

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

**A Multidimensional View of Public Sector Employee Commitment and
Willingness to Support Productivity Improvement Strategies:
A Comparative Study of Public Employees at the Managerial-Level between
the United States and South Korea**

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This study argues that previous examinations of the concept of organizational commitment do not tell the whole story about individual performance and productivity. In this regard, this study presents a multidimensional view of employee commitment. It examines commitment as manifested in three ways: commitment to supervisor, commitment to managerial-level group, and commitment to organization.

This study compares the perceptions of American middle level managers with those of Korean managers at the same level. The main purpose of this study is to examine how different dimensions of employee commitment rooted in two distinctive bureaucratic cultures (The U.S. and South Korea) can affect a public sector official's willingness to support productivity strategies in a turbulent environment and to further explore how individual foci of employee commitment are differentially related to employees' willingness for three types of productivity improvement strategies: organizational performance-driven, group performance-driven, and individual performance-driven strategies. In addition, this study also explores how these different types of employee

commitment differentially affect key dependent variables such as desire to remain with the organization, extra-role behavior, and turnover intent.

The study results indicate that the major factor affecting an employee's willingness to support productivity improvement strategies is the commitment to the supervisor in the U.S., while the commitment to the managerial-level group is the major factor in Korea. Furthermore, three dimensions of employee commitment are differentially associated with other key dependent variables in both countries.

More importantly, three dimensions of employee commitment are connected to employees' willingness to support productivity improvement strategies only when employees believe that their supervisor, organization, or managerial-level group is also committed to productivity improvement. This result illustrates why committed people at all levels are the key to improving productivity in organizations.

Based on these findings, this study points out that top management support and leadership, along with open communications, helps to connect employee commitment to performance and productivity in both countries. Finally, the theoretical implications of this research demonstrates the utility of distinguishing among individual foci of commitment to explain variance in key dependent variables above and beyond that is explained by commitment to organizations.