“Are Successful Entrepreneurs Committed or motivated?” A Research Review Synchronizing Commitment, Motivation and the Entrepreneur

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Abstract: Our paper aims to abridge sound theoretical views and research trends from the literatures on commitment, motivation and entrepreneurship, and to conceptualize a model on Entrepreneurial Commitment. Recent researches of workplace behavior suggest commitment as a division of motivation where both constructs affect performance and are distinct in its own forms. Even so, studies synchronizing these two constructs in the entrepreneurship literature, however, have yet to surface. The separate roles of commitment and motivation in the entrepreneurial process are still ambiguous. In this light, a review on studies relating commitment, motivation and entrepreneurial performance is documented. The paper ends with a hypothetical model conceptualizing the antecedents of entrepreneurial commitment as well as the relationships between entrepreneurial commitment, motivation and entrepreneurial performance.

Our work contributes to the underdeveloped, yet much anticipated knowledge on entrepreneurial commitment, benefitting future empirical studies aimed at understanding commitment and its associations with motivation, particularly in the successful entrepreneur.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial commitment, entrepreneurial motivation, entrepreneurial success, entrepreneurial performance.

Type of Paper: Literature Review, Conceptual

Introduction

Entrepreneurial success is synonym to efficiency and firm growth (J. R. Baum, Locke, & Smith, 2001; Low & McMillan, 1988; Murphy, Trailer, & Hill, 1996), and is a vital issue in entrepreneurship because it distinguishes an entrepreneurial venture from a small venture (Nieman & Bennett, 2002). Nonetheless, in the entrepreneur’s journey, the road towards growth and performance is not always a smooth ride. Growth more often leads to the “growing pains” (Flamholtz & Randle, 1990) caused by unwelcomed effects, challenges, and multiple
predicaments faced by the entrepreneur, in particular for small and medium sized businesses that visualize positive performance to survive and grow in their early years (Lewis & Churchill, 1983).

So what, exactly, makes a successful entrepreneur? Clearly, the answer to this question is complex and involves interrelations of numerous variables. To understand the phenomenology linking to entrepreneurial success, researchers have relied on Organizational Behavior (OB) theories - the branch of management science that focuses on human behavior in business contexts- supporting the argument on how OB is able “to answer questions long addressed by entrepreneurship researchers such as i) why do some persons but not others choose to become entrepreneurs?, ii) what factors influence entrepreneurs' success?, and iii) why do some persons, but not others, recognize economically advantageous opportunities ?” (Baron, 2002, p. 225). In short, OB places the entrepreneur directly as the heart of the entire entrepreneurial process. For instance, the topic of motivation has long been a focal interest to OB researchers, and their investigations have resulted in the development of sophisticated frameworks for understanding motivation in entrepreneurial settings (e.g J. R. Baum, et al., 2001; Locke, 2000). More recently, the importance of understanding motivation in the entrepreneur was re-highlighted (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011) while more studies confirming the impact of motivation onto venture creation and business performance materialized (e.g Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2012; J. Robert Baum & Locke, 2004; Collins, Hange, & Locke, 2004; DeTienne, Shepherd, & Castro, 2008; Muda, Halim, & Amin, 2011). More interestingly, motivation is found to play a significant part in the persistence decisions of under-performing firms (DeTienne, et al., 2008).

In the same vein, OB is also used as the main foundation for empirical testing in studies linking commitment to the entrepreneur. In recent studies, it is found that commitment positively impacts start-up and venture performance, (e.g De Clercq, Menzies, Diochon, & Gasse, 2009a; Simon, Elango, Houghton, & Savelli, 2002), new product development (Chiang, Shih, & Hsu, 2013), and internalization (Sleuwaegen & Onkelinx, 2013). A study on the factors associated with entrepreneurial success revealed that high-growth-oriented entrepreneurs labeled as “ambitious” possess strong commitment to the success of their businesses (Gundry & Welsch, 2001) while the importance of organizational commitment is also acknowledged as a contributor to alliance performance and firm performance (Fang Wua & Cavusgil, 2006). In short, the emergent trend of studies linking commitment to entrepreneurship authenticates the significant role commitment formulates in elevating business performance and efficiency.

But what is commitment to the entrepreneur, exactly? In light of the importance of commitment to the entrepreneur, how, then, is it developed? Is it possible to derive these answers based on OB foundations? And how is commitment distinct from motivation in the entrepreneurial process? In the following sections an overview of commitment is presented, followed by a brief review on organizational commitment and work motivation, and how both constructs are discrete. We then conceptualize a model on Entrepreneurial Commitment (EC) as an effort to respond to the above queries before arriving to a succinct conclusion.

An Overview of Commitment

What is commitment? The American Psychological Association defines commitment, in general, as “a person’s determination to pursue goals” ("Encyclopedia of Psychology," 2000, p. 188) Commitment is characterized as “whatever it is that makes a person engage or continue in a course of action when difficulties or positive alternatives influence the person to abandon the action” (Brickman, 1987, p. 2). More often, the term commitment refers to the strength of one’s
intention to pursue the goal or one’s actual adherence to its pursuit. It may also refer to an individual’s characteristic engagement with life or society by pursuing significant goals (Brickman, 1987). Commitment is an intention to a) perform action(s), b) create outcome(s), or c) produce consequences perceived as obligatory, requiring investment of personal or social resources (e.g., time, money, effort), over a period of time (Baxter, 1989).

Commitment is associated to decision and action (Festinger, 1964; Janis & Mann, 1971), as argued by Festinger (1964) who defines commitment as a decision that directly affects future behaviors. Festinger (1957) pioneered research on commitment through his works on the theory of cognitive dissonance, which talks about the simultaneous existence of elements of knowledge (cognition) which, in one way or another, are conflicting (dissonance), hence motivating a person to make efforts to make them consonant (reduction of dissonance). This theory relates to self-justification, resulting from a person’s desire to appear rational in their act or decision, whereby people will appear bias to their attitudes on the given experimental task positively, in an attempt to justify their previous behavior (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959). The theory of self-justification subsequently explains ‘escalation of commitment’; a situation where the person behaves by staying with his/her decision although this decision is undoubtedly questioned by facts (Simonson & Staw, 1992; Staw, 1976, 1981; Staw & Ross, 1987).

The application of commitment in the academic literature by psychologists encompasses a multitude of settings, each with its own set of goals and methods. From research on close relationships to topics on religion and beliefs, commitment theories have played a role in numerous fields of research. Throughout the years, because commitment is mainly treated as a multidimensional construct, it has been defined and measured in diverse ways (see Meyer & Allen, 1991; R. T. Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). A summary of definitions can be found in the works of Meyer and Herscovitch (2001, p. 302-303).

In the fields of business and management, studies applying the concept of commitment include topics on employment, careers, labor unions and projects ("Encyclopedia of Psychology," 2000). From the works of researchers in the field of social psychology (Joule & Beauvois, 1989, 2002; Kiesler, 1971) as well as cognitive psychology (Festinger, 1957; Staw, 1981), the concept of commitment has been applied to the fields of management and company administration, much extensively in the context of organizational and work commitment (e.g. Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer & Maltin, 2010; W. H. Mowday, 1998; Swailes, 2004).

**Organizational Commitment**

The notion of commitment has received noteworthy attention in the OB literature, with the works of Mowday et al. (1979) defining Organizational Commitment (OC) as the extent to which an employee identifies with and is involved in an organization. Mowday et al.’s theory of OC (1979) proposed three dimensions of commitment, i) a strong belief in an organization’s goals and values, ii) a willingness to disburse significant efforts for the organization, and iii) a powerful intent or desire to remain employed by the organization. Soon after, this theory was expanded to a generalization of a Three-Component Model (TCM) to conceptualize the meaning of commitment to multiple foci, and in the context of the organization in particular (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). The TCM (Meyer & Allen, 1991), widely used by researchers up to today, argues that the ‘psychological state’ need not be limited to value and goal
congruence as explained by Mowday et al. (R. T. Mowday, et al., 1982). Rather, Meyer and Allen (1991) argue that it reflects a desire, a need, and/or an obligation to maintain membership in the organization. They suggest that commitment is conceptualized as the components of affective, continuance and normative commitment, in view of commitment being a psychological state of mind that i) describes the relationship of an employee with the organization, and ii) has implications for the decision to stay employed (or not) with the organization. Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement in the organization. An employee with a high affective commitment will continue with employment because he/she wants to. On the other hand, continuance commitment refers to consciousness of the costs involved with leaving the organization. An employee whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain employed because there is a need to do so. Lastly, normative commitment refers to a feeling of obligation to continue employment. An employee with a strong normative commitment will stay employed because he/she feels ought to do so. We discuss each commitment in turn.

Affective, Normative and Continuous Commitment

According to the literature, some authors prefer to describe commitment as an affective orientation towards the organization (e.g Buchanan, 1974; R.M. Kanter, 1989). This affective attachment is described as “the relative strength of the individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (R. T. Mowday, et al., 1979, p. 226). The mind set reflecting affective commitment is desire – people with positive affective commitment will want to perform the given goals and tasks (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). What is presumably involved in shaping this desire include involvement, (Meyer & Allen, 1991; R. T. Mowday, et al., 1982), value congruence (Mayer & Shoorman, 1998), and identification (Shamir, 1991). The most widely cited antecedents of affective commitment fall into four categories: personal characteristics, structural characteristics, job-related characteristics and work experiences (W. H. Mowday, 1998), with research suggesting that work experiences, apart from other personal or structural characteristics, largely contributes to the desire to remain in an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Another approach in viewing commitment is seeing it as a belief about one’s responsibility to the organization, referring to normative commitment. The Oxford dictionary defines a norm as “something that i) is usual, typical, or standard, ii) a standard or pattern, especially of social behavior, that is typical or expected, or iii) a required standard; a level to be complied with or reached” (Clydesdale, 2010 ), while normative is defined as an adjective “establishing, relating to, or deriving from a standard or norm, especially of behavior” (“Definition of normative,” 2013). One of the authors defined commitment as “the totality of internalized normative pressures to act in a way which meets organizational goals and interests” (Wiener, 1982, p. 471), suggesting that “individuals exhibit behavior solely because they believe it is the ‘right’ and ‘moral’ thing to do” (p. 421). In the same vein, other authors have identified personal norms (defined as internalized moral obligations) as significant contributors to behavior (Prestholdt, M., & Mathews, 1987). Normative commitment develops following the feeling of obligation to remain employed with the organization resulting from normative pressures i.e. familial, cultural, organization socialization (Wiener, 1982) , or perhaps, by rewarding the employee in advance i.e. paying college tuition fees, training fees, etc. Role models play a significant role in shaping the ‘felt obligation’, especially when observing or having experienced rewards and punishments. For instance, when a parent stresses the importance of being loyal to an employer, this establishes the platform of
strong normative commitment in their children. In short, employees feel ‘indebted’ to the organization, hence deciding to remain employed until the debt is repaid (Scholl, 1981). At a macro level, collective norms play a major role in cultures. These unwritten rules of conduct are often termed as social norms (Elster, 1989) and are defined as the preferred behaviors plus the associated approval for not obeying these behaviors in a society (Kandori, 1992). When a person does not comply with the given norms, he often experiences unwelcomed emotions such as guilt and shame. Nonetheless, in an organizational setting, people may oppose a norm upon accepting a contending norm from a different group (Biddle, 1986; Warren, 2003). On the internalization of these norms – being originated from familial, cultural or organization experiences – may be explained according to social learning theory principles (Davis & Luthans, 1980). However, according to a conclusion by Meyer et al. (2012), given that a great extent of research on normative commitment is theoretical-based, rather than empirical-based, opportunities to develop research on its antecedents still remains.

To a few researchers, commitment is defined as an engagement in “consistent lines of activity” (H. S. Becker, 1960, p. 33) based on the individual’s acknowledgment of the costs related to discontinuing the activity (H. S. Becker, 1960; Farrell & Rusbult, 1981). It is also pictured as the perceived “profit associated with continued participation and a ‘cost’ associated with leaving” (R.M. Kanter, 1968, p. 504) and the “awareness of the impossibility of choosing a different social identity…because of the immense penalties in the making the switch” (Stebbins, 1970, p. 527). For continuance commitment, anything that increases perceived costs may be an antecedent (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Among the most popular studied antecedents are side-bets, investments, and the availability of alternatives. To illustrate, the side-bet theory (H. S. Becker, 1960) states that commitment to an action develops as a person makes side-bets that would be lost if the action were discontinued. These side-bets may be in the forms of work or non-work related i.e. losing attractive benefits, the effort taken on acquiring non-transferable skills, leaving seniority-based privileges, disrupting family or personal relationships, and may be seen as the potential costs of leaving the organization.

The piecing together of studies from the relevant literature on commitment resulted in a basic definition which serves as the ‘building blocks’ of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001);

"Commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action that is of relevance to a particular target." (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001, p. 301)

The variation in the definitions of commitment (for a summary, see Meyer and Herscovitch (2001, p. 302-303)) led teams of researchers to conclude two significant findings; i) that commitment exist in different forms (T. E. Becker & Billings, 1993; Jaros, Jermier, Koehler, & Sincich, 1993), and ii) that commitment can be directed to various targets or foci (Cohan, 2003; Reichers, 1985). With regards to commitment existing in multiple forms, the TCM by Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997) has been accepted and applied with greatest empirical scrutiny and received the greatest support. Meyer’s team summarizes a significant fact, encompassing many other researches by others: that commitment binds an individual to an organization, hence reducing the likelihood of turnover.

Following the works of Meyer et al. (Meyer & Allen, 1991), a second major breakthrough in commitment theory was established, which recognizes that commitment can be directed towards multiple targets, or foci; which includes the organization, occupation, supervisor, team, program,
customer, and union (e.g. T. E. Becker, Randall, & Riegel, 1995; Bishop & Scott, 2000; Neubert & Cady, 2001). Inspired by the overwhelming number of studies on commitment in the forms of multiple foci, a General Workplace Commitment model (an extension of the TCM) was soon developed (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001) (see Figure 1).

In conclusion, the past twenty years has witnessed a significant development in the theory and research on commitment, especially with regards to the distinctions among foci, forms, and bases of commitment. The general model of workplace commitment by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) incorporates these distinctions and therefore serves as an imperative guide towards the integration of both motivation and commitment theories (Meyer, Becker, & Vanderberghe, 2004). The following sections illustrate.

**Commitment in the Entrepreneurial Process**

‘Commitment’ as a construct is observed in both the triggering and implementation phases along the entrepreneurial process (see Moore, 1986). Seeing that entrepreneurial commitment echoes the capacity to ensure ventures succeed (Erikson, 2002; Klofsten, 1994), the scarce information about ‘what and how commitment works in the entrepreneurial process’ hinder our comprehension of, perhaps, one of the most fundamental mechanisms involved in the psychology of entrepreneurship. Fayolle (2007) argues that an individual’s commitment is the determining factor in understanding the entrepreneurial act and hence, the actual emergence of a firm. Here, the entrepreneur often takes strides in his levels and efforts of persistence, leading to significant entrepreneurial activities (Sinclair & Bruce, 2009) and positive entrepreneurial performance, even when adapting to changes along the process (Simon, et al., 2002). However, despite the importance and the significant value of commitment in the entrepreneurial process, there exists little effort in applying commitment theories into entrepreneurship research and that the idea of

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**Figure 1: The General Model on Workplace Commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001, p. 317)**
‘commitment’ itself is not synchronized (Fayolle, 2007). Although there have been studies associating commitment with entrepreneurship, on the whole, these studies seem to focus on the preliminary stages in the entrepreneurial process, where individuals decide on becoming an entrepreneur, and in particular, during start-up establishment (Carter, W, & Reynolds, 1996; Krueger, 1993). In short, these studies have associated commitment to the intention to start-up, rather than the amount of effort they are prepared to invest, and that “little is known about the entrepreneur’s commitment while they are in the process of setting up a business” (De Clercq, Menzies, Diochon, & Gasse, 2009b, p. 124), moreover in the survival, growth and maturity stages.

Fayolle (2007), argues that what is more important for us to understand is the process that leads to a person’s total commitment rather than the process during which he remains committed in spite of whatever the costs. This is in line with what Kiesler earlier argued; “Commitment is a continuous variable, rather than a dichotomous one, that is, individuals are labeled as having more or less commitment to a behavior, rather than simply being committed or not” (Kiesler, 1971, p. 30). In a work by Tang (2008) on entrepreneurial alertness and commitment, building on the previous literature on OC, Tang (2008) proposed three bases of entrepreneurial commitment to venture creation; “i) continuance: the entrepreneurs’ desire to remain with the new business regardless of the uncertainties and unpredictability associated with the start-up process, ii) behavioral: the entrepreneurs’ willingness to expend significant efforts for the new business; and iii) affective: the entrepreneurs’ emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the new ventures” (Tang, 2008, p. 133). Tang applied the theories of commitment into his study suggesting that entrepreneurial alertness is influenced by entrepreneurial self-efficacy in performing roles and tasks in the new venture creation process in a munificent environment. Results show a strong relationship between environmental munificence (defined as the scarcity or abundance of critical resources needed) and alertness, especially when entrepreneurs have high levels of self-efficacy which, in turn, affects entrepreneurial commitment. In a more recent development on entrepreneurial commitment, it was found that nascent entrepreneurs’ goal commitment is shaped by the desirability and feasibility of goal accomplishment (De Clercq, et al., 2009b). An entrepreneur’s perceived self-efficacy and perception of the availability of external private financial resources positively affect goal commitment, whereas their perception of the availability of public financial support negatively affects goal commitment. With regards to desirability of goal attainment, both the value associated with entrepreneurship as a career choice and their perception of normative support are positively related to goal attainment. The effort by De Clerq and colleagues (2009) enlightens the understanding on why many people intend to start-up but are not willing to exert the effort do so. In another work by Sinclair (2009), it seems that entrepreneurial commitment can be measured via the cognitive mechanisms of both self-efficacy and entity-schema. Nonetheless, Sinclair and Bruce’s (2009) work is limited to determining entrepreneurial commitment in the pre-entrepreneur, very much identical to what De Clerq and team (2009) have concluded, so much so, that their works portray the importance of commitment only in nascent entrepreneurship. Up to today, works on determining entrepreneurial commitment in the successful entrepreneur, i.e. “what makes a successful entrepreneur entrepreneurially committed?” have yet to materialize.
Motivation and Commitment – An Integration of Theories

Among the most noteworthy development in the TCM is its integration with the theories of motivation, in particular to the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (see Meyer, Becker, & Van Dick, 2006; Meyer, Becker, & Vanderberghe, 2004; Meyer & Maltin, 2010). The resemblance in the mindsets characterizing the components of commitment in the TCM with the motivational states identified by Deci and Ryan (1985) and Ryan and Deci (2000) in SDT was first noted by Meyer et al (2004). Meyer et al (2004) proposed that to better understand the mechanisms by which commitment exerts its influence on behaviour, it is best that an integration of the two theories is established. Organizational scientists and researchers have long been awed with the concepts of employee commitment and motivation, believing in the evidence of the benefits of a motivated and commitment workforce (Locke & Latham, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997). However, it is startling how these two concepts have to some extent evolved separately. Commitment is discussed by motivation researchers as with motivation having fairly discussed by commitment researchers. Nonetheless, neither concept has been dealt with the level of complexity that exists within its own domain (Meyer, Becker, & Vanderberghe, 2004).

In 2004, it was argued that both commitment and motivation are distinguishable, albeit securing related concepts (Meyer, Becker, & Vanderberghe, 2004). More excitingly, it was also suggested that commitment is one component of motivation, and by the integration of theories of commitment and motivation, a better comprehension of the two processes themselves and of workplace behavior is gained. In the process of this integration, Meyer et al. (2004, p. 992) introduced goal regulation, “a motivational mindset reflecting the reasons for, and purpose of, a course of action”, a concept originated from SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000), and regulation focus theory (Higgins, 1997, 1998). The incorporation of goal regulation into Locke’s model illustrates how motivated behavior can be accompanied by different psychological states, or mindsets, as compared to those found to characterize different forms of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997). Building from these seminal works, more recently Battistelli et al. (2013) empirically tested the relationship of commitment with motivation and found that i) commitment features are linked to work motivation, and that ii) commitment and motivation are important antecedents of work attitudes and behaviors. More specifically, their work illustrates “the fundamental mediation role of both autonomous and controlled motivation in determining the relationships between organizational commitment and behavioral outcomes” (2013, p. 40).

Work Motivation

Being a tough concept to accurately define because of the nature of human beings and how far can we know about other people (Pinder, 1998), work motivation is defined as:

*A set of energetic forces that originates both within as well as beyond an individual’s being, to initiate work-related behavior, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration.* (Pinder, 1998, p. 11)

Note that energetic forces (what induces actions in employees) and that these forces have affects on the direction, form, intensity and duration of behavior. In short, it explains what employees are motivated to achieve, how they will attempt to achieve it, how hard they will work to do so, and when they will stop. Goal setting is the heart of motivation where it is presumed that all willfully motivated behavior is goal-oriented, whether the goals are assigned or self
developed. There exists many theories on work motivation in the OB literature where each of them may be combined to form a general model (Locke, 1997, p. 402) (see Figure 2).

Locke’s indigenous works illustrates the fact that naturally occurring goals derive from the activation of basic human needs, personal values, personality traits and self efficacy perceptions, all of which are shaped by experience and socialization. External incentives also play a role in the acceptance and setting of goals. Goals individuals opt for vary in difficulty and specificity, and these attributes, when combined with perceptions of self efficacy, assists in determining the direction of behavior, amount of effort put forth, the degree of persistency, and the development of strategies to help with goal accomplishments. In short, goal choices and beliefs in self efficacy influences behavior (Locke, 1997; Locke & Latham, 2002), which then affects the level of satisfaction, and along with commitment, may lead to other forms of actions (e.g. avoidance of work, adjustment, inefficiency, etc). In the entrepreneurship literature, it has been found that an entrepreneur’s perceived self-efficacy affects business strategies and performance levels (Westerberg, 1998) where perceived self-efficacy is referred to the degree to which the entrepreneur believes he/she has the ability to successfully complete a task. Individuals with high self-efficacy believe themselves capable of successfully taking adaptive action as challenges surface. They tend to choose more challenging tasks and are more unlikely to deter from them (Wadeson, 2009). Throughout this chain of reactions, feedback, goal commitment, ability, and task complexity are identified as the moderating variables necessary for goal attainment. Goal setting is one of the most established theories of work motivation (Miner, 2003) and Locke’s general model is to date, inarguably one of the most comprehensive. More significant is that the causal reactions the model proposes are widely well supported by empirical evidence (e.g Locke, 1997; Pinder, 1998).
Motivation vs. Commitment

By now, the reader may have noticed the focal similarity of commitment and motivation: both are described as an *energizing force that affects behavior*. Remember how Pinder (1998) describes motivation as a set of energizing forces while Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) defines commitment as a force that *binds* an individual to a course of action, thus illustrating a point: that “motivation is a broader concept than commitment and that commitment is one of among a set of energizing forces that contributes to motivational (intentional) behavior” (Meyer, Becker, & Vanderberghe, 2004, p. 994). They note that the binding nature of commitment makes it an exclusive character among the forces and that looking at how “commitment” is phrased in our daily activities implies that it is widely referred to as important actions or decisions affecting long-term consequences. To illustrate, people would pronounce “commitment to marriage”, “commitment to improve customer loyalty and satisfaction”, or “commitment to pursue a degree” while on the contrary, motivation is widely termed as having trivial or short-term affects, for instance “getting motivated to finish off the day’s house chores”, “motivated to go to the dentist” or “motivated to complete homework”. Indeed, as commitment is involved, so does motivation, appearing and disappearing along the way as levels of commitment increases/decreases. For instance, a person may be committed to pursue a business start-up, causing high levels of motivation to work hard, but daily behavior and activities would also be formed by other sources of motivation (e.g. needs, values, incentives) that interfere, which may result in the long-term commitment for a moment seems less prominent. Nonetheless, commitment may serve as a powerful basis of motivation which may often lead to *persistence* to the given course of action (Meyer, Becker, & Vanderberghe, 2004). And more interestingly, they deliberated; this power (commitment’s force) may also cause one to persist in the course of action *even when opposing forces exist*. This noticeable overlapping of purpose and implications of both concepts of motivation and commitment brought the researchers to understand, predict and influence behavior, in particular workplace behavior. However, the same overlapping functions of both concepts have led to the recent argument by Meyer et al. (2004) who warrant a clear cut explanation on how commitment and motivation are both related, resulting in an attempt to integrate both concepts into one comprehensive model. Their integrated model excitingly proposes the positioning of commitment in the motivated mindset; that commitment is part of a more general motivational process and is distinguishable from other components within this process (see Figure 3).
“Are Successful Entrepreneurs Committed or motivated?”

Figure 3: An integrated model of employee commitment and motivation (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004, p. 998).

The integrated model is based on Locke’s (1997) model (Figure 2), and with minor modifications, Locke’s widely applied model was incorporated within a broader scope of the integrated model and is depicted by the boxes without shading. Key concepts that are added by Meyer’s team (2004) are shaded while relationships are based on theory and research findings. The concepts of goal regulation, commitment to social foci, goal commitment, and the bases of commitment were introduced (and partly modified) into Locke’s (1997) model of the motivation process. Apart from this, an important distinction between nondiscretionary and discretionary behavior was addressed. Table 1 summarizes the integrated model.

Table 1: Summary of the constructs in the Integrated Model of Employee Motivation and Commitment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-discretionary behavior</td>
<td>Behavior which is specified or implied by the goal itself. E.g. make 10% more sales this week, conduct 20 phone calls per hour, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discretionary behavior</td>
<td>Is unspecified, and may take up various forms. E.g. voluntarily sharing knowledge and information to help others achieve their goals, putting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>-------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>extraordinary effort</td>
<td>extraordinary effort into ensuring that one is pardoned after failure, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal mechanisms</td>
<td>Direction, effort, persistence, and task strategies directly affect nondiscretionary behavior and discretionary behavior. Are internal processes (e.g. intentions), that immediately precede motivated behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal moderators</td>
<td>Ability, feedback and task clarity moderates behavior, as well as affecting actual performance to certain degrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal regulation</td>
<td>Based on self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci &amp; Ryan 1985; Ryan &amp; Deci, 2000) and regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997, 1998), goal regulation is defined as “a motivational mindset reflecting the reasons for, and purpose of, a course of action being contemplated in process” (Meyer, Becker, &amp; Vanderberghe, 2004, p. 998). In line with SDT, this definition suggests that goal regulation includes an assessment of the reasons for, or ‘locus of causality’ of a course of action. So, perceived locus of causality (see Figure 2) means an individual’s beliefs on why he/she is pursuing the goal (more on SDT in the following section).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitments to social foci</td>
<td>Multiple workplace commitments that influences employee behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal commitment</td>
<td>The mindset of an individual involved in pursuing a goal because he/she wants to (affective commitment), ought to (normative commitment) or must (continuance commitment).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bases of commitment</td>
<td>The factors believed to influence the development of employee commitment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In short, the Integrated Model on Employee Motivation and Commitment strengthens both motivation and commitment literatures by “integrating the best and most current elements of both into a single theory” (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004, p. 1004), and by suggesting new directions through which the understanding of human behavior in the workplace may be advanced. Meyer and colleagues’ work (2004) then led to a fertile empirical finding by Battistelli and team (2013) where the Integrated Model on Employee Motivation and Commitment was supported. More specifically, their work illustrates “the fundamental mediation role of both autonomous and controlled motivation in determining the relationships between organizational commitment and behavioral outcomes” (Battistelli, et al., 2013, p. 40). All in all, these seminal works and historical review of literatures on both commitment and motivation from an OB perspective may contribute to the shallow understanding of i) what commitment is, exactly, to the entrepreneur? ii) how commitment is developed in the entrepreneur? and ii) how is commitment distinct from motivation in an entrepreneurial context? The concluding section elucidates.
**Conclusion: A Look Forward**

The vast literature on the psychology of commitment allows researchers to test models of commitment in their own fields. In the business and management literature, particularly in the OB field, much has been written on how commitment affects an individual in an organization, and thus influences the performance of the organization. In general, psychologists view commitment as the mechanism that binds an individual to his behavioral acts, relying much on perseverance with a decision. A popular understanding is that commitment happens only through behavior. Commitment consists of three components; affective, normative and continuance commitment, reflecting the desire, the obligation, and/or the need to maintain membership in the organization. Most researches look at tenure (or turnover) rates, job-related performance or performance of the organization as the main variables affected by organizational commitment.

Research on commitment in the entrepreneurship literature, however, is still in short supply. Although by now the role of commitment in the entrepreneurial process is widely acknowledged as one of the most important factors influencing performance and growth, efforts to truly understand what makes one entrepreneurially committed is still very much welcomed. Indeed there are studies already looking into this, but these studies are limited in the sense that they focus on the pre-entrepreneur and the nascent stages in entrepreneurship. As such, works on identifying the antecedents and consequences of commitment in already successful entrepreneurs are very much anticipated. Without a doubt, much can be learnt from entrepreneurs who have survived and wiggled through the venture life cycle stages and from the wholesomeness of their experiences, especially when it comes to staying persevered and determined even during the toughest of times.

The unique characteristic of motivation entwined in the concept of commitment should be further investigated, suggesting new theoretical grounds to be explored, in particular within the phenomenological experiences of the entrepreneur himself. Seeing that commitment is to a certain extent, a subset of motivation, discussions on entrepreneurial commitment would unavoidably lead to discussions on motivation, and whether the modeled association of motivation and commitment holds true in the notion of entrepreneurship, needs to be further clarified. As such, the authors put forward a conceptualized model of Entrepreneurial Commitment (EC); connecting EC to its antecedents (Affective, Normative and Continuous commitments), and to its behavioral outcome (Entrepreneurial Performance). The authors propose Motivation as playing a mediating role in this process (see Figure 4).

![Figure 4: Conceptualizing Entrepreneurial Commitment](image-url)
To conclude, the role commitment plays in the entrepreneurial process is incontestable. Even so, in entrepreneurship research, there is still a generous area for exploration and investigation on how commitment develops in the entrepreneur, specifically on what makes a successful entrepreneur committed to his goals. As the phenomenon of commitment (and motivation) involves a substantial understanding of the psychological mind set of the entrepreneur himself/herself, and deeply rooted as combined forces, researchers aiming to explore commitment are highly advised to opt for a person-centered approach and a well-suited methodology to work with. In this light, our modest review and proposed model may lead to more fertile grounds of research on commitment and motivation in the entrepreneur.

References


“Are Successful Entrepreneurs Committed or motivated?”


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