation between variables in the original model. Moreover, there is strong support for these paths in the existing literature. Paths were added in the order listed above: this order was based on the magnitude of corresponding modification indices, where the largest indices were added first. As each path was added, a chi-square difference test was calculated.

As each path was added individually, model fit improved incrementally as assessed by model fit indices (i.e., chi-square model statistic, TLI, SRMR, and RMSEA): these values are presented in Table 13. When the final path (i.e., perceived supervisor support to organizational commitment) was added to the model, the chi-square difference test was non-significant,  $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 2.70, p > .10$ . This suggested that the model with the added path did not fit the data significantly better than the model without said path: as such, this path was not retained in the overidentified model.

Table 10  
*Modification Indices (Proposed Model)*

Path	M.I.	Par Change
General Self-Esteem -> PSS	29.25	.58
Autonomy -> POS	8.49	.16
General Self-Esteem -> Trust	39.75	.29
Autonomy -> Trust	18.78	.12
Job Complexity -> Trust	7.23	.07
Job Demands -> Trust	6.03	.09
PSS -> Trust	51.22	.15
General Self-Esteem -> OBSE	17.14	.27
Autonomy -> OBSE	15.86	.16
PSS -> OBSE	18.41	.13
POS -> OBSE	51.42	.20
Autonomy -> OC	14.89	.22
PSS -> OC	24.91	.21
POS -> OC	65.92	.31
Job Satisfaction -> OC	46.66	.37
Autonomy -> Job Satisfaction	41.06	.27
Job Demands -> Job Satisfaction	12.74	-.19
PSS -> Job Satisfaction	57.41	.23
POS -> Job Satisfaction	72.66	.24
Trust -> Job Satisfaction	12.72	.25
OC -> Job Satisfaction	61.66	.26

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

Table 11  
*Model Fit from Proposed Model through Revised Model*

Model	$\chi^2$	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA	AIC
<b>Proposed Model</b>	<b>781.92*</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>.43</b>	<b>.24</b>	<b>.27*</b>	<b>827.92</b>
Building: Step 1	628.15*	31	153.77*	.53	.22	.24*	676.5
Building: Step 2	492.11*	30	136.04*	.63	.19	.22*	542.11
Building: Step 3	446.20*	29	45.91*	.65	.18	.21*	498.20
Building: Step 4	368.83*	28	77.37*	.71	.17	.19*	422.83
<b>Building: Step 5 (Overidentified Model)</b>	<b>231.18*</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>137.65*</b>	<b>.82</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.15*</b>	<b>287.18</b>
Building: Step 6	228.48	26	2.70	.81	.15	.15*	286.48
Trimming: Step 1	225.97*	21	-	.81	.16	.17*	273.97
Trimming: Step 2	198.38*	15	-	.81	.18	.19*	240.38
Trimming: Step 3	200.61*	16	-	.82	.18	.19*	240.61
<b>Trimming: Step 4 (Revised Model)</b>	<b>88.97</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>.90</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.16</b>	<b>124.97</b>

\* $p < .0001$ .

Standardized path coefficients of the overidentified model were visually inspected in determining how to trim the model. Almost all path coefficients were statistically significant with the exception of the following four paths: 1) job complexity to perceived supervisor support; 2) job demands to perceived supervisor support; 3) general self-esteem to job satisfaction; and 4) general self-esteem to organizational commitment. This finding was not particularly surprising considering the fact that job demands and job complexity had either weak or non-significant relationships with the other variables in the model (as indicated by bivariate scatterplots and correlations). It was decided to remove both job complexity and job demands from the overidentified model due to conflicting existing literature assessing the relationship between both job demands and job complexity and perceived organizational support. Recall that general self-esteem was

entered in the model as a covariate to reflect the assumption that general self-esteem would affect the relationship between organization-based self-esteem and job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Non-significant path coefficients between general self-esteem and job satisfaction and organizational commitment suggest that this assumption was incorrect. As such, general self-esteem along with its corresponding paths were also removed from the overidentified model. Existing literature indicates a significant relationship between general self-esteem and job satisfaction, however research has shown that organization-based self-esteem serves as a stronger predictor to work-related outcomes. As such, the removal of general self-esteem from the model was theoretically driven.

Although each path was removed individually in the order listed above, trimming was not conducted in accordance with traditional methods (i.e., chi-square difference tests after each removed path). Chi-square difference tests can only be used to compare models when one is a subset of the other (i.e., with the same variables, but with added or deleted paths). As presented in Figure 6, the removal of paths resulted in a revised model that was no longer nested within the overidentified model. Instead of chi-square differences tests, Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) values were inspected and compared as each path was individually removed. The AIC serves as an index for the difference between the observed and predicted covariance matrices. It is not intended to be analyzed individually, but in comparison to AIC values of competing models (Kline, 2011). There are no cutoff values that indicate “good” model fit, nor is there an upper or lower bound however, lower values (i.e., close to 0) suggest a better fit (Kelloway, 1998). It should also be noted that the AIC is a parsimony-adjusted index and may be biased towards simpler models (Kline, 2011).

As can be seen in Table 11, model fit improved incrementally as each path was removed. Overall, the revised model provided a better fit to the data than the proposed model,  $\chi^2(10) = 88.97, p < .0001$ ; TLI = .90; SRMR = .07; RMSEA = .16 ( $p < .0001$ ). The AIC for the proposed model was 827.92 whereas the AIC for the revised model was 124.97, indicating that the revised model was a better fit to the observed data. Similar to the proposed model, path coefficients (standardized and unstandardized) and squared multiple correlations were bootstrapped with a bias-corrected confidence interval of 95. A total of 19 iterations were required to complete 1000 bootstrap samples: method 1 was successful in bootstrapping all 1000 samples. Bootstrapped estimates suggest that path coefficients (standardized and unstandardized) and squared multiple correlations were statistically significant despite the violation of multivariate normality (see Appendices N1 through N3).

Despite the better fit, the revised model did not meet standards of good fit. Path coefficients of direct effects (see Appendices N1 and N2) indicate that all relationships were statistically significant, with the exception of the path between perceived organizational support and employee felt trustworthiness. Squared multiple correlations (see Appendix N3) indicate that a moderate proportion of variance in each endogenous variable was explained by its respective predictor(s). Furthermore, path coefficients of indirect effects (see Appendix N4) indicate that all mediated relationships in the model were statistically significant, with the exception of two paths: perceived supervisor support to trust and perceived organizational support to organization-based self-esteem. As mentioned above, the revised model was a post hoc modification of the proposed model and as such, can only be validated with an independent sample.

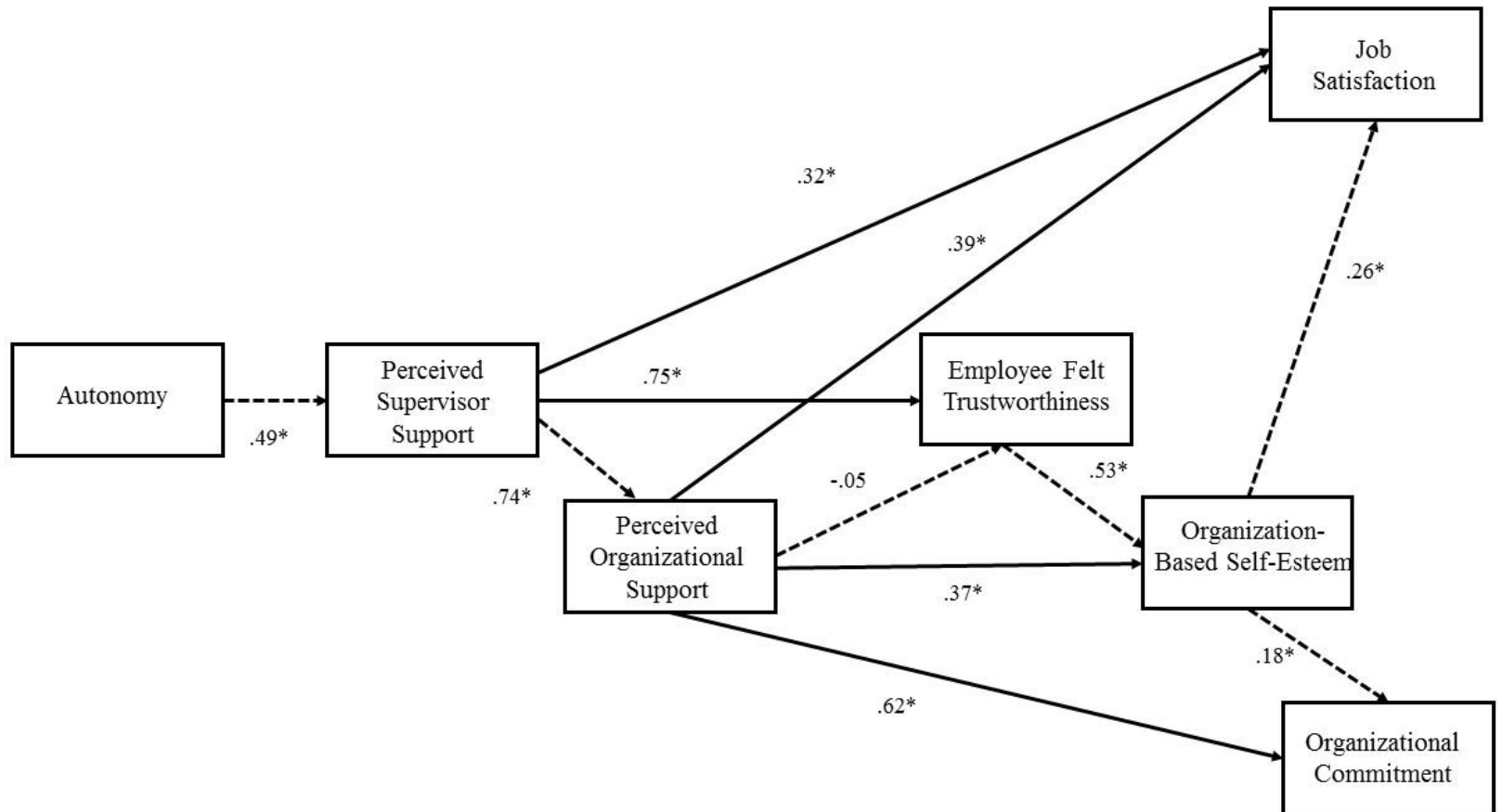


Figure 6. Standardized path coefficients of revised model.  
 Note. Dash arrows highlight proposed relationships;  $*p < .05$ .



## **Discriminant Analysis**

In light of the recent literature investigating differences in *profiles* of organizational commitment, a discriminant analysis was conducted to determine if different profiles of organizational commitment could be predicted based on scores of organization-based self-esteem, employee felt trustworthiness, perceived organizational support, and perceived supervisor support. In order to conduct the discriminant analysis, scores of affective and normative organizational commitment were recoded into categorical variables (i.e., “high” and “low”). For both affective and normative organizational commitment, mean scores of 3 and below were recoded as “low” whereas scores of 5 and above were recoded as “high”. Recall that scores of 4 on the 7-point Likert-type scale were indicators of neutrality (i.e., *neither disagree nor agree*), and were thus excluded from the analysis. Categories of affective and normative commitment were used to create the following four profiles of organizational commitment: 1) high affective and high normative (i.e., *affective-normative dominant*); 2) high affective and low normative (i.e., *affective dominant*); 3) low affective and high normative (i.e., *normative dominant*); and 4) low affective and low normative (i.e., *uncommitted*). These four categories served as outcome profiles in the discriminant analysis. The following four variables were entered into the analysis as independent variables: 1) perceived organizational support; perceived supervisor support; employee felt trustworthiness; and organization-based self-esteem. These variables were selected due to their hypothesized predictive relationship with organizational commitment. Table 12 presents the descriptive statistics of the sample. The discriminant analysis was based on a sample size of 115; 213 participants were excluded from the analysis as they did not score between 1-3 or 5-7 for

both affective and normative commitment. It should be noted that no participant was identified under a *normative dominant* profile.

Table 12  
*Group Descriptive Statistics*

Organizational Profile	Dependent Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Affective-Normative Dominant	Trust	4.56	.44
	OBSE	6.61	.48
	PSS	6.24	.77
	POS	5.96	.88
Affective Dominant	Trust	4.18	.66
	OBSE	6.42	.61
	PSS	5.97	.72
	POS	5.13	.74
Uncommitted	Trust	3.79	.54
	OBSE	4.90	1.12
	PSS	3.94	1.49
	POS	2.85	1.14

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

Table 13  
*Frequency of Organizational Profiles*

Organizational Profile	Frequency	Percent in sample ( <i>n</i> = 115)	Percent in larger sample ( <i>N</i> = 328)
Affective-Normative Dominant	47	40.87	14.30
Affective Dominant	10	8.70	3.00
Normative Dominant	0	0	0
Uncommitted	58	50.43	17.70

As such, only three categorical groups were used in the analysis: *affective-normative dominant*; *affective dominant*; and *uncommitted* (see Table 13).

The discriminant analysis revealed two functions. The first explained 97.8% of the variance, canonical  $R^2 = .72$ , whereas the second function explained only 2.2%, canonical

$R^2 = .06$ . In combination these discriminant functions significantly differentiated profiles of organizational commitment,  $\lambda = .26$ ,  $\chi^2(8) = 147.55$ ,  $p < .0001$  (see Appendices O1 through O3).

Table 14  
*Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients*

Dependent Variable	Function 1	Function 2
Trust	.18	1.14
OBSE	.28	-.63
PSS	-.04	-.99
POS	.83	.49

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

Table 15  
*Functions at Group Centroids*

Organizational Profile	Function 1	Function 2
Affective-Normative Dominant	1.74	.12
Affective Dominant	.87	-.76
Uncommitted	-1.56	.03

Table 16  
*Classification Results*

			Predicted Group Membership			
			Affective-Normative Dominant	Affective Dominant	Uncommitted	Total
Observed Group Membership	<i>n</i> (% of observed group total)	Affective-Normative Dominant	<b>42 (89.4)</b>	1 (2.1)	4 (8.5)	47
		Affective Dominant	8 (80.0)	<b>2 (20.0)</b>	0	10
		Uncommitted	3 (5.2)	0	<b>55 (94.8)</b>	58

*Note.* Values in bold indicate cases correctly classified.

Removing the first function indicated that the second function did not significantly differentiate profiles of commitment,  $\lambda = .95$ ,  $\chi^2(3) = 6.20$ ,  $p = .102$ . Standardized coefficients, as presented in Table 14, indicate that perceived organizational support loaded highly on the first function, whereas trust, organization-based self-esteem, and perceived supervisor support loaded highly on the second function. In conjunction with standardized coefficients, group centroids (see table 15) suggest that *affective-normative dominant* and *affective dominant* individuals are more likely to score high on the first function, whereas *uncommitted* individuals are likely to score low on the first function. In other words, individuals with either an *affective-normative dominant* or *affective dominant* profile are likely to score high on perceived organizational support, organization-based self-esteem, and employee felt trustworthiness. Conversely, *uncommitted* individuals are likely to score low on the aforementioned variables. Although the second function was non-significant and should be interpreted cautiously, results indicate that *affective-normative dominant* and *uncommitted* individuals are likely to score high on the second function. Putting it another way, individuals who score high or low on both affective and normative commitment are likely to score high on perceived organizational support and employee felt trustworthiness. The classification table (see Table 16), indicates that 86.1% of the original grouped cases were correctly classified.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to determine if and to what extent critical psychological states (i.e., perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, employee felt trustworthiness, and organization-based self-esteem) sequentially mediated the effects of job characteristics (i.e., autonomy, job demands, and job complexity) on organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

The first major finding was that autonomy was positively associated with both perceived supervisor and organizational support, which suggests that allowing employees to independently make decisions in how to complete their tasks can foster a sense of being cared-for and valued by their respective employer. Furthermore, results indicated that employee felt trustworthiness and organization-based self-esteem partially mediated the effects of perceived supervisor and organizational support on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This finding suggests that employees who feel valued and cared-for by their employer are likely to believe that their employer thinks they are trustworthy (i.e., integrity, ability, and benevolent). This perception is likely to be internalized by employees and subsequently increase their sense of self-worth as contributing members of their respective organization. Ultimately, employees with positive valuations of self-worth are likely to be happier with their job, as evidenced by the positive association between organization-based self-esteem and job satisfaction. Furthermore, these employees are more likely to be emotionally attached to their employer along with a developed sense of obligation and responsibility to their employer.

Although employee felt trustworthiness was measured as a proxy for employee felt trust, findings from the current study suggest that felt trustworthiness plays a pivotal

role in determining if and how organizational support systems affect employee self-evaluations. Specifically, employees who sense that their supervisor thinks they are trustworthy are likely to experience higher levels of self-esteem as a result of supervisor and organizational support. As mentioned above, trustworthiness has been found to predict trusting behaviour (Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006) and in conjunction with current findings, it is plausible to extend that predictive relationship to felt trustworthiness and felt trust. For instance, it is possible that employees who think their supervisors recognize their trustworthiness, are likely to perceive that their supervisors engage in trusting behaviour. These employees would recognize that their supervisors are more likely to invest in (and possibly be vulnerable to risks for) employees that personify high abilities, benevolence, and integrity.

It is understandable why autonomy had both direct and indirect effects within the proposed model. Specifically, results suggest that autonomy has simultaneously occurring multiple effects on numerous variables. In regards to its indirect effects, increased autonomy can signal to employees that their employer cares about them and values their contributions (i.e., perceived supervisor support and perceived organizational support) because it demonstrates that the employer is willing to enhance working conditions to further promote such valued contributions. Increases in both perceived supervisor and organizational support can foster feelings that an employer is willing to take risks (i.e., employee felt trust) because it demonstrates that valued employees are worthy of possibly risky investments. Establishing a working environment where employees can make decisions independently may be considered risky by employers as it increases employees' control over an outcome (e.g., productivity) and conversely, decreases the organization's control. In other words, employees are likely to make sense of their employer's support

by recognizing that they are worthy of it, since they have the impression that their employer thinks they have integrity, ability, and are benevolent (i.e., employee felt trustworthiness).

In regards to its direct effects on other variables in the model, such as felt trustworthiness, increases in independent decision-making can directly promote employees' sense of feeling trustworthy simply because it signals to employees that their employer has confidence in their work-related decisions. As such, autonomy simultaneously promotes employee felt trustworthiness, indirectly through perceived supervisor and organizational support (i.e., employer demonstrating that they care), but also directly. This argument can be applied to all the statistically significant mediated relationships in the proposed model. Ultimately, results supported partially mediated relationships between variables in the proposed model, and not full mediation as expected.

A similar argument can be made to explain other partially mediated relationships in the proposed model. Take for example the following mediated relationship that was statistically supported: employee felt trustworthiness -> organization-based self-esteem -> job satisfaction. Employee felt trustworthiness can indirectly promote job satisfaction through its effects on organization-based self-esteem because the employees' recognition that they are considered worthy of investment (due to their integrity, ability, and benevolence) can cause employees' self-worth to increase as well. This sense of self-worth as a valuable employee can make employees happier with their organization, and their role within it. However, employee felt trustworthiness can also directly impact job satisfaction simply because the recognition that the employer has a positive impression of

their employees can make employees happier about working at their particular organization.

The finding of partial mediation between the aforementioned psychological states (i.e., perceived organizational support, employee felt trustworthiness, and organization-based self-esteem) is puzzling, considering previous studies. Specifically, these studies found fully mediated relationships between perceived organizational support, employee felt trust, and organization-based self-esteem in predicting organizational performance (Salamon & Robinson, 2008) and organizational deviance (Ferris et al., 2009). These inconsistencies suggest that the mediating roles of different psychological states are more complicated than presumed and in fact, may depend on the outcome variable that is measured. For example, it is plausible that these psychological states partially mediate the effects of job characteristics on employee attitudes, such as organizational commitment (Lee & Peccei, 2007), but fully mediate the effects of the same characteristics on employee behaviour (e.g., performance).

It was hypothesized that job demands and job complexity would be negatively associated with perceived supervisor support. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that perceived supervisor support would mediate the effects of job demands and job complexity on perceived organizational support. Path coefficients indicated that such relationships were not supported with the observed data. Moreover, bivariate scatterplots and correlations indicate that neither job demands nor job complexity has significant linear relationships with any other variable in the model. The few significant correlations of job demands or job complexity were fairly weak. Existing literature regarding the relationship between job demands, job complexity, and social support is conflicted. Particularly, while the majority of studies have observed significant bivariate (negative)



correlations of social support or job satisfaction with job demands and job complexity (Luchman & Gonzales-Morales, 2013; McClenahan et al., 2007; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), there are contrasting studies that failed to support said relationships (Melamed et al., 1991; Rodriguez et al., 2001). In explaining this inconsistency, recall that the defining characteristic of job demands is as “physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological effort” (Bakker et al., 2010, p. 4). Using this definition, it is plausible to categorize job complexity as a form of job demand, especially considering the fact that the two variables shared a moderately high bivariate correlation. Due to the effort required to complete such onerous tasks, job demands act as significant predictors of job strain, but not motivation, learning, commitment, or engagement (Bakker et al., 2010). In contrast, job resources (e.g., autonomy) serve as significant predictors of commitment and motivation due to the fact that they help employees to achieve their work-related goals (Bakker et al., 2010). In relation to the current study, job satisfaction and organizational commitment were entered as outcome variables in the proposed model which could explain the significant relationships between various variables in the model and autonomy, as opposed to job demands and job complexity.

In the proposed model, general self-esteem was entered as a covariate to control for the effects of organization-based self-esteem on both organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Although general self-esteem and organization-based self-esteem were significantly correlated, path coefficients did not suggest a significant relationship between general self-esteem and job satisfaction or organizational commitment whereas such relationships were supported with organization-based self-esteem. This was

particularly unexpected considering the fact that bivariate correlations of general self-esteem with job satisfaction and organizational commitment were moderately high. Bowling et al. (2010) offer an explanation for this unexpected finding. Specifically, the authors differentiate general self-esteem and organization-based self-esteem as a general personality measure and a contextualized personality measure, respectively. They point out that contextualized personality measures share stronger relationships with work-related outcomes because they require participants to draw from a common frame-of-reference (i.e., work). However, when completing questionnaires of general personality measures, such as general self-esteem, participants are free to draw from any personal experience and as such, their self-esteem “score” may be generalized across all contexts. The heterogeneous frame-of-references can thus confound the relationship between general self-esteem and work-related outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. For example, employees with high general self-esteem may not always be confident employees. Subsequently, these employees may not be happy with or committed to their employer. A meta-analysis of predictors and outcomes of both general and organization-based self-esteem support this reasoning (Bowling et al., 2010).

Interestingly, bivariate correlations indicated a significant relationship between general self-esteem and age but a non-significant relationship between general self-esteem and organizational tenure. This finding suggests that older employees were more likely to have higher general self-esteem, but not as a function of their time spent with their employer. This explanation is further supported by the finding that organization-based self-esteem shared the exact same correlation with age. In understanding this relationship, it is possible that age is correlated to an underlying factor of both

organization-based and general self-esteem. This underlying factor may not have any frame-of-reference, and may be independent of individuals' roles as employees within their respective organization.

Finally it is particularly noteworthy that both gender and age were significantly correlated to employee felt trustworthiness, which suggests that older employees and female employees were more likely to experience higher felt trustworthiness. Although previous studies have not investigated gender and age differences in felt trustworthiness, it is possible that gender and age-based stereotypes were at play. Specifically, female employees may have perceived themselves to have more integrity, ability, and benevolence, especially in comparison to their male counterparts who may have been perceived as impulsive and careless. This can only be speculated as the frame-of-reference with which the participants answered questions was unknown. For example, it is possible that female employees evaluated their felt trustworthiness in comparison to their male counterparts whereas others may not have used any comparison with which to assess their felt trustworthiness. A similar explanation can be used in understanding the positive relationship between age and employee felt trustworthiness. Specifically, older employees may have evaluated their felt trustworthiness in comparison to their younger colleagues who may have been perceived as less knowledgeable and less experienced.

Cumulatively, the hypothesized relationships in the proposed model did not meet any standards of good fit and thus was not retained. A number of explanations should be highlighted in order to interpret this non-significant finding. First, violations of multivariate normality can overestimate chi-square values, and thus inflate the chances of attaining a statistically significant difference between predicted and observed data (Byrne,

2010). Moreover, TLI values may be underestimated in samples that violate multivariate normality (Byrne, 2010). Because the current dataset violated the assumption of multivariate normality across a number of endogenous variables, it is plausible that the oversensitive chi-square was artificially inflated, which led the proposed model to fail an overall standard of model fit. Similarly, the TLI value may have underestimated the comparative fit of the proposed model with the independence model.

Finally, in explaining the lack of model fit for the proposed model, it is plausible that the model was misspecified. This was evidenced in the RMSEA value, which remained high throughout model specification, despite increases in TLI (i.e., comparative fit). Values of RMSEA are particularly sensitive to model misspecification (Hu & Bentler, 1998). After a review of existing literature and taking into consideration current results, a new plausible model emerges. This new model is based on the following considerations: 1) existing literature that demonstrates the mediating effects of perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, and employee felt trust on the relationship between job characteristics and employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Salamon & Robinson, 2008); 2) existing literature that demonstrates the mediating role of organization-based self-esteem in the aforementioned relationships (Chen et al., 2005; Lau et al., 2014); and 3) present findings indicating that perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, employee felt trustworthiness, and organization-based self-esteem share significant (direct and indirect) relationships. This model suggests that perceived supervisor and organizational support, and employee felt trustworthiness simultaneously mediate (as opposed to sequentially mediate) the effects of autonomy on organization-based self-

esteem. This relationship is plausible specifically because existing literature indicates that they all share similar antecedents and outcomes (Bowling et al., 2010; Eisenberger et al., 2001; Eisenberger et al., 2002; Salamon & Robinson, 2008).

In regards to categorizing scores of affective and normative organizational commitment, results revealed that participants did not fall under the *normative dominant* profile (i.e., low affective-high normative). Meyer and Parfyonova (2010) offer an explanation for this finding. Specifically, the authors point out that affective and normative commitment share the same antecedents and outcomes, and as such, are highly correlated. Furthermore, although the two components of commitment are theoretically distinct and distinguishable from each other, they often co-occur (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). As such, the authors suggest that unlike affective and continuance commitment, the role of normative commitment within the three-component model is complementary. For example, high scores of normative commitment often complement high scores of either affective (i.e., *affective-normative dominant*) or continuance commitment (i.e., *continuance-normative dominant*). As a result of being paired with normative commitment, *affective* and *continuance dominant* profiles' characteristics are slightly altered. For instance, *affective dominant* employees are committed to their employer due to emotional attachment. When complemented with normative commitment however, (*affective-normative dominant*) employees are committed to their employer due to emotional attachment but also due to a moral sense or obligation to do so. Numerous studies investigating differences in employee attitudes across different profiles of organizational commitment failed to produce a *normative dominant* profile (Meyer,

Stanley, & Parfyonova, 2012; Meyer, Goldenberg, Kam, & Bremner, 2013; Sinclair, Tucker, Cullen, & Wright, 2005; Somers, 2009; Somers, 2010; Wasti, 2005).

The discriminant analysis revealed that individuals with either an *affective-normative dominant* or *affective dominant* profile are likely to score high on perceived organizational support, organization-based self-esteem, and employee felt trustworthiness. In contrast, *uncommitted* individuals are likely to score low on the aforementioned variables. Although differences in perceived organizational support has been investigated across various profiles of organizational commitment, this was the first study to simultaneously investigate differences in perceived supervisor support, organization-based self-esteem, and employee felt trustworthiness. Due to the exploratory nature of the discriminant analysis, no predictions were made however the results are not surprising. Particularly, it is plausible that individuals who are emotionally attached and have a sense of moral duty to their employer are characterized by high levels of perceived organizational support, organization-based self-esteem, and employee felt trustworthiness. This characterization can be understood by recognizing that perceived organizational support, organization-based self-esteem and employee felt trustworthiness all operate under the assumptions of social exchange theory, organizational support theory, and the reciprocity norm. Cumulatively, these theories suggest that employees who recognize favourable job conditions begin to formulate an overall impression of their employer's positive estimation of them. This impression subsequently increases employees' self-esteem and sense of obligation to reciprocate this favourable treatment. Employees' increased sense of self-worth consequently increases employees' happiness and felt obligation to reciprocate this favourable treatment. Partial support for this finding

is demonstrated by a recent study conducted by Meyer et al. (2013) which found that perceived supervisor support was the most unique predictor to group membership of organizational commitment profiles, particularly with *affective-normative* and *affective dominant* profiles.

It is interesting that although perceived organizational support was a significant predictor of group membership in the current study, perceived supervisor support failed to differentiate between profiles of organizational commitment. This is particularly puzzling considering the fact that the two constructs were highly correlated however a simple explanation can be offered in interpreting this finding. First, it should be noted that despite their shared antecedents and outcomes, perceived supervisor and organizational support are distinguishable constructs (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Second and perhaps more importantly, it should be noted that the Survey of Perceived Supervisor Support measures the extent to which employees perceive their supervisor to care for their well-being and to value their contributions. In other words, the survey uses the “supervisor” as the frame-of-reference and not the “organization”. Conversely, the subscales of Meyer and Allen’s (1997) measure of organizational commitment uses the “organization” as the frame-of-reference. As such, it is plausible that any support provided by supervisors was not perceived to be representative of their organization, which explains why the two constructs had differential predictive power in differentiating profiles of organizational commitment.

### **Theoretical Implications**

Results from the current study highlight the importance of employee felt trustworthiness, and by extension employee felt trust, in fostering employee satisfaction,

emotional attachment, and moral obligation to their employer. Furthermore, findings suggest how employee felt trustworthiness itself may be managed and enhanced by allowing employees to independently make decisions regarding their work. These findings contribute to practical issues in the workplace, but also significantly contribute to the trust literature. As mentioned above, the trust literature is largely devoid of the employee's perspective of trust within the employee-employer dyad. Therefore, this study helps to not only fill that void but also highlights the value of understanding the employee-employer relationship, specifically from the employee perspective of trust within said relationship. In looking through the employee's eyes, a clearer understanding develops that explains *how* job characteristics and forms of organization-based support can ultimately lead to positive work outcomes, such as happier and emotionally attached employees.

Furthermore, this study demonstrates how two schools of thought can be inform one another in explaining the same relationship. Particularly, organizational support literature and trust literature can collectively explain why certain job characteristics, such as autonomy, promote positive employee outcomes, than if either is applied individually.

Existing literature reveals that the relationship between employee perceptions of support, felt trustworthiness, and organization-based self-evaluations has rarely been tested in the same model, let alone in North American samples. Instead, the majority of the relevant research was conducted in China (Chen et al., 2005; Lau & Lam, 2008; Lau, Liu & Fu, 2007; Lau et al., 2014) and Korea (Lee & Peccei, 2007). Results from this baseline study suggest that findings from previous studies can be applied to an organizational sample within a different culture.



## **Practical Implications**

Cumulatively, findings from the current study suggest that employees' perceptions (i.e., perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, and felt trustworthiness) and self-evaluations (i.e., organization-based self-esteem) can affect their happiness with and commitment to their employer. These findings are significant in light of the shifting demographics of today's workforce, particularly in regards to age. Due to aging "baby boomers" who are rapidly approaching retirement and with lower birth rates, organizations are faced with a shrinking labour pool (Burke & Ng, 2006). As such, organizations frequently find themselves competing with one another to recruit the "best and brightest". Once recruited, this challenge extends to the preservation of employees who can easily be tempted to leave one organization for the next, in order to maximize rewarding outcomes (e.g., better pay, benefits, prestige). These conditions make it crucial for organizations to ensure that their employees are happy and to ultimately prevent them from leaving their jobs. Findings from the current study suggest that employee perceptions and self-evaluations can be harnessed and shaped by management, in order to promote job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This can be done by allowing employees to make more decisions independently as a means to develop employees' perception of being supported by both their respective supervisors and organization.

## **Limitations and Future Directions**

It is necessary to note that the majority of the sample consisted of Caucasian Americans, between 24-40 years of age. The overall demographics of the sample were not representative of the larger American population nor the general population of internet users (Paolacci et al., 2010). However in regards to age, the current sample was

only slightly younger in age, compared to said populations (Paolacci et al., 2010). As such, the results of the current study could be fruitful in understanding the work-related perceptions and attitudes of the younger generation of today's workforce.

Due to the exclusive use of self-report measures, findings may be subject to common method bias, which has been found to artificially inflate bivariate correlations (Spector, 1994). In regards to self-report measures of perceptions and attitudes however, common method bias is largely a concern with poorly designed measures (Spector, 1987). Considering the non-significant bivariate correlations of numerous variables in the model coupled with the high reliabilities of their respective measures suggests that common method bias was not in effect. Furthermore, self-report measures are specifically designed to capture individuals' subjective perceptions and attitudes, both of which are intended in the current study, and have been proven to be effective in doing so (Spector, 1994).

Although path coefficients (standardized and unstandardized) and squared multiple correlations were bootstrapped in order to determine their stability, the advantages of bootstrapping are limited. Particularly, bootstrapping assumes that the sample is representative of the population; if this assumption is not met, any bootstrapped values may be misleading or inaccurate (Byrne, 2010). If in fact the current sample was not representative of the population, then estimated coefficients and correlations would not be reliable.

It should also be noted that model respecification has limitations and as such, any revised models must be interpreted with caution for two reasons. First, research has shown that model respecification does not always result in the "true" model (MacCallum, 1986). Second, because model respecification is completed post hoc and is exploratory in nature, any revised model must be validated in an independent sample (Jackson et al.,

2009; Kelloway, 1998; Kline, 2011). In other words, assessments of model fit (e.g., path coefficients, approximate fit, and comparative fit) cannot be confirmed on the same sample from which modifications were based.

Due to the cross-sectional nature of the study, causation cannot be inferred from current findings. For example, findings cannot conclude that organization-based self-esteem causes employees to become more committed to or happier with their employer, despite their positive relationship. In light of this limitation however, cross-sectional studies are helpful as a first step to investigating new areas of research. With a preliminary exploration of employee felt trustworthiness as a primary aim, a cross-sectional methodology was warranted in the current study.

Finally, it is noteworthy that although the discriminate analysis revealed differences in work-related perceptions across different organizational commitment profiles, the analysis was based on approximately one-third of the larger sample. This exclusion was a direct result of the categorization of organizational commitment profiles. As such, it is plausible that a comparative analysis of profiles that include the whole sample may reveal different results. However, as an exploratory endeavor, the current analysis offered some insight into a possibly fruitful line of research for future scholars.

The current study was conducted in response to calls of previous researchers who have highlighted the importance of examining trust from both perspectives of the organizational dyad (i.e., employee-employer) (Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000; Brower et al., 2009). Current findings provided some insight into the importance of employee felt trustworthiness in explaining the relationship between job characteristics (i.e., autonomy and perceived support) and work-related attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment), however no model was retained. As such, more research

is needed to clarify their respective roles within one comprehensive model. Although the proposed model was modified, respecified models must be compared and validated on independent samples. Due to the small sample size (i.e.,  $N = 328$ ), respecified models could not be tested in the current study however future research could address this limitation in recruiting a larger sample size. In doing so, a longitudinal study that measures employee perceptions and attitudes over time may offer some insight as to the direction of hypothesized relationships. Similarly, and in line with recommendations in the existing literature, future studies examining trust could benefit from including measures that capture specific behaviours of managers (Salamon & Robinson, 2008). Such an inclusion could enhance our understanding of how management can harness and promote employee felt trustworthiness, and by extension, positive work-related attitudes such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

As mentioned above, results of the discriminant analysis was limited due to the exclusion of approximately two-thirds of the larger sample. Fortunately, there are analyses that can categorize cases into profiles of organizational commitment using advanced, yet more accurate techniques. Specifically, *K*-means cluster analysis groups individual cases by maximizing the similarities within profiles and the dissimilarities across profiles (Milligan & Hirtle, 2003). *K*-means cluster analysis is preferred over hierarchical and two-step analysis in cases where the number of clusters is known *a priori*. In light of the fact that current findings replicated profiles of organizational commitment found in existing literature, a *K*-means cluster analysis is appropriate for future studies. A cluster analysis, coupled with complementary analyses (i.e., multivariate

analysis of variance and discriminant analysis) in order to determine any differences in employee perceptions and attitudes across different organizational commitment profiles.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Researchers have highlighted the importance of examining trust (and its effects) from both perspectives of the organizational dyadic relationship (i.e., employee-employer) (Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000; Brower et al., 2009) and yet trust continues to be investigated solely from the employer's perspective (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). The aim of this study was twofold: 1) to address the large void in existing trust literature- that of the employee's perspective and 2) to integrate two schools of thought in organizational psychology- namely, organizational support and trust. In addressing the first aim, results of the current study suggest that psychological states (i.e., perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, employee felt trustworthiness, and organization-based self-esteem) can be enhanced with the aim of fostering employees that are happier and emotionally attached to their employer. In addressing the second aim, this study demonstrated the value of trust in predicting better outcomes for employees and employers, by informing upon organizational support literature. Trust is the foundation on which relationships are built upon: it is what binds employers and employees together. It is a psychological state that can help to explain why favourable job conditions improve employee self-esteem, and why it makes employees happy to work for their organization. It is with high hopes that this study inspires future research in the realm of felt trustworthiness and felt trust as this research can continue to fill the large void within the trust literature-that of the employee's perspective- and to further validate the perceptions, opinions, and attitudes of employees.

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## APPENDIX A

### *Survey of Perceived Supervisory Support*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the *supervisor* for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular *supervisor* for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 7-point Likert scale where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *moderately disagree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 4 = *neither disagree nor agree*, 5 = *slightly agree*, 6 = *moderately agree*, 7 = *strongly agree*.

1. My supervisor values my contributions to the well-being of our department.
2. If my supervisor could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary he/she would do so. (R).
3. My supervisor appreciates extra effort from me.
4. My supervisor strongly considers my goals and values.
5. My supervisor wants to know if I have any complaints.
6. My supervisor takes my best interest in to account when he/she makes decisions that affect me.
7. Help is available from my supervisor when I have a problem.
8. My supervisor really cares about my well-being.
9. If I did the best job possible, my supervisor would be sure to notice.
10. My supervisor is willing to help me when I need a special favour.
11. My supervisor cares about my general satisfaction at work.
12. If given the opportunity, my supervisor would take advantage of me. (R)
13. My supervisor shows a lot of concern for me.
14. My supervisor cares about my opinions.
15. My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments.
16. My supervisor tries to make my job as interesting as possible.

Note: (R) refers to a reversed scored item.

## APPENDIX B

### *Survey of Perceived Organizational Support*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the *company* or *organization* for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular *organization* for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 7-point Likert scale where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *moderately disagree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 4 = *neither disagree nor agree*, 5 = *slightly agree*, 6 = *moderately agree*, 7 = *strongly agree*.

1. The organization values my contributions to the well-being of our department.
2. If the organization could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary, it would do so. (R).
3. The organization appreciates extra effort from me.
4. The organization strongly considers my goals and values.
5. The organization wants to know if I have any complaints.
6. The organization takes my best interest in to account when it makes decisions that affect me.
7. Help is available from the organization when I have a problem.
8. The organization really cares about my well-being.
9. If I did the best job possible, the organization would be sure to notice.
10. The organization is willing to help me when I need a special favour.
11. The organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.
12. If given the opportunity, the organization would take advantage of me. (R)
13. The organization shows a lot of concern for me.
14. The organization cares about my opinions.
15. The organization takes pride in my accomplishments.
16. The organization tries to make my job as interesting as possible.

Note: (R) refers to a reversed scored item.



## APPENDIX C

### *Organization-Based Self-Esteem Scale*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible beliefs that individuals might have about the *company* or *organization* for which they work. With respect to your own beliefs about the particular *organization* for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 7-point Likert scale where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *moderately disagree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 4 = *neither disagree nor agree*, 5 = *slightly agree*, 6 = *moderately agree*, 7 = *strongly agree*.

1. I count around here.
2. I am trusted around here.
3. I am helpful around here.
4. I am taken seriously around here.
5. There is faith in me around here.
6. I can make a difference around here.
7. I am a valuable part of this place.
8. I am cooperative around here.
9. I am efficient around here.
10. I am an important part of this place.

## APPENDIX D

### *Organizational Commitment*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the *company* or *organization* for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular *organization* for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 7-point Likert scale where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *moderately disagree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 4 = *neither disagree nor agree*, 5 = *slightly agree*, 6 = *moderately agree*, 7 = *strongly agree*.

#### Affective Organizational Commitment

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
2. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside of it.
3. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
4. I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one.
5. I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization. (R)
6. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization. (R)
7. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
8. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization. (R)

#### Normative Organizational Commitment

1. I think that people these days move from company to company too often.
2. I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization. (R)
3. Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical to me. (R)
4. One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.
5. If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization.
6. I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization.

7. Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers.
8. I do not think that wanting to be a “company man” or “company woman” is sensible anymore. (R)

Note: (R) refers to a reversed scored item.

## APPENDIX E

### *Global Job Satisfaction Scale*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the *company* or *organization* for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular *organization* for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your satisfaction with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained on a 7-point Likert scale where 1 = *I'm extremely dissatisfied*, 2 = *I'm very dissatisfied*, 3 = *I'm moderately dissatisfied*, 4 = *I'm not sure*, 5 = *I'm moderately satisfied*, 6 = *I'm very satisfied*, and 7 = *I'm extremely satisfied*.

1. The physical work conditions. (I)
2. The freedom to choose your own method of working. (I)
3. Your fellow workers. (I)
4. The recognition you get for good work. (E)
5. Your immediate boss. (E)
6. The amount of responsibility you are given. (I)
7. Your rate of pay. (E)
8. Your opportunity to use your abilities. (I)
9. Industrial relations between management and workers in your organization. (E)
10. Your chance of promotion. (E)
11. The way your organization is managed. (E)
12. The attention paid to suggestions you make. (I)
13. Your hours of work. (E)
14. The amount of variety in your job. (I)
15. Your job security. (E)

Note: (I) refers to an intrinsic satisfaction subscale; (E) refers to an extrinsic satisfaction subscale.

## APPENDIX F

### *Employee Felt Trustworthiness*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the *supervisor* for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular *supervisor* for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neither disagree nor agree*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*.

1. My supervisor thinks I have a strong sense of justice
2. My supervisor never has to wonder whether I will stick to my word.
3. My supervisor thinks I try hard to be fair in my dealings with others.
4. My supervisor thinks that my actions and behaviours are very consistent.
5. My supervisor likes my values.
6. My supervisor believes that sound principles seem to guide my behaviour.
7. My supervisor feels that I am very capable of performing my job.
8. My supervisor believes that I am known to be successful at the things I try to do.
9. My supervisor believes that I have much knowledge about the work that needs done.
10. My supervisor feels very confident about my skills.
11. My supervisor believes that I have specialized capabilities that can increase our performance.
12. My supervisor believes that I am well qualified.
13. My supervisor thinks that I am very concerned about his/her welfare.
14. My supervisor feels that his/her needs and desires are very important to me.
15. My supervisor believes that I would not knowingly do anything to hurt him/her.
16. My supervisor believes that I really look out for what is important to him/her.

17. My supervisor believes that I will go out of my way to help him/her.

## APPENDIX G

### *The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale*

Instructions: Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 4-point Likert scale where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, 4 = *strongly agree*.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
2. At times, I think I am no good at all. (R)
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (R)
6. I certainly feel useless at times. (R)
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. (R)
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (R)
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Note: (R) refers to a reversed scored item.

## APPENDIX H

### *Job Demands Subscale – Job Demands and Decision Latitude Scale*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the *company* or *organization* for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular *organization* for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the seven alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 5-point Liker-type scale where 1 = *never* and 5 = *extremely often*.

1. To what extent does your job require your working fast?
2. To what extent does your job require your working hard?
3. To what extent does your job require a great deal of work to be done?
4. To what extent is there not enough time for you to do your job?
5. To what extent is there excessive work in your job?
6. To what extent do you feel there is not enough time for you to finish your work?
7. To what extent are you faced with conflicting demands on your job?



## APPENDIX I

### *Job Complexity Subscale – Work Design Questionnaire*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the *company* or *organization* for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular *organization* for which you are now working, please indicate the frequency with which you experience each statement by checking one of the five alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*.

1. The job requires that I only do one task or activity at a time. (R)
2. The tasks on the job are simple and uncomplicated. (R)
3. The job comprises relatively uncomplicated tasks. (R)
4. The job involves performing relatively simple tasks. (R)

Note: (R) refers to a reversed scored item.

## APPENDIX J

### *Autonomy Subscales – Work Design Questionnaire*

Instructions: Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the *company* or *organization* for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular *organization* for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the five alternatives below each statement.

Responses are obtained using a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*.

#### Decision-Making Autonomy

1. The job gives me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgement in carrying out the work.
2. The job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own.
3. The job provides me with significant autonomy in making decisions.

#### Work Methods Autonomy

4. The job allows me to make decisions about what methods I use to complete my work.
5. The job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do the work.
6. The job allows me to decide on my own how to go about doing my work.

## APPENDIX K

### *Eligibility Criteria*

1. Are you currently employed by an organization? (For example: Microsoft Co., ExxonMobil Co., Ford Motor Co., etc.)

Yes                      No

2. How many organizations do you work for?

1                      2 or more

3. Does your organization pay you for your work?

Yes                      No

4. How many job titles do you currently hold, within your respective organization? (For example: Business Manager, Accountant, Sales Representative, etc.)

1                      2                      3 or more

5. How many hours (on average) do you dedicate to your job, per week (excluding lunches and breaks)?\*

6. How many months have you been working for your current employer, while working the number of hours, as specified in the previous question?\*

7. In which country are you currently employed?

Canada                      United States                      Other

Note: \* refers to a question in which participants will not be given multiple choice options. Instead, participants are required to input their response in a response box.

## APPENDIX L

### *Demographics*

1. What is your gender (e.g., male; female)?\*
2. How old are you (in years)?\*
3. What ethnic background do you most identify with? (For example: Caucasian, Italian, East Asian, etc.)\*
4. What is your highest level of education?\*

Some high school	University graduate
High school graduate	Master's Degree
Community college graduate	Ph.D.
Some university	Other (please specify)

5. What was your household income last year (before taxes)?

Under \$14,999	\$75,000 - \$89,999
\$15,000 - \$29,999	\$90,000 - \$104,999
\$30,000 - \$44,999	\$105,000 - \$119, 999
\$45,000 - \$59,999	\$120,000 - \$134,999
\$60,000 - \$74,999	Over \$135,000

6. What is your current job title? (For example: Business Manager, Accountant, Sales Representative, etc.)\*
7. In which industry does your current occupation fall under? (For example: Sales, )\*

Note: \* refers to a question in which participants will not be given multiple choice options. Instead, participants are required to input their response in a response box.

## APPENDIX M1

### *Unstandardized Residual Covariances (Proposed Model)*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. General Self-Esteem	-									
2. Autonomy	.14	-								
3. Job Complexity	.05	-	-							
4. Job Demands	.01	-	-	-						
5. PSS	.32	-	-	-	-					
6. POS	.32	.16	-.08	-.04	-	-				
7. Trust	.17	.15	.07	.05	.28	-	-			
8. OBSE	.33	.36	.13	.09	.60	.43	-	-		
9. OC	.23	.46	.10	.05	.79	.96	.04	-.01	-.02	
10. Job Satisfaction	.23	.53	.06	-.04	.89	.86	.11	.04	.43	.06

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

**APPENDIX M2**

*Standardized Residual Covariances (Proposed Model)*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. General Self-Esteem	-									
2. Autonomy	4.11	-								
3. Job Complexity	1.32	-	-							
4. Job Demands	.55	-	-	-						
5. PSS	6.71	-	-	-	-					
6. POS	6.27	1.85	-.93	-.59	-	-				
7. Trust	8.60	4.66	1.85	1.82	5.80	-	-			
8. OBSE	9.07	6.12	1.99	2.13	7.18	4.68	-	-		
9. OC	5.29	6.63	1.28	.97	8.15	9.17	.82	-.16	-.15	
10. Job Satisfaction	6.36	9.15	.94	-.98	10.91	9.70	2.84	.58	5.39	.70

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

### APPENDIX M3

#### *Squared Multiple Correlations (Proposed Model)*

Endogenous Variable	Estimate (R <sup>2</sup> )	S.E.	S.E. – S.E.	Mean	Bias	S.E. Bias	C.I. (Low 95)	C.I. (High 95)
PSS	.24*	.05	.001	.25	.008	.002	.15	.34
POS	.54*	.05	.001	.55	.001	.002	.43	.63
Trust	.25*	.04	.001	.26	.002	.001	.17	.35
OBSE	.52*	.05	.001	.52	.001	.001	.41	.60
OC	.34*	.05	.001	.34	.003	.001	.25	.43
Job Satisfaction	.50*	.05	.001	.51	.004	.001	.41	.59

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

\* $p < .05$ .

**APPENDIX N1**

*Unstandardized Path Coefficients (Revised Model)*

Path	Estimate (MLE)	S.E. (MLE)	Critical Ratio (MLE)	S.E.	S.E. – S.E.	Mean	Bias	S.E. Bias	C.I. (Low 95)	C.I. (High 95)
Autonomy -> PSS	.68*	.07	10.12	.08	.002	.68	.000	.003	.52	.85
PSS -> POS	.79*	.04	19.75	.04	.001	.79	-.001	.001	.71	.86
POS -> Trust	-.02	.02	-8.86	.02	.000	-.02	-.001	.001	-.06	.02
PSS -> Trust	.32*	.03	13.08	.03	.001	.32	.002	.001	.27	.38
Trust -> OBSE	.96*	.07	13.51	.09	.002	.96	.001	.003	.80	1.14
POS -> OBSE	.27*	.03	9.34	.04	.001	.27	.000	.001	.19	.35
OBSE -> OC	.22*	.06	3.83	.06	.001	.22	.001	.002	.12	.33
OBSE -> Job Satisfaction	.27*	.04	6.53	.05	.001	.27	.002	.001	.17	.35
POS -> Job Satisfaction	.28*	.03	8.89	.04	.001	.28	-.003	.001	.21	.36
POS -> OC	.53*	.04	12.94	.04	.001	.52	-.003	.001	.44	.61
PSS -> Job Satisfaction	.25*	.04	7.05	.04	.001	.25	.000	.001	.16	.33

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; Trust = employee felt trustworthiness. \* $p < .05$ .



**APPENDIX N2**

*Standardized Path Coefficients (Revised Model)*

Path	Estimate (MLE)	S.E.	S.E. – S.E.	Mean	Bias	S.E. Bias	C.I. (Low 95)	C.I. (High 95)
Autonomy - > PSS	.49*	.05	.001	.49	-.001	.002	.38	.59
PSS -> POS	.74*	.04	.001	.74	.000	.001	.65	.80
POS -> Trust	-.05	.05	.001	-.05	-.002	.002	-.15	.04
PSS -> Trust	.75*	.05	.001	.75	.002	.001	.66	.84
Trust -> OBSE	.53*	.05	.001	.53	.001	.002	.43	.63
POS -> OBSE	.37*	.05	.001	.37	.000	.002	.26	.47
OBSE -> OC	.18*	.05	.001	.18	.001	.001	.10	.27
OBSE -> Job Satisfaction	.26*	.05	.001	.26	.002	.002	.16	.35
POS -> Job Satisfaction	.39*	.05	.001	.38	-.003	.002	.29	.48
POS -> OC	.62*	.05	.001	.62	-.002	.002	.52	.71
PSS -> Job Satisfaction	.32*	.05	.001	.32	.000	.002	.21	.42

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; Trust = employee felt trustworthiness. \* $p < .05$ .

### APPENDIX N3

#### *Squared Multiple Correlations (Revised Model)*

Endogenous Variable	Estimate (R <sup>2</sup> )	S.E.	S.E. – S.E.	Mean	Bias	S.E. Bias	C.I. (Low 95)	C.I. (High 95)
PSS	.24*	.05	.001	.24	.002	.002	.15	.35
POS	.54*	.05	.001	.55	.001	.002	.43	.63
Trust	.51*	.05	.001	.51	.003	.002	.40	.59
OBSE	.62*	.03	.001	.62	.003	.001	.55	.68
OC	.74*	.03	.001	.74	.001	.001	.69	.79
Job Satisfaction	.56*	.04	.001	.56	.000	.001	.48	.63

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

\* $p < .05$ .

**APPENDIX N4**

*Unstandardized Coefficients of Indirect Effects (Revised Model)*

Path	Estimate	S. E.	C. I. (Low 95)	C. I. (High 95)
Autonomy -> POS	.53**	.07	.40	.70
Autonomy -> Trust	.21*	.03	.15	.27
Autonomy -> OBSE	.34*	.05	.25	.44
Autonomy -> Job Satisfaction	.41**	.06	.31	.54
Autonomy -> OC	.35**	.05	.27	.47
PSS -> Trust	-.02	.02	-.05	.01
PSS -> OBSE	.50*	.03	.44	.57
PSS -> Job Satisfaction	.36*	.03	.29	.43
PSS -> OC	.52**	.03	.46	.59
POS -> OBSE	-.02	.02	-.06	.02
POS -> Job Satisfaction	.07*	.02	.04	.10
POS -> OC	.05**	.02	.03	.09
Trust -> Job Satisfaction	.26*	.05	.15	.35
Trust -> OC	.21*	.05	.11	.32

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; OC = organizational commitment; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

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

## APPENDIX O1

### *Eigenvalues of Discriminant Functions*

Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Canonical Correlation
1	2.59	97.8	.85
2	.06	2.2	.23

## APPENDIX O2

### *Discriminant Functions*

Function(s)	Wilk's Lambda	$\chi^2$	df
1 through 2	.26	147.55*	8
2	.95	6.20	3

\* $p < .0001$ .

## APPENDIX O3

### *Structure Matrix of the Discriminant Analysis*

Dependent Variable	Function 1	Function 2
Trust	.45	.40
OBSE	.61	-.35
PSS	.60	-.33
POS	.93	.01

*Note.* PSS = perceived supervisor support; POS = perceived organizational support; OBSE = organization-based self-esteem; trust = employee felt trustworthiness.

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