
Even if the Tower Is “Ivory,” It Isn’t “White:” Understanding the Consequences of Faculty Cynicism

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Prompted by a seemingly growing level of cynicism within academia, on the part of Academy of Management members in particular, I developed a new measure of cynicism and investigated a previously untested structural model in which cynicism is related in sequence to organizational identification, affective commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Data were obtained from 379 faculty members who were participants in the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting. Structural equation modeling was used to represent and test the hypothesized latent structure of the respective constructs, as well as the proposed structural paths between constructs. Support was found for the convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs underlying the structural model and for the network of proposed relationships. The implications of these findings for management education and learning, as well as avenues for future research, are discussed.

“The power of accurate observation is commonly called cynicism by those who have not got it.”

—George Bernard Shaw,
Irish playwright (1856–1950)

The genesis of this study lies in my own personal puzzlement over what I sense is a growing level of

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cynicism about the current state of the academy (lower case “a”). It was inspired by the simple observation that the sanguine “academic groves” to which I had been drawn so many years ago had long since become a high-stakes proposition euphemistically known as the “higher education industry.” Whereas my puzzlement was initially just a lingering thought, it grew deeper after attending various presentations at the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting in New Orleans, and after engaging in follow-up conversations with colleagues who were likewise perplexed by the changing academic landscape. The heightened cynicism expressed by these colleagues regarding the contemporary tenor and direction of the academy was, at times, quite stark. Without qualification, all agreed that over the past 2 decades there had been a major shift in the tectonic plates underlying our profession. For many, it was evident that life within the academy had failed to live up to the grand ideals that had initially attracted them to our common endeavor. The academy they had once envisioned joining—a collegium of students and faculty working and learning together—now seemed more akin to 19th-century academic life as

portrayed in Newman's *Idea of a University* (1873) than to present-day reality. Indeed, Veblen's (1918) vision of a university as a community of scholars and students engaged in a search for truth does seem a quaint reminder of a long-lost innocence.

Given the level of cynicism I heard expressed at the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting, I wondered on my return trip home from New Orleans about the possible effects of my colleagues' disillusionment on their professional lives and, by extension, on their universities' educational missions. To the degree that increased cynicism leads to a challenging of ideas, pedagogies, and established methods, and to the degree that innovative ideas are developed in response, universities and higher education in general stand to gain. On the downside, however, should escalating cynicism lead to poorer teaching (either in the sense of less preparation or enthusiasm) or to diminished involvement in academic programs and research, our students as well as our universities and profession stand to suffer.

The core of the seemingly heightened cynicism that I heard my colleagues express appeared to center on what was generally perceived as a gaping contradiction between the professed ideals and the actual reality of contemporary university life. In various guises, this contradiction found voice in what many saw as a basic disconnect between their university's publicly stated aims and the day-to-day reality wherein form outweighs substance. From what I was able to further discern, the essence of this cynicism rested on various bases—some old, some new. With respect to the old, for instance, all readily acknowledged, but begrudgingly accepted, the lengths to which some universities go to succeed in intercollegiate sports: bogus courses and majors, "academic centers for athletes," and falsifying grades. In discussing such instances, one commentator has succinctly noted that, all too often, "uniforms and sneakers take precedent over caps and gowns" (Rozin, 2004: D12).

Other sources of voiced cynicism, however, are relatively recent in origin. As universities have adopted a more businesslike orientation, they have also acquired some of the same trappings that have given rise to increased cynicism in both the sports world and the private sector. After initially embracing the sports model of school rankings to drive their marketing efforts, university administrators are now beginning to recognize what they could have learned from their own faculty. External pressure exerted by the annual rankings of "America's Best Colleges," published in magazines such as *U.S. News and World Report*, and epitomized in the MBA program ratings sponsored

by *BusinessWeek* and *The Financial Times* represent an environmental threat to a university's professional autonomy. This threat contributes to a coercive isomorphism across institutions, as one university after another acquiesces to ranking criteria that run counter to the professional values and independence of their faculties (DeAngelo, DeAngelo, & Zimmerman, 2005). The clash resulting from placing fad and fashion over academic substance is a relatively new, but growing, source of increased faculty cynicism (Kirp, 2003).

Given such bases for heightened cynicism, and others that were mentioned in passing—such as the increasing disparity between top pay for university presidents and the average pay of the professorate, selling of courses (or as some colleagues said, "the selling of degrees") on the Internet, the push for professional schools to be self-supporting, the growing pressure on business-school faculty to obtain external dollars, the rise of the politically correct university, and the increased need for public universities to behave like private colleges (Zemsky, Wegner, & Massy, 2005)—it is perhaps not surprising that the colleagues I spoke with at the 2004 Academy Meeting expressed cynicism both in their formal presentations and in our informal conversations about the values that are reshaping academia. It is likewise no surprise that, in general, faculty have come to question the effectiveness of top university administrators and, in turn, the attitudes of university administrators toward faculty have become increasingly sulfurous (e.g., see, Greenberg, 2002). The standard brief of faculty and administrators against one another has long been established (Glottzbach, 2001). From a faculty point-of-view, administrators are high-handed and arbitrary, too busy to include faculty in decision making, seduced by antiacademic values, and out-of-touch with the realities of a university's real mission. For their part, administrators "give as good as they get," seeing faculty as infantile, selfish, self-indulgent, parochial, and unappreciative of the easy life they live. Wherever the truth lies—likely somewhere in-between—as Birnbaum (1999) has shown, university administrators cannot establish confidence in their leadership and engender faculty support unless they nurture close ties with their faculties. To do so, however, requires that they address the issue of increased faculty cynicism. Whatever may be said for the impact of a winning football team on a university's prominence, the achievements of a university's faculty, more than any other factor, determine its quality. In this sense, a university's most important internal constituency is its faculty (Duderstadt, 2001). It is, thus, critical for the success of university edu-

cation to plumb the nature of faculty cynicism within the academic realm.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Accordingly, my purpose in conducting this study was to gain insights into the effects of the seemingly heightened level of cynicism expressed by the colleagues I spoke with at the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting. In brief, I hoped to explore a question I pondered upon leaving New Orleans: "What, if any, are the consequences of my colleagues' cynicism on their professional lives and, by implication, of their universities' educational mission?" Whereas cynicism has been the focus of attention in other venues, no one to my knowledge has empirically explored its possible effects on university faculty, in general, and, more specifically, among Academy of Management program participants. Thus, to find an answer to my question, and address my own puzzlement about the dynamics of my colleagues' cynicism, I sought to move beyond a qualitative narrative and collect my own primary data. The present study is the result of that effort. It investigates a previously untested structural model in which cynicism is related in train to organizational identification, affective commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Doing so required that I first develop and validate a measure of cynicism appropriate to the task at hand. I then faced the challenge of drawing on the broader workplace literature to elaborate a set of hypotheses to guide my research and, thus, build upon the personal reflection that had prompted my puzzlement. This melding of reflection and quantitative methods lends a dual-tenor to the material that follows, and represents an example of "triangulation in action" (Jick, 1979).

Given that my initial interest was sparked at the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting, I took as my target population all those attendees who were identified as participants in the meeting's published program. In doing so, I restricted my sampling frame to those program participants who held terminal degrees and were affiliated with an educational institution located in the United States. These restrictions were deemed necessary to control for possible confounds due to differences in educational experience and national and societal differences in educational systems and cultural norms.

CYNICISM AS A CONSTRUCT

Past social-science researchers have viewed cynicism as existing in various forms, ranging from

personality cynicism to social-institutional cynicism, to organizational-change cynicism. As a consequence, cynicism has no universally accepted definition (Andersson, 1996). In the present instance, following the ancient Greek philosophy developed by Antisthene (485–380 BCE), *cynicism* was defined as an attitude resulting from a critical appraisal of the motives, actions, and values of one's employing organization (i.e., university). As used here, the word *critical* is not meant to denote a readiness to find fault, but rather to imply careful evaluation and judgment. Hence, by this definition, cynicism is taken to be an evaluative judgment stemming from an individual's employment experiences. Moreover, as with other attitudinal phenomena, it is viewed as a subjectively based construct (variable) susceptible to the perceptual biases common to other attitudes. Important for the behavioral implications of the present study is the realization, following Thomas's theorem (Merton, 1995), that it matters little whether an individual's cynicism is grounded in fact, for it be real in its consequences. Individuals react to what they define as real, whether their perceptions are accurate or inaccurate. Finally, implicit in this definition is the notion that cynicism exists over a psychological continuum, reflecting various degrees of endorsement, with no theoretical reason to believe that this continuum is discontinuous. As Dean, Brandes, and Dharwadkar (1998: 346–347) note, "[T]he world is not divided into cynics and non-cynics," but occupied by individuals whose attitudes are common throughout the general non-clinical population.

Other researchers have used the term *cynicism* pejoratively to describe a jaded or disparaging state. In doing so, they have confused cynicism with what it may lead to. The above definition views cynicism in its purest form, reflecting careful evaluation and judgment. As such, it avoids necessarily linking cynicism with negative implications for organizational functioning (cf. Pugh, Sharlicki, & Passell, 2003: 203). Indeed, careful evaluation and judgment are generally encouraged for the operational success of both individuals and organizations. As suggested supra, the resulting appraisal may yield varying degrees of endorsement that reflect different levels of cynicism. Moreover, an unprepossessed definition recognizes that organizational reality is socially constructed and that the same referents may be seen quite differently depending upon an individual's perspective (Dean, 1995). Further, within an organizational context, such a definition avoids the promanagement bias of thinking that discontented employees are necessarily "at fault," when, in fact,

they may have accurately assessed their employing organizations' motives, actions, and values. This said, cynicism should not be confused with "skepticism." As is popularly conceived, "skepticism stems from an intellectual doubt about knowledge" (Fortier, 2003: 4). Whereas skepticism is anchored in doubt, cynicism (as construed in the present application) is based on critical thinking. Both skepticism and cynicism can be the basis for appropriate responses to work and life. Likewise, cynicism should not be confused with "trust." The latter is a belief in the honesty and reliability of others. In this sense, trust represents an expectation about a future state and, when violated, may be a strong predictor of cynicism (Thompson, Bailey, Joseph, Worley, & Williams, 1999).

CONCEPTUAL SCHEME

In an effort to understand the dynamics of the cynicism I had heard expressed at the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting, I first reviewed the literature on cynicism in its various forms (for a summary of the relevant literature, see Abraham, 2004). Whereas there is currently no established model of cynicism and its consequences, previous research has demonstrated the importance of cynicism in predicting various individual-level outcomes. Drawing on both past theory and research, it was possible to identify relevant variables and propose the conceptual scheme presented in Figure 1. Given the sparseness of prior research documenting the consequences of cynicism in the academic arena, this scheme is necessarily exploratory. It posits a causal sequence wherein cynicism has a direct effect on organizational identification, which, in turn, is related to affective commitment. As an outcome of affective commitment, job satisfaction is subsequently linked to turnover intentions. I should emphasize from the start that these variables were selected to capture a sense of the broad pool of potential consequences likely associated with cynicism in

an academic setting rather than to test a fully specified model.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

As indicated in Figure 1 and outlined above, organizational identification is considered a direct function of cynicism. Generally conceived, *organizational identification* is "a specific form of social identification in which people define themselves in terms of their membership in a particular organization" (Mael & Ashforth, 1995: 311–312). To the extent that one shares the successes and failures of an organization, and these successes and failures reflect upon the self, organizational identification is recognized as having important implications for one's well-being, as well as for a focal organization's effectiveness. With respect to individual well-being, as described by Mael and Ashforth (1992: 104), organizational identification elicits a sense of oneness with an organization, wherein individuals see themselves as psychologically intertwined with an organization's fate. By extension, the more individuals identify with an organization, the more likely they are to ascribe to themselves characteristics that are typical of the organization. As relates to an organization's effectiveness, research indicates that to the extent individuals identify with an organization they will take the organization's perspective and act in its best interests (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Moreover, as expressed by Haslam (2001: 52), when individuals identify strongly with an organization, they "may more readily interpret the world, and their own place within it, in a manner consistent with that organization's values, ideology and culture." Haslam, Postmes, and Ellemers (2003: 365) go so far as to argue that organizational identification makes organizational life possible, in that, in its absence, "there can be no effective organizational communication, no heedful interrelating, no meaningful planning, no leadership."

With regard to the direct effect of cynicism on

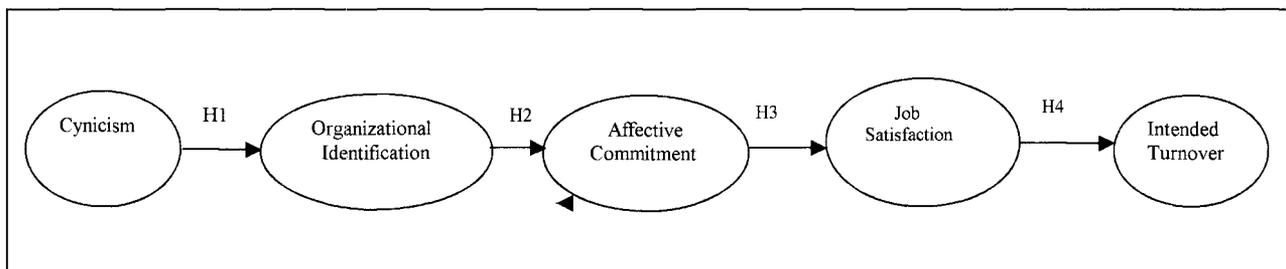


FIGURE 1
Conceptual Scheme

organizational identification posited in Figure 1, Bartel (2001: 379) has shown that whereas identification processes operate in everyday work contexts, they are "not static but can increase and decrease in strength as a result of new experiences." To the degree that a higher level of cynicism results as a consequence of an experience that casts doubt on the motives, actions, and values of one's employing organization and, thereby, diminishes one's willingness to define oneself in terms of one's organizational membership, it is logical to anticipate lower levels of organizational identification. This potential relationship, however, has yet to be investigated. In their test of an expanded model of organizational identification, Kreiner and Ashforth (2004) treat *societal cynicism toward institutions* as an antecedent of identification, but advance no hypothesis with respect to work-related cynicism. The negative correlation ($-.25$) they report between higher levels of *societal cynicism* and organizational identification is, nonetheless, theoretically consistent with the logic underlying Figure 1. The present study is, therefore, the first to explore a direct link between work-related cynicism and organizational identification. Thus, among survey respondents,

Hypothesis 1: Higher levels of cynicism will be negatively related to the strength of respondents' organizational identification.

As noted by Mael and Ashforth (2001), commitment is one of the many benefits of organizational identification. Indeed, they contend that commitment is the most direct expression of identification. Their contention is consistent with the Meyer, Becker, and Vandenberghe (2004) integrative model of commitment and motivation, which includes organizational identification as a basic mechanism leading to affective commitment. This relationship is modeled in Figure 1, wherein organizational identification is hypothesized to be directly predictive of respondents' affective commitment. Building on past theory and research, higher levels of organizational identification should increase the extent to which individuals commit to an organization. As defined here, *affective commitment* refers an individual's emotional attachment to and engagement in an employing organization. It is characterized by a strong belief in and an acceptance of an organization's goals and a willingness to exert considerable effort on the organization's behalf (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). With a strong desire to see their organizations succeed, committed employees internalize work-related problems as their own and show a willingness to exceed duty's call.

This suggests that because identification elicits a sense of oneness with an organization, wherein individuals see themselves as psychologically intertwined with their organization's fate, it is plausible to consider a theoretical model in which affective commitment, with its characteristic emotional attachment and engagement, is directly influenced by the extent to which individuals identify with their employing organization. Thus, among survey respondents,

Hypothesis 2: Higher levels of organizational identification will be positively related to the strength of respondents' affective commitment.

As an aside, it perhaps should be noted that early work incorporated varying degrees of overlap in the use of the terms *organizational identification* and *organizational commitment*. Addressing this issue, Mael and Ashforth (1992) point out that organizational identification has a cognitive, self-definitional component that distinguishes it from constructs such as affective commitment and loyalty, which refer to affective ties between an individual and an organization. Further, commitment is viewed as an attitude toward an organization, whereas identification is seen as a deeper and more existential connection, eliciting a sense of oneness with an organization (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004). Corroborating this conceptual distinction, van Kippenberg (2000) reports findings from a confirmatory factor analysis that show identification, as substantiated using Mael and Ashforth's organizational identification instrument, is empirically distinguishable from affective commitment, as assessed with Allen and Meyer's (1990) Affective Commitment Scale. Moreover, a recent meta-analysis by Riketta (2005) indicates that the two concepts have different bases and consequences, further suggesting that they are distinct psychological constructs.

Figure 1 also posits a direct link between affective commitment and job satisfaction. In support of this relationship, two recent meta-analyses, Meyer et al. (2002) and Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005), report finding the strongest correlation involving affective commitment to be with overall job satisfaction ($\rho = .63-.65$). *Job satisfaction* may be viewed as a general attitude reflecting one's overall global feeling about one's job. It follows from the definition of affective commitment that an absence of emotional attachment and active engagement in achieving an organization's goals may leave employees feeling discontented with their work environment, leading to decreased job satisfaction and, consequently, an increased desire to seek employment elsewhere (Buchanan,

2004). To the extent that decreased levels of affective commitment erode job satisfaction, we may expect that the perceived desirability of turning over ("pulling up stakes") and migrating to avoid participating in a dissatisfying work situation would increase. Accordingly, Figure 1 also posits a direct satisfaction → intended turnover path. Supporting this logic, job satisfaction is among the most frequently cited predictors of both intended and actual turnover, with the estimated effect of job satisfaction on turnover intentions ranging from $-.64$ to $-.75$ (Hom & Kinicki, 2001). Thus, among survey respondents,

Hypothesis 3: Higher levels of affective commitment will be positively related to the strength of respondents' job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Lower levels of job satisfaction will be positively related to respondents' intent to turn over.

METHOD

Participants and Data-Collection Procedures

Given my interest in the extent to which the cynicism expressed by colleagues I spoke with at the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting might be more broadly shared by all those on the program, the sample for this study (which was the population universe) consisted of the 2,640 U.S.-based terminally qualified faculty members who were listed as program participants. For reasons explained above, I purposefully restricted the sampling frame to those program participants holding terminal degrees and current affiliations with an educational institution located in the United States. With these restrictions in mind, and the assistance of the Academy's home office, I was able to determine the exact number of sampling units comprising the target population (Nancy Urbanowicz, personal communication, September 27, 2004).

Data for hypothesis testing were collected through an on-line Internet survey. A systematic-random sampling procedure was employed, wherein I selected every third name in the printed program's alphabetized Participant Index. The index lists participant names and their e-mail addresses. Participants whose e-mail addresses ended in a non-U.S. extension or commercial domain name (e.g., .com or .org) were omitted from the sampling frame. Assuming that the alphabetized order of the participants' last names is unrelated to the focal variables, systematic-random sampling results in a more uniform distribution of demographic attributes across respondents than

does simple-random sampling and, thus, leads to greater sampling reproducibility (Hart, 1999). The result was an initial sampling frame of 1,330 program participants affiliated with 347 universities.

A two-stage sampling plan incorporating recommended principles for conducting web surveys was used in data collection (Dillman, Tortora, & Bowker, 1998). Targeted respondents were sent an individually addressed cover letter via e-mail, requesting their participation in the study. The cover letter stated the study's general purpose and that all responses would be anonymous. Recipients were told they had been selected to participate in the study as part of a random sample of individuals who were active in the Academy of Management. The e-mail contained a World Wide Web link to the "Faculty Attitude Job Survey," which could be completed in a point-and-click manner. One week after the initial e-mail posting, the targeted respondents were sent a follow-up reminder, once again requesting their participation. The survey was deactivated 10 days later. In addition to assessing the study's focal variables, the survey requested demographic information pertaining to respondents' chronological age; gender; education level; academic rank; tenure with current university; years with highest degree; size of student body; tenure status; nature of university (public, private, denominational, nondenominational); race/ethnicity; and primary Academy of Management Division membership. To capture unsuspected information, space was provided for open-ended comments. To complete the study, respondents were instructed to click a button labeled "Submit."

Of the 1,330 survey links sent out, 130 were undeliverable. Of this number, all but one was ultimately reposted. Exactly 326 survey responses were received in reply to my initial e-mail, with 448 additional responses being returned in answer to my follow-up elicitation. An additional 62 responses were received from individuals who fell outside the intended sampling frame for various reasons (e.g., 25 held faculty positions but were not yet terminally qualified; 16 were located at non-U.S. universities; three were no longer in academe; two were retired). Of the 1,330 surveys posted, replies were received from 510 respondents, yielding a 38% return rate. Setting aside the 62 ineligible responses that fell outside the intended sampling frame, and 69 surveys that were more than 5% incomplete, the final sample used for the following analysis thus consisted of 379 faculty respondents, or 29.4% $([510 - 62 - 69] / 1,330)$ of the effective base sample.

The final sample was predominantly male (62.3%) and Caucasian (81.5%), with an average

age of 46.11 years ($SD = 10.05$). Respondents' average tenure with their current university was 9.05 years ($SD = 8.49$), and the average number of years since receiving their highest degree was 13.41 ($SD = 10.20$). A majority (58.8%) was tenured. Roughly equal percentages reported being in the three principal academic ranks (34.6% assistant professor, 25.6% associate professor, and 36.7% full professor). A more complete description of the final sample, including a breakdown by primary Academy of Management division affiliation, is presented in Table 1.

To meet computational requirements for complete data and to maintain a favorable ratio of respondents to the number of estimated parameters in the ensuing analyses, I used mean imputation to adjust for the small number of otherwise missing values (Roth & Switzer, 1999). Bentler and Chou (1987) recommend a minimum ratio of 5:1 between sample size and the number of parameters to be estimated. For this study, the sample-to-parameters ratio (379/64) was 5.8 and, thus, deemed sufficient for obtaining accurate parameter estimates and appropriate standard errors of sample statistics. Data screening was undertaken to check for out-of-range values and to verify that there were no outlying data points. Sample-to-population comparisons were not possible given an absence of archival data. Chi-square comparisons between early and late respondents for chronological age, education level, academic rank, gender, length of service with current university, number of years since awarding of highest degree, size of university student body, tenure status, institutional affiliation (private or public), and race/ethnicity yielded only one significant difference: gender ($p < .05$). A larger proportion of female than male respondents returned the survey late. Given that there is a 40.13% chance of finding one or more significant ($p < .05$) differences in ten tests (<http://home.clara.net/sisa/bonfer.htm>), these results provide some evidence against the confounding of results due to nonresponse error (Rogelberg & Luong, 1998).

Cynicism Measure Development

Systematic item-generation procedures are crucial in constructing measures that yield reliable and content-valid scores. Whereas there are existing measures of work-related cynicism, none has been derived following clearly articulated and documented validation procedures. Thus, a three-phase process was followed in developing a cynicism measure that would yield meaningful scores. In the initial phase, a pool of 31 candidate items was generated to represent the full range of the cynicism content domain. Items were devised follow-

ing an extensive review of the relevant literature, discussions with potential survey respondents, evaluation of existing cynicism measures, and personal experience. Attention was directed at avoiding overlap between items as well as redundancy with other concepts. Items were worded based on the notion that employees view the actions of an organization's general representatives (e.g., university officials) as the actions of the organization itself. Following advice from others working with cynicism as a latent (unobservable) construct, items were phrased in both a positive and negative direction. On the one hand, there is a concern that negative wording has the potential to be inflammatory (Bateman, Sakano, & Fujita, 1992). On the other, it has been suggested that it is important that items tapping cynicism be negatively worded as "positive wording does not resonate with cynics" (Robert J. Vance, personal communication, March 25, 2004). Five knowledgeable judges with advanced training in psychometric theory, acting alone, served as an expert review panel to assess the items for content relevance and coverage. All the judges were members of the academic community, thus, further enhancing their standing as content-validity experts (Vogt, King, & King, 2004). Care was taken to clearly delineate the focal content domain by explicitly defining cynicism as specified above. To safeguard against unintended item interpretations and related complications, judges were asked to eliminate or rephrase any items that were redundant, offensive, ambiguous, or poorly worded. A total of 13 items were retained on the basis of interpretability and being evaluated by all five judges as best reflecting the demarcated content domain. One new item was generated based on the judges' comments.

In Phase 2, the 14 items from Phase 1 were resubmitted to the panel of judges for further purification. Judges were asked to indicate whether they "Agreed," "Disagreed," or were "Uncertain" as to the relevance and representativeness of each item vis-à-vis the focal content domain. Following standard recommendations, items were retained for further testing if they were endorsed by 80% of the judges as a content valid indicator of cynicism (Miller, 1997: 63). Based on this feedback, 12 items were selected for pilot testing to uncover any further difficulties in item wording or response options. Six of these items were negatively phrased and six positively phrased. Three items were slightly edited to ensure that their wording was sufficiently broad to be applicable to widely divergent respondent samples and, thus, suitable for use in future research with other occupations/settings (and, as will be discussed anon, other targets).

TABLE 1
Sample Characteristics

Age	Percent	Years with highest degree	Percent
Under 30	1.80	0 to 9	44.00
30 to 39	26.10	10 to 19	27.40
40 to 49	30.60	20 to 29	15.80
50 to 59	28.70	30 to 39	7.60
60 or over	9.00	40 or over	2.00
No response	3.70	No response	2.90
Academic rank		Size of university's student body	
Full professor	36.70	Less than 4,999	12.40
Associate professor	25.60	5,000 to 9,999	13.10
Assistant professor	34.60	10,000 to 14,999	14.80
Instructor/Lecturer	1.80	15,000 to 19,999	10.30
No response	1.30	20,000 to 24,999	13.50
		25,000 to 29,999	11.30
		Over 30,000	23.40
Years with current university		Nature of university	
0 to 9	63.60	Public	68.80
10 to 19	21.40	Private non-denominational	17.70
20 to 29	13.40	Private denominational	12.10
30 to 39	.04	"For-profit" proprietary	.01
40 or over	.01	No response	.01
No response	2.40		
Tenure status		Primary AOM division affiliation	
Tenured	58.80	Organizational Behavior	22.4
Not yet tenured	39.60	Business Policy & Strategy	13.5
Fixed term tenured	1.60	Human Resources	8.20
		Organization & Management Theory	6.50
		Social Issues in Management	4.50
Race/ethnicity		International Management	4.20
Caucasian	81.50	Entrepreneurship	4.00
African-American	5.00	Org. Comm. & Information Systems	3.20
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.00	Conflict Management	2.90
Hispanic	2.40	Technology & Innovation Management	2.90
American Indian	.50	Health Care Management	2.60
Other	2.40	Careers	2.30
No response	3.20	Management Education & Development	2.30
		Organizations & the Natural Environment	.01
Gender		Managerial & Organizational Cognition	1.30
Male	62.30	Organization Development & Change	1.60
Female	36.40	Gender & Diversity	2.10
No response	1.30	Primary AOM Division Affiliation	
		Operations Management	1.60
		Management History	1.30
		Research Methods	1.30
		Critical Management	.01
		Management Consulting	.01
		Management Spirituality & Religion	.01
		Not a member	3.40
		No response	3.70

Note. Not all percentages total 100 due to rounding. $n = 379$.

In Phase 3, the 12 surviving items were pilot-tested with a sample of 151 professional and executive masters of business administration students, all of whom were employed full time. The students were provided with these instructions: "Please read the following statements and indicate the degree to which each statement applies to your company." Items were likewise worded to refer to the respondents' "company." Responses were on a 5-point continuum (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Given that the recommended minimum 5:1 subject-to-item ratio (Gorsuch, 1983: 332) was met, a principal-axis factor analysis was conducted to assess the underlying structure of the 12 items. The original solution yielded a single factor (eigenvalue = 6.83) that accounted for over 56% of the variance. The mean factor loading for the 12 items was 0.72, demonstrating their homogeneity. A mean inter-item correlation of 0.52 supported the presence of a unidimensional factor structure and suggested that the target construct was systematically and comprehensively measured. Examination of the item standard deviations revealed that restriction of range was not a concern. To estimate the extent to which item scores were free of measurement error (i.e., reliable), I computed both Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alpha (α) and Raykov's (1997) composite reliability for unidimensional measures (ρ_v). Compared to coefficient alpha, composite reliability (which is based on

parameter estimates derived from analyzing the covariance structure of a latent construct's observable indicators) has been shown to yield a more accurate estimate of item reliability in the absence of classical tau-equivalency (i.e., equal true score variance but unequal error variance); when tau-equivalency is present, Raykov's composite reliability equals Cronbach's alpha. In the present application, the item scores displayed high reliability according to both estimators: $\alpha = 0.93$, with a 95% confidence interval of .912 to .946 (Duhachek & Iacobucci, 2004), and $\rho_v = 0.94$, with a 95% confidence interval of .930 to .940 (Raykov, 2002). The minimal difference between the two estimators indicates that the items are, in fact, essentially tau-equivalent and, in the immediate instance, alpha is not a lower bound reliability estimate. Finally, follow-up discussions with pilot-test respondents indicated that the survey instructions and all survey items were interpreted as intended. The 12 items comprising the final cynicism measure, together with their factor loadings, means, and standard deviations are reproduced in Table 2.

Other Measures

Organizational Identification

The extent to which respondents defined themselves in terms of their employing university was

TABLE 2
Factor Loadings, Means, and Standard Deviations for the 12-Item Cynicism Measure

	Item	Factor Loading	Item M	Item SD
1	I have confidence the university will do what's right when interacting with faculty ^R	.78	3.46	1.03
2	I wonder about the real purpose behind university decisions	.74	3.06	1.20
3	There is no doubting the university's integrity ^R	.77	3.62	1.06
4	I have misgivings whether the university is forthright regarding its actions	.80	2.66	1.18
5	I suspect the university is deliberately evasive in things it says	.78	2.58	1.26
6	I am sure university officials can be counted on to put the university's interests ahead of their own self-interests ^R	.58	3.14	1.10
7	I have complete faith in the university's good intentions ^R	.66	3.07	1.19
8	When the university says it is going to do something, I know it will happen ^R	.61	2.91	1.30
9	I am confident that the university's public rhetoric reflects its actual intentions ^R	.74	2.6	1.17
10	I marvel at the disparity between reality and the university's claims	.84	2.44	1.15
11	I've question whether university officials are really interested in addressing the problems facing the university.	.66	2.62	1.26
12	I've suspected that the university's public statements reflect more spin than reality	.77	2.72	1.21
	Eigenvalue	6.83		
	% item variance explained	53.22		
	Coefficients α/ρ_v	.93/.94		

Note. $n = 151$. R = Reverse-coded item. Item 8 was adapted from Brandes, Dharwadkar, and Dean (1999).

gauged with Mael and Ashforth's (1992) 6-item organizational identification measure. Haslam (2001: 366) states that because of its ease of use and association with Mael and Ashforth's pioneering work, this is one of the most frequently used measures of organizational identification. Sample items include (a) "When I talk about the university, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'"; (b) "The university's successes are my successes," and (c) "When someone praises the university, it feels like a personal compliment."

Affective Commitment

The extent to which respondents were emotionally attached and engaged in their employing university was tapped with six items developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). I did not use two items from the full 8-item measure because they tap an intent-to-quit factor and would, thus, be confounded with the assessment of turnover intentions. Sample items include (a) "I really feel as if the university's problems are my own;" (b) "I do not feel a strong sense of 'belonging' to the university" (reverse-coded); and (c) "I do not feel like 'part of the family' at the university" (reverse-coded).

Job Satisfaction

Respondents' overall global feeling about their job was instantiated with three items traditionally used for this purpose (e.g., Scarpello & Hayton, 2001). The three items read: (a) "All in all, I am satisfied with my job"; (b) "In general, I am dissatisfied with my job" (reverse-coded); and (c) "Generally speaking, I feel satisfied with my present job."

Turnover Intentions

Intended turnover, defined as the desire to continue (or terminate) employment with one's current university, was represented by three items used in previous research (e.g., Day, Bedeian, & Conte, 1998). The items were: (a) "I intend to be employed with the university 2 years from now" (reverse-coded); (b) "I will probably look for a new job within the year;" and (c) "I hope to have a new job before classes begin in the fall."

Hanisch and Hulin (1990) note that the validity of behavioral intentions as surrogates for actual behavior has been repeatedly demonstrated in a variety of contexts. Accordingly, most withdrawal models have treated intention to quit as the final cognitive variable immediately preceding (and having direct causal impact on) turnover behavior.

As such, intended turnover has been shown to be among the best predictors of eventual turnover, reflecting an individual's desire to stay or leave. Indeed, in their meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover, Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner (2000) found a .38 average population effect size between these two variables.

Controls

Data relating to five demographic variables were collected as possible control variables. It was thought that *length of service with current university* might have a potential effect on cynicism. Studies of police officers and prison guards have shown cynicism (defined as a "hostile, suspicious, and disparaging attitude toward work situations and social interactions") to peak somewhere between 1 month and 4 years' service (Crank, Culbertson, Poole, & Regoli, 1987; Ulmer, 1992: 423). Similarly, based on prior research, it was thought that natural dependent, time-related considerations might be related to job satisfaction (Bedeian, Ferris, & Kacmar, 1992) and turnover intentions (Werbel & Bedeian, 1989). Thus, the effects of *number of years since awarding of highest degree*, *academic rank*, and *chronological age* were also analyzed. Finally, *gender* was included as a study variable based on speculation that men may be more cynical than women (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989: 156).

Length of service with one's current university, number of years since awarding of highest degree, and respondent chronological age were assessed with open-ended questions (e.g., "How many years have you been with your current university?"). Academic rank was coded Professor (= 4), Associate Professor (= 3), Assistant Professor (= 2), and Instructor/Lecturer (= 1). Gender was coded Male = 1 and Female = 2. All other variables were measured using a traditional scoring frame that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), and were coded and summed such that a high score indicates a positive level of agreement.

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Variable means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for all study variables are presented in Table 3. These results indicate that (a) consistent with my expectations, higher levels of cynicism are negatively correlated with organizational identification, affective commitment, and job satisfaction and positively correlated with intended

TABLE 3
Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables

Variables	r									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Cynicism	—									
2 Organizational identification	-.32	—								
3 Affective commitment	-.49	.66	—							
4 Job satisfaction	-.50	.29	.50	—						
5 Intended turnover	.36	-.30	-.54	-.55	—					
6 Years with current university	.10	.05	.08	-.02	-.17	—				
7 Years with highest degree	.06	.01	.08	.01	-.19	.75	—			
8 Academic rank ^a	.06	.01	.07	.04	-.15	.59	.76	—		
9 Chronological age	.08	.07	.09	-.06	-.17	.67	.82	.66	—	
10 Gender ^a	-.04	-.04	-.10	-.08	.08	-.16	-.25	-.14	-.16	—
M	35.34	20.43	21.70	12.01	6.08	9.05	13.41	4.01	46.21	35.51
SD	9.51	4.01	5.45	2.79	3.14	8.49	10.20	0.92	10.05	9.58

Note. $n = 379$ – 356 . Correlations $> |.10|$ are significant, $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed test). Gender was coded 1 = male ($n = 236$); 2 = female ($n = 143$). Academic rank was coded 4 = professor; 3 = associate professor; 2 = assistant professor; 1 = instructor.

^a Point-biserial correlation.

turnover; (b) organizational identification and affective commitment are positively related at a level predicted by previous research (Riketta, 2005); (c) intended turnover is negatively related to organizational identification, affective commitment, and job satisfaction; (d) moderate to strong relations exist between organizational identification, affective commitment, and job satisfaction; and (e) a relative absence of effects between what were considered potential covariates and other study variables, the average absolute correlation being .08, with a range from $-.19$ to $.10$. This latter result suggests that level of reported cynicism is not confounded by differences in academic rank, gender, and various time-related considerations such as years with highest degree. Consequently, these factors were excluded from further analyses, not only to reduce the number of parameters to be estimated and, thus, provide maximum power for the following statistical tests, but because analyses that include unnecessary control variables can yield biased parameter estimates (Becker, 2005). Perhaps indicative of interest in the survey's general topic, 121 respondents (32%) provided written comments in the space provided. Selected comments are quoted in the following Discussion section for illustrative purposes; however, because the survey was completed anonymously, these comments are presented on a nonattributable basis.

Given that a new measure of cynicism was developed for this study, additional information on its psychometric properties is provided. Univariate normal distributions produce skewness (symmetry; S_x) and kurtosis (peakedness; K_x) statistics that equal 0. With $S_{cyn} = .367$ and $K_{cyn} = -.332$, the

frequency distribution of cynicism scores in the present sample is slightly positively skewed (i.e., somewhat bunched up on the low end of the 1–5 response scale) and somewhat flat (i.e., all values on the response scale occurred about equally frequently). Fisher's g_1 (.38) statistic for skewness and g_2 ($-.14$) statistic for kurtosis confirm this interpretation and provide evidence of only slight non-normality (DeCarlo, 1997). Although no limits can be placed on the values of S_x or K_x , neither S_{cyn} nor K_{cyn} exceed accepted levels for skewness (viz., not more than 2.0 or less than -2.0) or kurtosis (viz., around 3.00; Kenney, 1939: 72). Reflecting this relative symmetry in cynicism scores, the mean response for the 12 items comprising the cynicism measure is at the approximate midpoint of its response scale ($35.34/12 = 2.94$; $SD = .17$). This suggests that cynicism is not a rare phenomenon, and provides additional evidence that it warrants further study. Whether this value represents an increase or decrease over past years is impossible to say without historical data. The present results, thus, provide a baseline for future studies.

Data Analysis

Consistent with the approach advocated by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), I conducted my data analysis in two phases to avoid having the meaning (i.e., empirical definitions) of my study variables confounded by the simultaneous estimation of measurement and structural models (Burt, 1976). In the first phase, I performed a confirmatory factor analysis to establish the validity and reliability of my hypothesized measurement model. In the sec-

ond phase, I used structural modeling to evaluate the relations among the constructs comprising the conceptual scheme depicted in Figure 1.

Phase One: Measurement Model Evaluation

I evaluated the fit of the observed data to the model in Figure 1 using the EQS 6.1 structural equation modeling (SEM) program (Bentler, 2004). Structural equation modeling involves the use of a generalized multi-equation framework to specify, estimate, and test hypothesized relations among a set of variables that comprise a theoretical model. In the present application, I modeled the study's five latent constructs as five correlated first-order factors that corresponded to a 12-item cynicism factor, a 6-item organizational identification factor, a 6-item affective commitment factor, a 3-item job satisfaction factor, and a 3-item intended turnover factor. An advantage of SEM is that it can model the relations between latent constructs as error-free indices reflecting the variance shared by multiple item-indicators of the latent constructs. A 30×30 matrix containing the covariances among the latent item-indicators was used as input to separately estimate (a) the effects of the individual indicators used to measure each latent construct (i.e., measurement model), and (b) relations among the latent constructs (i.e., structural model). The covariance between any two constructs measures the extent that a change in one construct is associated with a change in another construct. Because the distributions of several study constructs were asymmetrical (normalized Mardia's coefficient of multivariate kurtosis = 41.62; Mardia, 1970) and, therefore, could bias parameter estimates, I used maximum-likelihood (ML) estimation and requested robust methods appropriate for analyses of non-normal data. Robust methods minimize the effect of non-normal data on standard errors and test statistics, as well as parameter estimates and power evaluations. As with other estimators, ML is based on minimizing the discrepancy between the covariance matrix for a set of measured variables and the covariance matrix implied by a theoretically specified model. I assessed model fit, the extent to which an observed covariance matrix is congruent with an implied covariance matrix, using various goodness-of-fit criteria. A model fits well when there is minimal discrepancy between the observed covariances among a set of measured variables and the covariances among those variables as implied by a target (i.e., specified) model.

Overall Model Fit

In fitting the measurement model, the EQS program converged with no estimation problems. To assess the measurement model's overall goodness-of-fit, I used the Satorra-Bentler (1994) scaled (mean-adjusted) chi-square test because it is recommended for non-normal multivariate data. The observed chi-square value indicated a relatively poor model fit, $S-B_x^2 (395, N = 379) = 744.41, p < .01$, thus, intimating a significant difference between the observed covariance matrix and the covariance matrix implied by the parameters estimated in my specified model. Statistical significance reflects the probability that this difference is due to either an error of approximation (i.e., error due to model misspecification) or an error of estimation (i.e., error due to sampling fluctuation and the misestimation of parameters). Because $S-B_x^2$, as a measure of overall fit, is sensitive to sample size relative to more specialized indices (Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003), I also examined four other goodness-of-fit statistics. First, I computed Boruch and Wolins's (1970) adjusted chi-square ratio (X^2/df). It was selected because it is sensitive to model parsimony. The X^2/df for the observed data is 1.87:1. Schmitt and Bedeian (1982), among others, have considered a 5:1 ratio or less to indicate an acceptable fit. Next, I examined Bentler's (1990) comparative fit index (CFI) and the Bentler-Bonett (1980) non-normed fit index (NNFI), as they are known to be robust to sampling characteristics and relatively invariant to sample size. The CFI and NNFI generally take on values between 0 and 1.0, with values exceeding .90 suggesting an adequate fit among empirically observed covariances and those implied by a specified model. The CFI and NNFI indices for the observed data are .93 and .94, respectively. Finally, I examined the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) because it adjusts for both sample size and degrees of freedom. The RMSEA is a measure of the discrepancy between a model-implied covariance matrix and a covariance matrix based on observed data, with an adjustment for degrees of freedom (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). RMSEA values less than .08 are considered desirable, indicating a reasonable error of approximation. The RMSEA for the observed data is .048, with a 90% confidence interval of .043 to .053. All three adjusted indices thus suggest that the specified model provides a good representation of the observed data.

Item Reliability and Convergent Validity

To further determine how well the specified measurement model fit the observed data, I next examined the item reliability and convergent validity of the individual latent constructs through estimates of composite reliability (Raykov, 1997) and variance extracted (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). These estimates (see Table 4) are based on standardized parameter estimates from the specified measurement model. Indicating that the indicators defining each construct are unidimensional (i.e., congeneric), all composite reliabilities are above the widely accepted .70 cut-off, with narrow confidence intervals (Raykov, 2002). The variance-extracted

statistic estimates the proportion of variance explained by a construct as compared to the variance due to random error. As such, it serves as an estimate of the convergent validity of a latent construct's indicator variables. The cynicism, affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intended turnover constructs all have variance extracted estimates above .50, indicating both good internal consistency and that the variance captured by each construct is larger than the variance due to measurement error (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The organizational identification construct demonstrates acceptable composite reliability (.80), but a less satisfactory variance-extracted estimate (.40). This

TABLE 4
Measurement Properties for Study Constructs

Constructs and indicators	Standardized loading	Composite reliability ($\rho\gamma$) (CI = LO90; HI90)	Variance extracted estimate
Cynicism		.94	.55
Item 1	.589	(.93-.94)	
Item 2	.802		
Item 3	.764		
Item 4	.800		
Item 5	.759		
Item 6	.815		
Item 7	.745		
Item 8	.733		
Item 9	.679		
Item 10	.732		
Item 11	.665		
Item 12	.780		
Organizational identification		.80	.40
Item 1	.640	(.78-.82)	
Item 2	.586		
Item 3	.742		
Item 4	.638		
Item 5	.659		
Item 6	.492		
Affective commitment		.88	.55
Item 1	.629	(.86-.89)	
Item 2	.603		
Item 3	.738		
Item 4	.783		
Item 5	.833		
Item 6	.819		
Job satisfaction		.94	.77
Item 1	.937	(.87-.95)	
Item 2	.919		
Item 3	.776		
Intended turnover		.89	.73
Item 1	.858	(.88-.90)	
Item 2	.878		
Item 3	.821		

Note. All standardized loadings are significant, $p < .05$. CI = Confidence interval.

said, support for the convergent validity of all five latent constructs is offered by their individual item (indicator)-to-construct loadings (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). These can be interpreted as a correlation (ranging from -1.0 to $+1.0$) between an indicator and the variance shared by other indicators of the same latent construct. In the present case, the item-to-construct loadings range from .49 to .94 (the average standardized loading is .74), and their t values range from 8.80 to 28.47 ($p < .05$), indicating that each of the indicators loads onto its intended construct. Standard errors for the parameter estimates range from .04 to .12. The average value of the absolute standardized residuals (i.e., the difference between the actual and predicted scores) is .037, which reflects a fairly good fit to the data. The frequency distribution of these standardized residuals is symmetric and centered on zero, with 96.77% of the residual values falling between $\pm .10$, and 3.33% between .10 and .17. These values indicate that the specified measurement model describes the observed data well.

In reconciling these results, it should be noted, as pointed out by Fornell and Larcker (1981), that the variance extracted statistic is a more conservative estimate than is composite reliability. Moreover, none of the items have loadings less than .40, a threshold commonly used in factor analysis (Hulland, 1999). Taken together, these latter results suggest a reasonable fit of the latent constructs to their respective indicators. As such, for research purposes, an argument can be made for the acceptable convergent validity of all five latent constructs, especially given that all their composite reliabilities are considerably above the .70 cut-off value typically recommended and all their indicator-to-construct loadings are well above .40 and significant.

Discriminant Validity

To assess the discriminant validity of the individual latent constructs, I compared the average variance shared between each latent construct and its indicators with the variance shared between each construct and other constructs. Following Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1994: 709), if two constructs are distinct, the average variance shared between a construct and its indicators "should be greater than the variance that construct shares with any other construct." If this were not the case, "the construct would have more in common with other constructs (and their indicators) than with its own [indicators], and it would be hard to argue that it is distinct from those other constructs." Results from this comparison indicate adequate discriminant

validity in all but one possible pair of constructs. The squared correlation between organizational identification and affective commitment (.58) is greater than the average variance shared between organizational identification (.40) and its indicators. This result is not surprising given the conceptual overlap between these two constructs.

To explore the overlap of organizational identification and affective commitment further, I took three additional steps. First, I calculated confidence intervals around the maximum likelihood estimate for the correlation (Φ) between the two constructs (i.e., $\Phi \pm 2$ standard errors). Neither confidence interval contains a value of 1, providing some evidence that the two constructs are distinct (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Second, I compared a 1-factor measurement model combining organizational identification and affective commitment to a 2-factor measurement model with organizational identification and affective commitment as separate factors. According to a sequential chi-square difference test (Steiger, Shapiro, & Browne, 1985), the 2-factor model is a significantly better fit to the observed data than the 1-factor model: X^2_{diff} ($df_{\text{diff}} = 1, N = 379$) = 172.20, $p < .05$, thereby offering further support for the discriminant (and convergent) validity of the two constructs. Finally, I inspected the residual covariance matrix, that is, the difference between the covariance matrix for the observed data and the model-implied covariance matrix, for large values and found none. The covariances among the residuals comprising organizational identification and affective commitment range from $-.11$ to $.10$, suggesting that the indicators distinctly measure what they are believed to represent (Bedeian, Day, & Kelloway, 1997). Therefore, based on the balance of evidence supporting the discriminability of the organizational identification and affective commitment constructs, I treated them separately in subsequent analyses.

Phase Two: Structural Model Evaluation

In this phase, I examined the structural portion of the specified model. As depicted in Figure 1, the model proposes that cynicism has a direct effect on organizational identification, which, in turn, is related to affective commitment. As an outcome of affective commitment, job satisfaction is subsequently linked to turnover intentions. Assuming a null hypothesis of close fit (H_0 : RMSEA = .05), and an alternative hypothesis of unacceptable fit (H_a : RMSEA = .10), power analyses with $df = 401$ and $p = .05$ indicated that the level of statistical power (1.00) exceeded the level (.993) necessary to test the hypothesis that the model is an exact fit with the

observed data (MacCullum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996).

Test results indicate a generally good fit of the model to the data, $S-B_{\chi^2}(401, N = 379) = 856.94, p < .01$; CFI = .91; NNFI = .91; RMSEA = .06, with a 90% confidence interval of .05 to .06. Figure 2 presents the values of the path coefficients that link the model constructs. Each value can be intercepted as a standardized regression coefficient (ranging from -1.0 to $+1.0$) that is adjusted for all other paths specified in the model. Tests of the standardized path estimates between latent constructs comprising the model indicate that all are statistically significant ($p < .01$), with t values ranging in absolute magnitude from 6.28 to 9.67. Together, these results provide support for the model and Hypotheses 1–4. The standardized direct effect of cynicism on organizational identification (effect size = $-.48$) is significant, as is its indirect effect on affective commitment (effect size = $-.38$; i.e., $-.48 \times .80$), job satisfaction (effect size = $-.21$; i.e., $-.48 \times .80 \times .55$), and intended turnover (effect size = $.13$; i.e., $-.48 \times .80 \times .55 \times -.61$), all $ps < .05$). Thus, the magnitude of the direct effect of cynicism on organizational identification is in the moderate range, with its indirect effects (as would be expected) diminishing the more distal its influence.

DISCUSSION

My purpose in conducting this study was to gain insights into the effects, if any, of cynicism on the professional lives of program participants at the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting and, by implication, on their universities' educational mission. Toward this end, I investigated a previously untested structural model in which cynicism is related in sequence to organizational identification, affective commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (see Figure 1). The *first phase* of the current analysis used confirmatory factor analysis to examine the psychometric properties of the mea-

asures used to assess each of the preceding constructs. Findings provide general support for the convergent and discriminant validity of scores derived from the individual measures.

In particular, it is hoped that further research will be facilitated by the development and presentation of a new cynicism measure. The measure was created using systematic item-generation procedures that are crucial for constructing measures that yield reliable and content-valid scores and for gaining an unbiased understanding of the nomological network linking cynicism to other theoretically relevant constructs. Although administered in the current study to a university-based sample, its content was developed with input not only from faculty serving as expert judges, but also from professional and executive MBA students employed in a wide range of nonacademic occupations. Future tests will be necessary to establish the reliability and validity of the new measure's scores in applications with other populations. In the present instance, the focal sample's occupational homogeneity is notably counterbalanced by its high geographical dispersion and organizational heterogeneity.

An unstated premise underlying this study is that faculty members do not deliberately decide to be more or less cynical about their universities, but rather cynicism results from and is sustained by their experience within universities (cf. Reichers, Wanous, & Austin, 1997: 50–51). Further, it may be helpful to reiterate that whether an individual's basis for being more or less cynical is real or imagined, from a psychodynamic perspective, the effect is the same (Dean, Brandes, & Dharwadkar, 1998). The data on which the present study is based indicate a wide variation in cynicism across respondents. Respondents' open-ended comments, however, suggest an appreciation that there are differences in perceived reality. As one faculty member wrote, "the administration higher up the food chain suffers from a serious case of not being

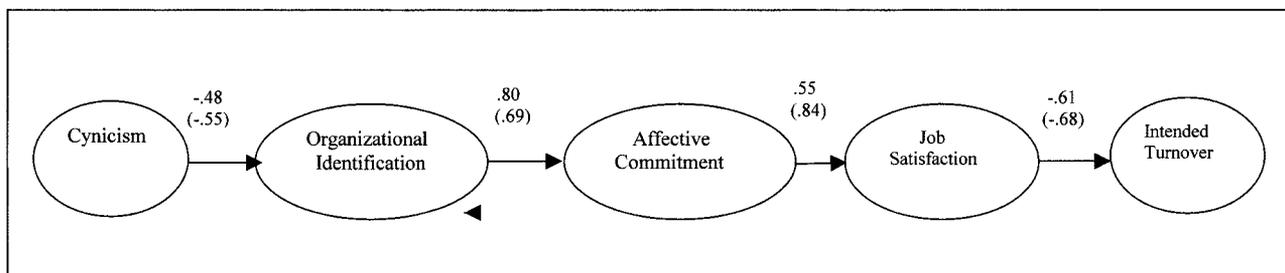


FIGURE 2

Structural Model Results With Standardized and Unstandardized (in parentheses) Path Estimates, All Statistically Significant ($p < .05$).

grounded in reality, which at times is so bad it's been suggested that they're simply delusional." This should not be taken to suggest that all respondents held such a view of their university's top-side administrators. A second faculty member expressed the following sentiment: "In all fairness, administrations have a very tough task of balancing all of the competing pressures they face. Taken individually, many decisions appear misguided because outsiders are not aware of the constraints imposed on their decisions and of the competing objectives."

The *second phase* of the analysis examined the structural representation of the proposed conceptual scheme. Structural equation modeling provided support for each of the study's hypotheses. In support of Hypothesis 1, higher levels of cynicism were negatively related ($-.48, p < .05$) to organizational identification. This finding supports the belief that cynicism is an antecedent of identification and suggests that faculty with higher levels of cynicism are less apt to experience a sense of oneness with their employing university and to be less psychologically intertwined with its fate. It further suggests that faculty with higher levels of cynicism will be less likely to take their university's perspective and to act in its best interests. Moreover, they will be less inclined to interpret events in a manner consistent with their university's values, ideology, and culture. As Haslam, Postmes, and Ellemers (2003: 365) have argued and, as noted above, under such circumstances, effective organizational communication, favorable workplace relations, and attempts at leadership will be especially challenging, if not impossible. It is conceivable that, unless favorably resolved, the resulting difficulties may feed upon themselves and, in turn, breed greater discontentment in a self-perpetuating cycle.

Consistent with Hypothesis 2, higher levels of organizational identification were found to be positively related ($.80, p < .05$) to the strength of faculty members' affective commitment. This finding is consistent with Meyer, Becker, and Vandenberghe's (2004) integrative model of commitment and motivation which proposes that identification is a basic mechanism leading to affective commitment. It is also consistent with earlier theory holding that commitment is built when individuals develop a sense of identification with an organization's goals (Alpander, 1990). The organizational identification-affective commitment relationship should be managed carefully, however. It has been suggested that there is a danger in individuals overidentifying with an organization, in that, doing so may lead to various negative outcomes (Pratt,

2001). For instance, overidentification may result in an extreme form of affective commitment characterized by an unhealthy emotional attachment or belief in an organization's goals and the subordination of one's self-interests to an organization's greater benefit.

This finding also underscores the importance of knowing "the difference between being used and abused" by one's institution. As Sternberg (2004: 120-121) has observed in relation to universities, "I have seen many people who are long loyal to their institutions, and then discover that the loyalty goes one way . . . I have learned it pays to keep one's expectations for loyalty on the part of one's institution relatively modest." Future research is needed to uncover how such affective commitment is channeled. Gouldner (1957) has noted that some faculty seem to naturally adopt a "local" identity, wherein their commitment resides almost exclusively in their employing university. In contrast, he observed that other faculty seek a national reputation, and feel separate from their immediate environment. They adopt what is known as a "cosmopolitan" identity. Although they work in a university, their principal commitment is to their profession. As one faculty member, reflecting a cosmopolitan identity, commented, "In many ways my primary loyalty is to the profession, not the institution." This discussion also raises questions concerning the antecedent relationship between cynicism and organizational identification. Is increased cynicism more likely to result in reduced organizational identification when faculty view themselves more with a cosmopolitan identity lens, as opposed to a local identity lens? Or, does the nature of their cynicism depend on which identity hat they are wearing?

Along these lines, Feldman (2004: 515) has suggested that individuals may adopt a local identity "when their attempts to be professionally active get thwarted" and, conversely, "individuals may become more 'cosmopolitan' in orientation in response to frustrating encounters with their . . . organizations." The possibility that such a displacement might occur and, if so, its relationship to affective commitment is an area that likewise awaits future research. Prevailing career advice calls for aspiring academics to develop a cosmopolitan rather a local identity (Bedeian, 1996). Experience suggests that the visibility, esteem, and career mobility derived from the national recognition enjoyed by cosmopolitans provides a measure of local independence and, thus, protection from being "used and then abused." The potential conflict that this creates between university administrators, with their local priorities, and faculty,

seeking national acclaim, can give rise to increased cynicism (on the part of both parties) and, in line with the present findings, initiate the sequence of events depicted in Figure 1.

As predicted in Hypothesis 3, higher levels of affective commitment were positively related (.55, $p < .05$) to job satisfaction. This finding reinforces the belief that affective commitment may be a precondition for positive feelings about one's job, and suggests, to the extent that faculty are not emotionally attached to their universities, they are more likely to experience greater job dissatisfaction. Furthermore, this result underscores the role of job satisfaction as one of the most salient elements in a relationship between a university and its faculty. In the context of the proposed conceptual scheme, the sequential chain of variables leading in train from cynicism to organizational identification to affective commitment to job satisfaction supports the long-held notion that the relationship between workers and workplaces, in general, is a complex function of one's appraisal of the degree to which the various elements of a work environment fulfill one's needs.

Hypothesis 4 is confirmed by the negative relationship ($-.61$, $p < .05$) between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. This finding supports theories of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000) and planned behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005), which suggest that one's tendency to engage in a given behavior is determined by one's intention to perform that behavior. In doing so, it once again reinforces the notion that job dissatisfaction leads to an increased desire to seek employment elsewhere. To the extent that individual faculty experience dissatisfaction that originates in cynicism (however distal), it can be expected that their interest in seeking employment elsewhere will increase. The practical implications of this in an academic setting are immediately evident. As Hensel (1991: 79) advises, "The well-being of [a] university depends on its ability to recruit and retain a talented professorate." Thus, it would be important to not only do something about increased levels of cynicism, but also to determine which faculty may be the most affected. If the latter group includes a university's most talented and, hence, mobile faculty, the adverse consequences for successfully achieving academic excellence are obvious. Future research to isolate contributors to heightened cynicism (e.g., structures, reward systems, measurement practices, selection processes) would be especially helpful. Such research would provide insights into means for addressing cynicism's knock-on effects.

From an individual perspective, an emphasis on

retention thus argues for investigating intent to turnover and its antecedents to circumvent many of the accidental and avoidable reasons for faculty separation. At the same time, from a faculty perspective, a rub develops in those instances where faculty members are dissatisfied with their jobs, but are unable to find or seek employment elsewhere. As expressed by one faculty member, "I hate where I am, but feel constrained to relocate and, hence, I'm not looking for another job." Unfortunately, to the detriment of one's university, as well as one's colleagues and students, such situations can result in psychologically disengaged faculty who refuse to participate in university life. These are the faculty we all know as "names on a door," spending no more time on campus than required to teach their classes. In my own experience, these are often faculty who at one time were emotionally involved in their work, but over time have come to doubt their university's motives, actions, and values. Eventually, the resulting mental scar tissue from such doubt seems to have simply grown too thick for these faculty to do little else than go through the basic motions required to keep their jobs. Often, too, these faculty members "hang in there," realizing that because upper level administrators come and go, there may be hope for the future. There is also the thought that things may be no better elsewhere.

Practical Implications

The most obvious implication derived from these results is that universities that engender high levels of cynicism among their faculty can expect diminished organizational identification, lower levels of affective commitment, waning job satisfaction, and, ultimately, increased turnover among their faculty. Beyond this, however, there are less obvious implications. First, cynicism may, in fact, carry with it certain advantages. From an individual perspective, cynicism may be a safety-valve or social mechanism (Meyerson, 1990) for coping with frustrating situations. Indeed, Rouillard (2003: 5) has suggested that cynicism "may be a defense mechanism against disappointment, disillusion, even against the feeling of being betrayed . . . by unkept promises and false claims." Building on this point, and echoing Sternberg's (2004) advice above, Dean, Brandes, and Dharwadkar (1998: 347) have suggested that cynicism plays a role in preventing employees from being preyed upon by organizations that lack integrity. They note, however, that cynicism can also benefit organizations. By serving as the conscience of an organization, cynicism "may provide a necessary check on the

temptation to place expediency over principle or the temptation to assume self-interested behavior will go undetected." Thus, in line with the neutral definition that I have proposed, Dean, Brandes, and Dharwadkar conclude that cynicism should not be seen as either "an unalloyed good [or] an unalloyed evil for organizations."

A second implication that may likewise be less obvious is that to the extent mood transfer occurs between faculty, cynicism (both high and low) can spread throughout entire colleges and, perhaps, campuses. Whereas cynicism may have advantages for both faculty and their universities, it no less behooves university administrators to be alert to faculty cynicism. In this regard, it is important for university administrators to view all top-down decisions from a faculty perspective. The success of executive edicts have been repeatedly shown to depend on avoiding a values conflict between the way employees believe decisions should be made and the actual means chosen by higher ups (Wanous & Reichers, 2004). When such conflict does occur, mounting cynicism among faculty about their university's motives, actions, and values may be an inevitable result. To the degree that research has shown that emotions prompted by such attitudes as cynicism may be contagious and influence a university's affective tone (Totterdell, 2000) and decision-making abilities (Maitlis & Ozcelik, 2004), the implication is straightforward. As Eaton and Struthers (2004: 24), perhaps reflecting their own heightened cynicism, advise: "Before allowing employees to generate their own, potentially erroneous, explanations for the organization's actions, and acting on those perceptions, the organization would benefit both itself and its employees by communicating clearly and effectively to all employees the reasons for its actions (unless, of course, those reasons are self-serving)."

A third implication that is also perhaps less than obvious is that cynicism may be directed to different targets. Cynicism may exist with respect to an organization as a whole, to a specific work-group or team, or to a particular individual, such as a supervisor or peer. These different targets and the variations in attitude that they elicit are especially reflected in the comments of various respondents: "I think very highly of my department and college and love my job. On the other hand, I am very unhappy with upper administration" or "The issues are not so much at the university-level because we are so 'distant' on a day-to-day basis. I have significant problems with the Area Chair who has created a hostile work environment by hoarding all the resources and making decisions without consultation. This person has his own self

interests above all else." Faculty comments even suggest that feelings directed at various referents might interact. One respondent reported feeling less cynical toward his/her department than toward the university: "I have very different feelings about my department and immediate colleagues (very positive) than I do about college and university officials (less than positive). Hence, I have mixed feelings about the institution as a whole." Another expressed an opposite sentiment: "My difficulties are at the departmental level—though those certainly have an effect on my attitudes towards the university. My attitudes toward the university are much more positive than they are toward the department." The consequences such a roux of faculty attitudes may have on the relationships outlined in Figure 1 merit further investigation.

A final, somewhat transcendent, implication relates to the extent to which, in particular, heightened cynicism spills over into other aspects of faculty involvement. When faculty feel a sense of disconnection, as a result of doubting the motives, actions, and values of their employing university, their relations with colleagues and students may well be affected. As Palmer (1998: 20) writes in *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*, all too many academic careers are characterized by a "slow slide into cynicism," as faculty who once thought they were entering a community centered around colleagues and students working and learning together suffer "the pain of dismemberment" that results from finding themselves in a land of hollow university rhetoric. Palmer (1998: 48) laments that "it is not unusual to see faculty in midcareer don the armor of cynicism against students, education, and any sign of hope," as the passion that brought them into academic life is "dashed by experience." The toll such cynicism exacts on collegial relations, faculty performance of service obligations, mentoring roles, and, most important, teaching responsibilities is unknown. Likewise unknown is the impact that this cynicism has on faculty members' inner lives and the passion they bring to their subject matter and convey to their students. The nature of cynicism's toll on the growth and development of collegial relations and student learning are, thus, areas for additional research.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Beyond the suggestions above, future cynicism research might take several avenues. First, the conceptual scheme I employed as a beginning step should be extended to include a more complete

representation of other potential consequences. To date, various forms of cynicism have been associated with increased feelings of workplace alienation, resistance to organizational change, and less participation in employee involvement programs (see, e.g., Stanley, Meyer, & Topolnytsky, 2005). Beyond such consequences, it may be useful to consider a wide range of situational factors to explore how cynicism becomes part of a university's culture or under what circumstances different work-group dynamics attenuate or accentuate cynicism (Vance, Brooks, & Tesluk, 1995). Second, future researchers might also explore the role of emotions in kindling cynicism. Prior studies indicate that cynicism is only weakly related to individual differences in emotionality as gauged by positive and negative affectivity, with effect sizes ranging from $-.18$ to $-.22$ (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004; Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003). Eaton and Struthers (2004) have speculated, however, that increased cynicism may stem from an interaction between, for instance, feelings of hopelessness and anger. They suggest that whereas loss of hope alone may be insufficient to prompt heightened cynicism, in combination with anger, which provides the spark to act, hopelessness may lead to higher levels of cynicism. The extent to which hopelessness and other factors such as trust or apathy interact to function as both predictors and consequences of increased cynicism is unknown.

A third area of future research would be to further examine the content domain of cynicism as an independent construct. For example, it would be interesting to determine whether behavioral integrity is a component of cynicism. As defined, *behavioral integrity* is "the perceived degree of congruence between the values expressed by words and those expressed through action" (Simons, 1999: 90). Thus, there appears to be some commonality between behavioral integrity and cynicism. As I have measured it (see Table 1), cynicism is also concerned with assessing the consistency between an actor's words and deeds. The two constructs do differ, however, in that whereas cynicism centers on the evaluation and judgment of an actor's motives, actions, and values, behavioral integrity focuses only on evaluating the word-deed alignment of an actor's "espoused and enacted values," without necessarily passing judgment on the actor's stated motives, actions or values (Simons, 2002).

A final area for future research would be to examine the relationship between cynicism and various forms of organizational identification. In addition to "positive" identification, identity theorists have explored *conflicted* or *ambivalent identifica-*

tion in which "individuals are both attracted to and repulsed by their organization" and *disidentification* in which individuals identify with a set of values and beliefs that are antithetical to those of their organization (Pratt, 2001: 20). It would be interesting to know if in situations where faculty disidentify or experience "mixed" identification with their university, increased cynicism is part of how they express their feelings. Along these lines, Brown, Lawrence, and Robinson (2005) have suggested that to protect their identity and self-esteem, individuals may actively engage in "psychological disownership" wherein they actively attempt to communicate to others that they have no relationship with an organization. Similarly, Roberts (2005) has detailed how individuals proactively negotiate their personal and social identities to deflect the negative attributions that derive from employment in a devalued organization. In doing so, she notes that individuals who experience threats to their desired professional image as a result of being affiliated with their employing organization are less satisfied with their employer, more likely to turn over, and less engaged in their work than those who do not experience an image discrepancy. The tenor and direction of the present findings suggest that future researchers should view increased cynicism as a potential precursor to psychological disownership, as well as a possible means by which faculty attempt to deemphasize their university affiliation so as to protect their professional image.

LIMITATIONS

As with all studies, the present effort should be considered in light of its limitations. First, given that the data I used to test the proposed conceptual scheme (Figure 1) are cross-sectional rather than grounded in a carefully controlled experiment, the reported results cannot be interpreted to indicate causality. Whereas the presence of causal relations among variables is implied by the use of the terms "effects" and "consequences," it was only possible (given my study's synchronic design) to test the extent to which the observed associations among the focal variables could be predicted from the specified model, without respect to causation. Additional evidence based on other types of research designs is needed before confident attributions of causality are warranted. Moreover, given that cynicism is assumed to be dynamic, diachronic studies, in particular, will be necessary to determine how levels of cynicism vary from day-to-day and are linked to specific precipitating events. A second concern is that whereas a specified

model may be consistent with observed data, the same data may also support other conceptual schemes (MacCallum, Wegener, Uchino, & Fabrigar, 1993). Furthermore, the arrows in Figure 1 may operate in the reverse direction or the hypothesized effects may be bi-directional. This concern is minor in the present instance as the specified model was based on reasonably sound a priori theoretical considerations and yielded statistically as well as practically significant results. Variants to a fully mediated model were, however, investigated to assess whether different partially mediated models provided a equivalent or better fit to the observed data. For example, I examined the direct effects of organizational identification on both turnover intentions and job satisfaction. In each case, there was a marked decrement in model fit. This approach follows conservative SEM procedures for discounting plausible alternative models with different patterns of hypothesized relations among variables (Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005). A third concern is that, given practical constraints on respondents' time and energy, the specified model did not include all known determinants of organizational identification, affective commitment, job satisfaction, and intended turnover. The impracticability of doing so, however, is underscored by the fact that job satisfaction alone has been related to nearly 500 other variables (Kinicki, McKee-Ryan, Schriesheim, & Carson, 2002). Nonetheless, whereas no study can test every variable and there are few totally self-contained models, the consequence of these omissions is a potential bias in the reported path estimates.

A further study limitation is a reliance on personal-report data (Mayer, 2004) that can result in spurious relationships among variables due to common-method bias. Thus, it is possible that some of the observed relationships could be artifacts of my measurement procedures. To investigate possible effects due to common-method bias, I re-estimated the measurement model in Figure 1 by adding a "same-source" factor to the item indicators of all five constructs (Williams, Cote, & Buckley, 1989). I then compared this re-estimated 6-factor model ($S-B_X^2 = 602.65$, $df = 365$, $N = 379$, $p < .05$), with my original 5-factor measurement model ($S-B_X^2 = 744.41$, $df = 395$, $N = 379$, $p < .05$). The difference in fit between these two models provides a significance test of the effects of the same-source factor. This difference was significant ($X^2_{diff} = 141.76$, $df_{diff} = 30$, $p < .05$), which suggests that a same-source factor is present. A comparison of the correlations between constructs in both models, however, indicates minimum common-method

bias, as the correlations across models were virtually identical. All correlations were significant in my original model and remained significant in the re-estimated model. The average change across the correlations was .02, with a standard deviation of .01. Of the ten correlations, six were inflated, three were attenuated, and one remained unchanged. No correlation changed sign. Because the pattern and magnitude of correlations remained virtually the same, it may be concluded that the observed relations among study constructs were not due to common-method bias.

A final limitation involves the generalizability of the current results beyond 2004 Academy of Management program participants. The general applicability of the immediate results to the larger academic universe would be verified by replication with other samples drawn from different scholarly disciplines and from varying national and societal contexts possessing alternative educational and normative structures. Future researchers may also wish to include individuals representing other occupations (both unionized and non-unionized), varying educational levels, and diverse cultural backgrounds, thus, providing an even broader base for comparative analysis. Of particular interest is whether the reported results can be extrapolated to other employee groups who, unlike faculty, do not have their feet planted in two worlds. As noted, faculty are rather unique in being hired by their local institutions, but often having a strong affiliation to their greater profession. By extension, this suggests that faculty cynicism may have implications not only for individual universities, but also for professional organizations and higher education in general. It is possible, for instance, that increased cynicism among faculty about their professional associations (such as the Academy of Management) may lead to beneficial changes in our profession that would not have otherwise occurred. Further, I have only looked at cynicism from one perspective. It would be interesting to know more about cynicism directed toward faculty by upper level university administrators. Perhaps cynicism is associated with certain behavioral expectations that are linked with occupying a particular role in a university (e.g., chancellor or provost) or assuming a specific identity ("I'm an administrator"). An evaluation of cynicism from a top-down vantage would help to extend our understanding of these possibilities.

CONCLUSION

Prompted by my own puzzlement, my purpose in conducting this study was to gain insights into the

effects of the seemingly higher levels of cynicism expressed by colleagues I spoke with at the 2004 Academy of Management Meeting. The reported results offer insights into the process by which the cynicism I heard expressed is linked to a number of consequences. In the conceptual scheme that I proposed, intended turnover is the last link in a chain of consequences connecting organizational identity, affective commitment, and job satisfaction. As the aftereffects of cynicism, these outcomes may be viewed as secondary results of a critical appraisal of the motives, actions, and values of the universities employing the Academy of Management Meeting attendees who responded to my survey. As a first-cut at understanding the effects of cynicism on the professional lives of those colleagues with whom I spoke informally, or heard in formal meeting presentations, the present study is admittedly more exploratory than definitive. My findings do confirm, however, that cynicism is a fact of academic life. Moreover, they indicate that those universities which engender high levels of cynicism among their faculty can expect diminished organizational identification, lower levels of affective commitment, curbed job satisfaction, and, ultimately, increased turnover within their faculty ranks. To establish confidence in their leadership and engender faculty support, university administrators must nurture close ties with their faculties. It is my belief, however, that to do so first requires that they actively address the issue of growing faculty cynicism and reaffirm the shared ideals that shape our common endeavor.

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