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Comprehensive management practices and policies performance model

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# Comprehensive management practices and policies performance model

Comprehensive management practices

1043

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to assess the impact of a specific set of management practices and policies and policies (organizational behavior modification, the management principles, and the management process) on human resource outcomes and on individual employee performance. A comprehensive management practices and policies performance model is theorized and empirically assessed.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Data collected from a sample of full-time employees working in the Southern USA are analyzed using a partial least squares/structural equation modeling methodology.

**Findings** – Considering the direct and indirect links among the constructs the authors conclude the following: organizational behavior modification, the management principles, and the management process combine to improve organizational commitment and job satisfaction; organizational commitment and job satisfaction combine to improve employee engagement and workplace optimism; and employee engagement and workplace optimism combine to enhance individual performance.

**Research limitations/implications** – The model tested reflects the synergy created through the implementation of the management practices and policies and policies and the impact of that synergy on human resource outcomes and individual employee performance. This is the first assessment of this comprehensive model. Replication and verification of the model are suggested.

**Practical implications** – Practitioners are provided with a framework for assessing the synergistic impact of the management practices and policies on human resource outcomes and individual employee performance. The theorized model and results provide practicing managers with a blueprint for the systematic implementation of the management practices and policies.

**Originality/value** – A comprehensive management practices and policies performance model is proposed and empirically assessed. The results support the proposition that implementation of the management practices and policies leads to improved human resource outcomes and individual employee performance.

**Keywords** Employee performance, Human resource outcomes, Management practices and policies, Partial least squares SEM

**Paper type** Research paper

## 1. Introduction

We contend that the management principles and management process first described by Fayol (1916) combine with organizational behavior modification (Luthans and Stajkovic, 1999) to improve human resource outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and workplace optimism which ultimately improve the performance of individual employees. There is concern that these management practices and policies, which once served as the foundation for successful management, are no longer sufficiently emphasized in either management education or management practice. Current research supports the concept that human



resource processes and practices are accepted as an important direct factor (Sirca *et al.*, 2013) and as a mediating factor (Lewicka and Krot, 2015) in organizational performance. Bloom and Van Reenen (2010) empirically established a link between the management practices of a firm and the firm's performance. We investigate the role that specific management practices and policies have on human resource outcomes and individual employee performance, rather than firm-level performance.

Adherence to the management principles ensures an environment free of roadblocks to high performance. Implementation of the management process ensures that each employee knows exactly what is expected of them by the organization and has the resources necessary to fulfill those expectations. Once the organizational environment is suited for performance and employees know what is expected and have sufficient resources, it is imperative that managers reinforce appropriate organizational behavior through organizational behavior modification.

The contribution of this study relates to the comprehensive nature of the theorized management practices and policies performance model and the empirical results of model assessment using data from a sample of full-time employees. Support for the model will serve to reestablish the importance of the management practices and policies to management practice and education. While many of the theorized links within the proposed model have been empirically established through prior research, we contend that combining these relationships into a single macro framework serves to provide practitioners and educators with a "big picture" perspective that is not currently available in the existing literature.

In spite of much research on management practices, productivity in the USA has been flat, especially since 2005 (Matthews, 2013). While technology and the economy get some of the blame; poorly skilled and trained workers are also part of the problem. Technology and its implementation need to be skillfully managed. Implementing new technologies is not a new problem. It is our thesis that understandable, tested management practices and policies from the past will still be effective in today's environment. However, there is a paucity of research in the area of inclusive management models.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Theoretical foundation

The theory of complementarity serves as the theoretical basis for this study. Milgrom and Roberts (1990, p. 514) describe complements as "relation among groups of activities" and identify the "defining characteristic of a group of complements is that if the levels of any subset of the activities are increased, then the marginal return to increases in any or all of the remaining activities rises." We argue that the groups of activities associated with an organizational behavior modification program, adherence to the principles of management, and the management process are complements and that increases in any of the three sets of activities will lead to increases in the other sets which result in marginal returns to the organization in terms of human resource outcomes (improved organizational commitment, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and workplace optimism) and improved individual employee performance.

### 2.2 Theoretical model

Throughout the past decade, we have worked to develop and assess macro models that represent the antecedent, focal, and consequence relationships among management

practices and policies and human resource and organizational performance outcomes. Our purpose has been to develop such models to facilitate instruction of undergraduate and graduate management students and to provide management practitioners with blueprints for successful implementation of the management practices in their organizations. The proposed theoretical model was initially developed from discussions with colleagues concerning the importance of these basic management practices and policies and our in-class discussions with students based on previous research that has been focussed on the individual linkages incorporated into the model.

The theoretical comprehensive management practices and policies performance model developed for this study by the authors is displayed in Figure 1. The general proposition theorized is that implementation of an organizational behavior modification program coupled with adherence to the management principles and implementation of the management process results in improved levels of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and workplace optimism which in turn enhance the level of individual employee performance. Definitions for these study constructs are displayed in Table I. There are 14 hypothesized positive, direct effects incorporated in the model.

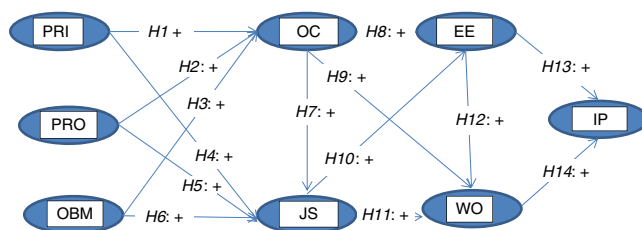
### 2.3 Hypotheses

An environment free of unnecessary roadblocks to the successful completion of individual objectives is theorized as positively associated with organizational commitment. Bureaucracy and red tape associated with the violation of one or more management principles are a source of frustration to employees that is likely to reduce commitment to the organization.

Two recent studies, one in Taiwan (Silverthorne, 2004) and the other in Pakistan (Alvi *et al.*, 2014) confirmed the finding that a supportive culture had a much stronger impact on commitment than a bureaucratic culture or innovative cultures:

*H1.* The principles of management positively impact organizational commitment.

Employees who are well aware of the organization's expectations of their roles and who are provided with the resources necessary to fulfill those expectations are more likely to be committed to their organizations. Implementation and execution of the management process results in clear direction for employees in terms of what is required to achieve success and commitment to that organization. Buchanan (1974) tested the impact of



**Notes:** OBM, organizational behavior modification; JS, job satisfaction; PRI, management principles; EE, employee engagement; PRO, management process; WO, workplace optimism; OC, organizational commitment; IP, individual performance

**Figure 1.**  
Theorized  
comprehensive  
management  
practices and policies  
performance model

**Table I.**  
Construct definitions

Organizational behavior modification	A process where managers reinforce employee' actions that lead to accomplishment of the organization's objectives primarily by providing positive reinforcement (Thorndike, 1911; Luthans and Stajkovic, 1999; Stajkovic and Luthans, 1997)
Management principles	A set of guidelines originally delineated by Fayol (1916), such as unity of direction, unity of command, and <i>esprit de corps</i> . Adherence to the guidelines ensures that management is providing an environment free of roadblocks to the success of individual employees
Management process	A set of four distinct activities by managers that include meeting with employees to set objectives; providing resources; providing support; and meeting with employees to discuss completion status for the objectives (Drucker, 1954; Iacocca, 1984; Locke, 1968)
Organizational commitment	The relative strength of an employee's identification with and involvement in a particular organization that is based on an attitude toward the organization and its policies as a whole (Steers, 1977)
Job satisfaction	Positive satisfaction is an overall feeling of well-being and acceptance concerning one's cumulative attitudes or feelings about the job. Job satisfaction is a construct with multiple foci or contexts and includes both organizational and social aspects of the task (Diestel <i>et al.</i> , 2014)
Employee engagement	The relative strength of an employee's involvement in and enthusiasm about his or work (Tritch, 2003)
Workplace optimism	The degree to which an employee believes that he or she will successfully complete their organizational objectives (Green <i>et al.</i> , 2004)
Individual employee performance	The degree to which an employee perceives that he or she has successfully completed assigned organizational objectives (Green <i>et al.</i> , 2004)

role clarity on organizational commitment. However, he found a positive, but not statistically significant impact on organizational commitment in a regression analysis. He found that organizational commitment was more a function of managerial and cohort attitudes and less a function of job duties. We think that other factors in Buchanan's research lessened the impact of role clarity and that it is still a significant factor in organizational commitment:

*H2.* The management process positively impacts organizational commitment.

Luthans and colleagues (i.e. Luthans, 2002; Youssef and Luthans, 2007) have modified the organizational behavior modification concept and focussed on the positive aspects of organizational behavior. Unlike our model, Youssef and Luthans (2007) used the organizational behavior modification outcomes of hope, optimism, and resilience as contributors to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and performance. They considered organizational commitment and job satisfaction as work outcomes instead of mediating factors to performance. Hope, optimism, and resilience all had positive, significant correlations with organizational commitment (Youssef and Luthans, 2007). They considered the factors of hope, optimism, and resilience as a mediating step between organizational behavior modification and organizational commitment. We contend that a high level of usage of organizational behavior modification will increase the level of perceived organizational commitment:

*H3.* Organizational behavior modification positively impacts organizational commitment.

Employees who work in an organization that is well structured and devoid of unnecessary restrictions are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. We argue that

such a positive work environment is a necessary antecedent to employees' satisfaction with their jobs. Frustrations with organizational methods and processes will conversely lead to reduced satisfaction. Membership in an organization that had a bureaucratic organizational culture resulted in the lowest levels of job satisfaction (Silverthorne, 2004). A supportive culture impacts job satisfaction much more significantly than bureaucratic or innovative cultures (Alvi *et al.*, 2014):

*H4.* The principles of management positively impact job satisfaction.

Employees who have clear objectives and who are provided needed resources to achieve success are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. The management process enhances the likelihood that employees will be successful in completing their objectives which should lead to increased job satisfaction. Thompson *et al.* (1981), found that a management-by-objectives intervention improved employee satisfaction with both supervision and the work itself. Overall job satisfaction is enhanced by the clarification of objectives. In a study of nurses, access to structural resources was a significant predictor of job satisfaction (Pineau-Stam *et al.* (2015):

*H5.* The management process positively impacts job satisfaction.

The practice of organizational behavior modification requires that managers positively reinforce appropriate behaviors (those leading to the accomplishment of organizational objectives). There is considerable research supporting the link between positive reinforcement and job satisfaction. Rothfelder *et al.* (2012) report a correlation coefficient of +0.70 between the contingent reward component of transformational leadership and job satisfaction for a sample of German hotel employees and found that the contingent reward dimension is a positive predictor of job satisfaction. Rahmani and Ghanbari (2015) report a +0.55 correlation between intrinsic rewards and job satisfaction for a sample of metal industry workers in Iran and also provide regression analysis results that show that intrinsic rewards have a strong impact on job satisfaction than extrinsic rewards. Shoemaker (1999) investigated the impact of the leadership practices of sales managers on industrial sales professionals on multiple outcomes including job satisfaction. Study results support a positive link between the leadership practice of "encouraging the heart" which incorporates positive reinforcement aspects of intrinsic rewards and job satisfaction ( $R = +0.65$ ) and indicate that this particular leadership practice is a positive predictor of job satisfaction. Luthans (2002) and Youssef and Luthans (2007) found that the organizational behavior modification outcomes of hope, optimism, and resilience are positively associated with job satisfaction. Hope, optimism, and resilience all had positive, significant correlations with job satisfaction:

*H6.* Organizational behavior modification positively impacts job satisfaction.

There are previous studies that have focussed on the job satisfaction-commitment relationship. Bateman and Strasser (1984) found that commitment is a causal antecedent to satisfaction. Mathieu (1991) found that general satisfaction, when measured in place of satisfaction with training, had the strongest direct effect on commitment. Green and Medlin (2010) found a positive, significant correlation (+0.626, significant at the 0.01 level) between organizational commitment and job satisfaction based on a survey of 304 full-time employees working in the Southern USA:

*H7.* Organizational commitment positively impacts job satisfaction.

Green and Medlin (2010) found a positive, significant correlation of 0.71 between organizational commitment and employee engagement based on a survey of full-time employees working in the Southern USA. Shuck *et al.* (2011) also found a positive, significant correlation of 0.71 between affective commitment and employee engagement based on a survey of US employees. More recently, Boon and Kalshoven (2014) found a positive significant correlation between work engagement and organizational commitment of 0.53 based on a survey of employees in Europe and the USA. Shuck *et al.* (2011) theorized commitment as an antecedent to engagement. Boon and Kalshoven (2014) conversely theorized engagement as an antecedent to commitment. We have chosen to hypothesize commitment as impacting engagement within the context of our theorized model:

*H8.* Organizational commitment positively impacts employee engagement.

Workplace optimism has not been extensively studied. No studies were found that specifically investigated the link from organizational commitment to workplace optimism. There is some evidence that personal optimism is positively correlated with organizational commitment (Bressler, 2010; Youssef and Luthans, 2007). In these cases, the studies involved personal optimism rather than workplace optimism that is included in the theorized model. We argue that organizational commitment positively influences workplace optimism. Employees who strongly identify with and are heavily involved in their organizations are more likely to believe that they will successfully complete their organizational objectives. The major outcomes of organizational commitment are desire and intention to remain, better attendance, and greater effort (Porter *et al.*, 1974). A review of the items in the measurement scales is shown in the list below:

- (1) Individual performance – from Green *et al.* (2004):
  - I successfully accomplished my organizational objectives last year;
  - I am confident that I will successfully accomplish my organizational objectives this year;
  - my supervisor consistently rates my performance as excellent;
  - I regularly accomplish my organizational objectives; and
  - I have recently been given additional responsibilities because of my high level of individual performance[1].
- (2) Management principles – developed by Medlin and Green (2014) based on Fayol (1916):
  - workers in my organization specialize in particular tasks to produce more and better work with the same effort;
  - disciplinary sanctions are fairly applied at work;
  - I report directly to only one supervisor (see footnote 1);
  - everybody in this organization is focussed on the same mission;
  - in my organization, the interest of one employee or group of employees does not prevail over that of the organization;
  - my co-workers and I are compensated fairly for the work that we do (see footnote 1); and

- my co-workers and I have sufficient authority to effectively fulfill our responsibilities (see footnote 1).
- (3) Management process – developed by Medlin and Green (2014) based on Fayol (1916), Drucker (1954), and Iacocca (1984):
- I meet periodically during the year with my supervisor to set my organizational objectives;
  - my supervisor delegates the authority to me that is necessary for me to accomplish my organizational objectives;
  - my supervisor provides resources and other support necessary for me to accomplish my organizational objectives; and
  - my supervisor periodically assesses my performance based on accomplishment of my organizational objectives.
- (4) Organizational behavior modification – based on the works of Thorndike (1911), Luthans and Stajkovic (1999), and Stajkovic and Luthans (2001):
- when I take actions that lead to accomplishment of my organizational objectives, I generally receive some sort of positive reinforcement (praise, merit increase, bonus...) from my supervisor;
  - when I accomplish my organizational objectives, I generally receive some sort of positive reinforcement (praise, merit increase, bonus, etc.) from my supervisor;
  - when I take inappropriate actions that do not lead to accomplishment of my organizational objectives, I do not receive any type of positive reinforcement from my supervisor (see footnote 1);
  - when I fail to accomplish my organizational objectives, I do not receive any type of positive reinforcement from my supervisor (see footnote 1);
  - when I take inappropriate actions that do not lead to accomplishment of my organizational objectives, I receive some sort of punishment (leave without pay, reduction in pay, demotion...) from my supervisor (see footnote 1); and
  - when I fail to accomplish my organizational objectives, I receive some sort of punishment (infraction report, leave without pay, reduction in pay, demotion...) from my supervisor (see footnote 1).
- (5) Employee engagement – from Buckingham and Coffman (1999):
- I know what is expected of me at work;
  - I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work; and
  - at work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
- (6) Organizational commitment – from Mowday *et al.* (1979):
- I tell my friends that this organization is a great one to work for;
  - I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar;
  - I am proud to tell others that I am employed by this organization;



- this organization inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance; and
  - I am extremely glad that I chose this organization over other job options at the time I joined (see footnote 1).
- (7) Job satisfaction – from Smith *et al.* (1969):
- I am satisfied with my work environment;
  - I am satisfied with the actual work that I perform;
  - I am satisfied with level and makeup of my compensation package that I receive;
  - I am satisfied with the level and makeup of the benefits package that I receive; and
  - I am satisfied with my promotional opportunities.
- (8) Workplace optimism – from Medlin and Green (2009):
- I will fully achieve my goals;
  - I am very confident that I will successfully perform my duties and responsibilities at work;
  - when unsuccessful at work, I take personal responsibility for the lack of success;
  - my current level of productivity will ensure the accomplishment of my goals at work; and
  - I actively seek solutions to problems in the workplace.

The list highlights the antecedent/consequence relationship between organizational commitment and workplace optimism. Organizational commitment inspires “best effort in terms of job performance” (organizational commitment item 4) which leads to workplace optimism in the form of a belief that “goals will be fully achieved” (workplace optimism item 1):

*H9.* Organizational commitment positively impacts workplace optimism.

Green and Medlin (2010) found a positive, significant correlation of 0.58 between job satisfaction and employee engagement based on a survey of 304 full-time employees working in the Southern USA. Abraham (2012) found a positive, significant correlation for the relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement of 0.60 based on a sample of 120 employees working for a private insurance company in India. Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013) found a positive, significant correlation between job satisfaction and employee engagement of 0.32 based on a survey of managers in India. Brunetto *et al.* (2012) found a positive, significant correlation between job satisfaction and employee engagement of 0.67 based on data from a sample of Australian state police service employees. Abraham (2012) theorized and assessed job satisfaction as an antecedent to employee engagement:

*H10.* Job satisfaction positively impacts employee engagement.

The positioning of workplace optimism within the model is dictated by results reported by Medlin and Green (2009) who found that workplace optimism is a consequence of

employee engagement and an antecedent to individual employee performance and Abraham (2012) who found job satisfaction to be an antecedent to employee engagement. Considering these established relationships, it is logical to insert workplace optimism as a consequence of both job satisfaction and employee engagement and an antecedent to individual performance. While nothing could be found specifically linking job satisfaction and workplace optimism, Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008) report a correlation coefficient of +0.41 for the relationship between job satisfaction and a measure of generalized optimism for a sample of Canadian governmental employees. A review of the items in the measurement scales for job satisfaction and workplace optimism supports the hypothesized positive linkage between the two constructs. For example, an employee's satisfaction with the work environment (job satisfaction item 1) and actual work performed (job satisfaction item 2) supports confidence in the full achievement of employee goals (workplace optimism item 1) and the successful performance of duties by the employee (workplace optimism item 2):

*H11. Job satisfaction positively impacts workplace optimism.*

Rothbard and Patil (2012) describe the necessary correlation of engagement and self-esteem. Self-esteem and efficacy are enhanced by increasing employees' general confidence in their abilities (Rich *et al.*, 2010) which in turn assists them in feeling secure about themselves and less self-conscious about how other people are perceiving or judging them (Kahn, 1990). Employees also gain increased control and efficacy when they perceive that they are receiving important returns on their investments (Kahn, 1990). Having adequate resources increases work engagement (Mauno *et al.*, 2007). An engaged worker is more involved in the job using physical, emotional, and cognitive resources and believes they have the skills and abilities to complete a task – which is how we define workplace optimism:

*H12. Employee engagement positively impacts workplace optimism.*

Since the Gallup organization's development of the Q12 (a survey instrument to measure employee engagement) over a decade ago (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999), articles in the area of employee engagement have appeared in great abundance in the management literature. The primary driver of this attention to engagement has undoubtedly been overwhelming evidence that high levels of employee engagement significantly impact employee and organizational performance. One recent study by WorkUSA (2008/2009) found that highly engaged employees work at firms with 26 percent higher revenue per employee, 13 percent higher returns to shareholders over five years, and a 50 percent higher market premium – suggesting that higher employee engagement significantly leads to improved business performance. Trahan (2009) states that the research is clear that “highly-engaged employees are twice as likely as less-engaged workers to be top performers in their organizations; three-quarters of highly engaged employees exceed or far exceed job performance expectations”:

*H13. Employee engagement positively impacts individual performance.*

Intuitively, it is easy to accept a link between optimism and employee performance. Realistic optimism can be a very positive force in the workplace. For example, optimists are easily motivated to work harder; are more satisfied and have high morale; and persevere in the face of obstacles and difficulties (Luthans, 2002). In practice, this relationship has rarely been examined. Certainly studies exist that indicate that performance outside of the workplace (athletically, academically, etc.) is positively

associated with optimism (Norem and Chang, 2002; Wilson *et al.*, 2002; Siddique *et al.*, 2006). Studies that have focussed on the optimism-performance link in the workplace have primarily been in the sales literature (Rich, 1999; Sujan, 1999; Dixon and Schertzer, 2005). Green *et al.* (2004) examined the relationship between optimism and performance in manufacturing settings. Results indicated that there is a “very positive link” between employee optimism and level of performance. Recently, Medlin and Green (2009) found a positive, significant correlation (+ 0.637 significant at the 0.01 level) between workplace optimism and individual employee performance based on a survey of 426 full-time and part-time employees working in the Southern USA. Green *et al.* (2004) found a positive, significant correlation (+ 0.450, significant at the 0.01 level) between employee optimism and individual employee performance based on a survey of 133 employees working for US manufacturing plants:

*H14.* Workplace optimism positively impacts individual performance.

### 3. Methodology

Data were collected from 362 full-time employees working in the Southern USA. In total, 196 responses were collected during the spring of 2011 and the remaining 166 responses were collected during the spring of 2012. The sample is a convenience sample with the data being collected by students in MBA quantitative methods classes at Southern Arkansas University in southwest Arkansas who were asked to identify full-time workers and have those workers complete surveys as part of data collection assignments. It should be noted that, while students collected the data, the data were not supplied by students, rather by individuals holding full-time jobs. Sample demographics are displayed in Table II. In total, 44 percent of the responding full-time employees are compensated on an hourly basis, 52 percent are compensated on a salaried basis, and the remaining four percent are compensated on a commission basis. Respondents indicated that they worked for at least 11 different types of organizations. Respondents have been in their current positions an average of 6.4 years. Data were provided by a relatively experienced group full-time employees working for a relatively diverse array of organization types.

	Combined sample (362) (%)
<i>Compensation basis</i>	
Hourly	43.8
Salaried	52.1
Commission	4.1
<i>Organization type</i>	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	1.4
Mining	0.6
Construction	3.9
Manufacturing	16.4
Transportation, communications, electric, gas, and sanitary services	13.9
Wholesale trade	1.6
Retail trade	8.4
Finance, insurance, and real estate	18.7
Local, state, or federal government	11.4
Lodging, personal, and business services	10.0
Other	13.7
Average years in current position	6.4 years

**Table II.**  
Sample  
demographics

The organizational behavior modification scale is newly developed for this study based on the works of Thorndike (1911), Luthans and Stajkovic (1999), and Stajkovic and Luthans (2001). The items in the organizational behavior modification scale reflect the use of positive reinforcement following actions that accomplish organizational objectives and extinction and punishment following actions that do not accomplish organizational objectives. The management principles and management process measurement scales are taken from Medlin and Green (2014). They derived the seven items reflecting management principles identified by Fayol (1916) and four items in the management process scale from the descriptions of the management functions and management process from Fayol (1916), Drucker (1954), and Iacocca (1984). The organizational commitment scale is based on the scale developed by Mowday *et al.* (1979). The job satisfaction scale is revised based on the scale developed by Smith *et al.* (1969). The employee engagement scale was previously developed and assessed by Buckingham and Coffman (1999). The workplace optimism scale is from Medlin and Green (2009). The individual performance scale is derived from scales developed by Green *et al.* (2004). All measurement scales are displayed in the list above.

Measurement scales are assessed for validity and reliability. The structural model is assessed using partial least squares (PLS) structural equation modeling (SEM) because the focus is on hypothesis testing and prediction (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Specifically, SmartPLS 3.0 developed by Ringle, Wende, and Will (<http://SmartPLS.de>).

## 4. Results

### 4.1 *Measurement scale validity and reliability*

Convergent validity is assessed by reviewing the standardized loadings for each of the first-order constructs with loadings greater than 0.70 indicating sufficient convergent validity (Chiang *et al.*, 2012). It should be noted that items 3, 6, and 7 were removed from the management principles scale and item 5 was removed from the organizational commitment scale due to concern that these items are conceptually related to items in other scales. It was also necessary to remove items 3-6 from the organizational behavior modification scale, item 3 from the management principles scale, and item 5 from the individual performance scale to achieve sufficient convergent and discriminant validity. The items removed are identified in Table II. The remaining standardized factor loadings for all measurement scale items equal or exceed the 0.70 threshold.

To assess for discriminant validity, the square root of the average variance extracted value for each construct is compared to the correlations with other constructs with square root values greater than the correlations signifying sufficient discriminant validity (Wetzels *et al.*, 2009). Square root of average variance extracted values and construct correlations are displayed in Table III. The square root values for each of the constructs exceed correlations with other constructs.

Scale reliability is assessed based on Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , composite reliability, and average variance extracted values (see Table III). All  $\alpha$ , composite reliability, and average variance extracted values exceed the respective minimums of 0.70, 0.70, and 0.50 recommended by Garver and Mentzer (1999) indicating that the measurement scales exhibit sufficient reliability.

### 4.2 *Common method bias*

Podsakoff and Organ (1986) recommend that Harman's one-factor test be used to assess the degree of common method bias. The items in the sample were subjected

**Table III.**

Reliability scores and correlations among first-order latent constructs

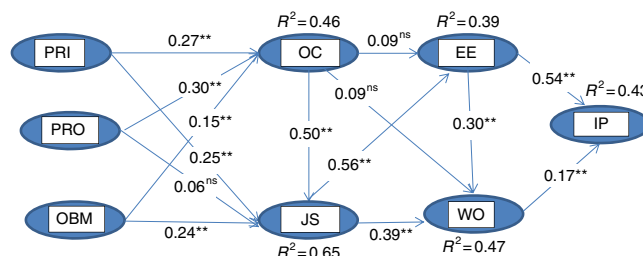
Variables	CA	CR	AVE	EE	IP	JS	OBM	OC	PRI	PRO	WO
EE	0.82	0.89	0.74	<i>0.86</i>							
IP	0.91	0.94	0.78	0.64	<i>0.88</i>						
JS	0.80	0.86	0.56	0.62	0.44	<i>0.75</i>					
OBM	0.96	0.98	0.96	0.42	0.31	0.54	<i>0.98</i>				
OC	0.91	0.94	0.79	0.53	0.39	0.77	0.56	<i>0.89</i>			
PRI	0.77	0.85	0.59	0.66	0.47	0.67	0.51	0.62	<i>0.77</i>		
PRO	0.88	0.92	0.73	0.66	0.50	0.66	0.59	0.61	0.70	<i>0.85</i>	
WO	0.92	0.94	0.76	0.58	0.49	0.64	0.43	0.57	0.53	0.55	<i>0.87</i>

**Notes:** CA, Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ; CR, composite reliability; AVE, average variance extracted; EE, employee engagement; IP, individual performance; JS, job satisfaction; OBM, organizational behavior modification; OC, organizational commitment; PRI, principles of management; PRO, management process; WO, workplace optimism. Square root of AVE in italic on diagonal

to principal components factor analyses. Substantial common method variance is signified when a single factor explains a majority of the total variance. The results reveal eight factors with eigenvalues greater than one, which combine to account for 69 percent of the total variance. The first factor accounted for 38 percent which is less than a majority of the total variance. Based upon these results of Harman's one-factor tests, problems associated with common method bias for the sample are not considered significant (Podsakoff and Organ 1986).

#### 4.3 Structural model assessment

Figure 2 displays the PLS SEM results. Of the 14 hypotheses embedded within the model, 11 of the hypotheses are supported with positive standardized coefficients that are significant at the 0.01 and three are non-significant. Management process does not directly impact job satisfaction. Rather, management process impacts job satisfaction indirectly through organizational commitment. Organizational commitment does not directly affect either employee engagement or workplace optimism. Rather, organizational commitment indirectly affects both engagement and optimism through job satisfaction. These results are summarized in Table IV.



**Figure 2.**  
PLS results  
standardized  
coefficients and  
 $R^2$  values

**Notes:** ns, Non-significant; OBM, organizational behavior modification; JS, job satisfaction; PRI, management principles; EE, employee engagement; PRO, management process; WO, workplace optimism; OC, organizational commitment; IP, individual performance. \*\*Significant at the 0.01 level

Hypothesis	Standardized coefficient	Study conclusion	Evidence from literature
H1: PRI → OC	0.27 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	Supportive culture associated with organizational commitment (Silverthorne, 2004; Alvi <i>et al.</i> , 2014)
H2: PRO → OC	0.30 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	Supportive culture associated with organizational commitment (Silverthorne, 2004; Alvi <i>et al.</i> , 2014)
H3: OBM → OC	0.15 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	OBM outcomes of hope, optimism, and resilience are contributors to organizational commitment (Youssef and Luthans, 2007)
H4: PRI → JS	0.25 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	Supportive culture associated with job satisfaction (Silverthorne, 2004; Alvi <i>et al.</i> , 2014)
H5: PRO → JS	0.06 (non-significant)	Not supported	MBO intervention positively impacts improved employee satisfaction (Thompson <i>et al.</i> , 1981)
H6: OBM → JS	0.24 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	OBM outcomes of hope, optimism, and resilience are contributors to job satisfaction (Youssef and Luthans, 2007)
H7: OC → JS	0.50 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	$R = 0.63$ (Green and Medlin, 2010)
H8: OC → EE	0.09 (non-significant)	Not supported	$R = 0.71$ (Shuck <i>et al.</i> , 2011); $R = 0.53$ (Boon and Kalshoven, 2014)
H9: OC → WO	0.09 (non-significant)	Not supported	No empirical results found
H10: JS → EE	0.56 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	$R = 0.58$ (Green and Medlin, 2010); $R = 0.60$ (Abraham, 2012); $R = 0.32$ (Biswas and Bhatnagar, 2013); $R = 0.67$ (Brunetto <i>et al.</i> , 2012)
H11: JS → WO	0.39 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	$R = +0.41$ for the relationship between job satisfaction and a measure of generalized optimism (Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser, 2008)
H12: EE → WO	0.30 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	No empirical results found
H13: EE → IP	0.54 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	No empirical results found
H14: WO → IP	0.17 (sig. at 0.01 level)	Supported	$R = 0.64$ (Medlin and Green, 2009); $R = 0.45$ (Green <i>et al.</i> , 2004)

**Table IV.**  
Support for hypotheses

## 5. Conclusions

### 5.1 Discussion of findings

While the model is generally supported, it is important to further discuss potential reasons why three of the hypothesized links are non-significant. The management process does not directly affect job satisfaction with the context of the model. The management process is designed to ensure that employees know specifically what is expected from them in their organizational roles and to ensure that they have sufficient resources to fulfill those expectations. In the hypotheses section, we argued that such knowledge of expectations and assurance of sufficient resources would lead to higher levels of job satisfaction. Based on the results the effect of the management process on job satisfaction is indirect through organizational commitment, rather than direct. This may have been a product of our survey. Often job satisfaction is divided into several categories; for instance, personal disposition, tasks and roles, supervisors and co-workers, and pay and benefits (Noe *et al.*, 2014). The job satisfaction scale adopted for this study measures focussed on the pay and tasks; while the management process is a measure of management/supervisor interaction. Use a satisfaction with supervision scale may have provided different results.

Well communicated expectations and sufficient resources increase employee' commitment to the organization which in turn improves job satisfaction. Within the context of the model, organizational commitment does not directly impact either employee engagement or workplace optimism. Instead the effects on engagement and optimism are indirect through job satisfaction. Based on these results job satisfaction is key to improving both engagement and optimism and commitment is one key to improving job satisfaction.

Following the strongest linkages through the model, the sequence of impact on human resource outcomes appears to be from the management practices and policies to commitment to job satisfaction to employee engagement and finally to optimism. It should be noted that both employee engagement and workplace optimism are directly with employee performance. The impact of engagement is much stronger ( $\beta = 0.54$ ) vs the impact of optimism ( $\beta = 0.17$ ). To summarize, the results support the general proposition that application of the management practices and policies leads to improved human resource outcomes which in turn lead to improved employee performance.

### *5.2 Limitations and future research*

While we believe that we have provided reasonable support for the theorized model, there are alternate models that pose different formulations of the relationships among the human resource outcome constructs that could and should be considered. Because the study is based on data from a convenience sample, it is not possible to assess non-response bias. We recommend that the theorized model be assessed using data from a random sample of full-time employees working in the USA in an attempt to verify the results. We also recommend that random sample of employees working in other countries be analyze in an effort to generalize the results presented here. Concerning the measurement scales used, the organizational behavior modification scale was reduced to a two-item scale with the items representing the positive reinforcement component only.

### *5.3 Implications for practitioners*

The comprehensive model presented provides practicing managers with a framework for improving the individual performance of employees. The model supports our recommendation that managers develop an environment in which the management practices and policies (organizational behavior modification, management principles, and management process) improve commitment, satisfaction, engagement, and optimism which in turn lead to improved employee performance. Employees who operate within an environment in which the management principles are enforced; know the expectations associated with their positions; and are reinforced for the accomplishment for the fulfillment of those expectations are more likely to be committed to their organizations and satisfied with their jobs. Employees who are more committed and satisfied are more likely to be engaged in their work and optimistic about their success. Ultimately, such engagement and optimism result in high levels of individual performance. In addition, the model provides a framework for use by management educators as they strive to provide concrete strategies to students concerning how the students must manage to improve organizational commitment, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and workplace optimism and to explain how the human resource outcomes impact employee performance.

The model and assessment results inform management practitioners, management educators, and management students as to what works practically to improve

employee performance. The current literature provides evidence that supports some of the hypothesized individual link, but the literature does not synthesize the evidence into a single framework that offers a holistic view of how managers should behave and what can be expected as the result of their behavior. Managers who adhere to the management principles, implement the management process, and reinforce employee success will ensure commitment, satisfaction, engagement, optimism, and above all that their employees are high performers.

### Note

1. Items removed to achieve sufficient convergent and discriminant validity. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement as it relates to your workplace (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

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