

Work Alienation as an Individual-Difference Construct for Predicting Workplace Adjustment: A Test in Two Samples¹

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This study represents the first attempt to examine the validity of work alienation as a general attitude toward the work domain. As hypothesized, hierarchical regression analyses of data from 2 employee samples ($n = 99$ and $n = 250$) indicated that work alienation explained incremental variance in selected workplace adjustment variables (i.e., job involvement, affective organizational commitment, affective occupational commitment, overall job satisfaction, and volitional absence) beyond the variance accounted for by work conscientiousness (i.e., dependability and achievement orientation) and by variables used to control for sources of self-report variance (i.e., self-deception and negative affectivity). These results support the legitimacy of work alienation as an individual-difference construct associated with work-related adjustment.

Work alienation has been conceptualized as a psychological construct (Kanungo, 1979, 1982; Kobasa, Maddi, & Kahn, 1982) that captures the subjective experience of the individual worker. As used in the present study, work alienation represents a generalized, indifferent outlook toward work that indicates an absence of enthusiasm and involvement (Kobasa et al., 1982). To date, the only (albeit indirect) attention that work alienation has received in the applied psychology literature is as a component of a commitment disposition; that is, as an aspect of the tendency to "involve oneself in (rather than experience alienation from) whatever one is doing or encounters" (Kobasa et al., 1982, p. 169). The commitment-disposition construct, in turn, is associated with affect-laden adjustment variables, such as optimism, self-esteem, and depression (Hull, Van Treuren, & Virnelli, 1987). Work alienation thus has not been examined apart from its role as an aspect of a broader, noncontextual commitment propensity.

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Consequently, the present study represents the first attempt to investigate the role of work alienation as an individual-difference construct that accounts for meaningful variance in forms of work-related adjustment.

Although Kobasa et al. (1982) regarded work alienation as part of a personal-disposition, the nature of the items (Appendix) used to measure work alienation (Maddi, Kobasa, & Hoover, 1979) suggests that, rather than being a personality factor, work alienation is a general attitude reflecting a lack of workplace enthusiasm and involvement. Items used to assess personality usually elicit self-presentations of respondents' behavioral consistencies or traits (Hogan, 1991; Klimoski, 1993). In contrast, work-alienation items in the Maddi et al. (1979) measure require respondents to present their beliefs and feelings about the work domain (an external referent), rather than to self-present their own reputation or identity (Hogan & Shelton, 1998).

Although work alienation is an attitudinal construct, it may nonetheless represent a general tendency to respond to work endeavors and settings in an unenthusiastic and uninvolved manner. Such an attitude is presumably shaped by a person's work-specific experiences in adulthood, including, at least to some extent, encounters with one's present work situation. It should be noted that not one of the Maddi et al. (1979) work-alienation items (Appendix) uses one's present job as a referent. Rather, work-alienation items are directed toward the work domain in general.

Rokeach (1968) defined an *attitude* as "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner" (p. 112). Similarly, Reber (1985) acknowledged that an attitude may be defined as "a response tendency" (p. 65). The conceptualization of an attitude as a somewhat stable response propensity (at least in the short-term) is thus likely to be especially germane for attitudes directed toward a class of situations, such as the world of work or work in general (Kanungo, 1982; Morrow, 1993; Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994; Shamir, 1986). This reasoning is consistent with Rokeach's assertion that a person with a particular attitude will have a propensity to selectively perceive, interpret, evaluate, remember, and think in ways that correspond with the attitude.

Rokeach (1968) noted the potential importance of attitudes toward a cluster of situations (e.g., work contexts) and implied that such constructs may complement personality traits in accounting for responses and experiences in specific social settings (e.g., a specific job or organization). Because work alienation represents an unenthusiastic attitude toward work endeavors and settings, the present study investigates whether it complements work-specific conscientiousness in accounting for aspects of workplace adjustment reflecting affective experiences in specific work situations.

Of the so-called Big Five personality factors, conscientiousness has drawn special attention in the industrial-organizational psychology literature as the

findings of several large-scale studies have led to the conclusion that it functions as a valid predictor of workplace behavior (Barrick & Mount, 1991, 1996; Hough, Eaton, Dunnette, Kamp, & McCloy, 1990; Mount & Barrick, 1995; Salgado, 1997). The construct of conscientiousness is comprised of two subdimensions: *dependability* and *achievement orientation* (e.g., Mount & Barrick, 1995). *Dependability* encompasses the extent to which an individual is purposeful, determined, reliable, persistent, and feels a sense of obligation (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Costa & McCrae, 1992; Mount & Barrick, 1995). *Achievement orientation* refers to the extent to which an individual has high aspiration levels, sets high standards, and is willing to work hard toward task accomplishment (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Hough et al., 1990; Jackson, 1984).

We posit that dependability and achievement orientation are valid predictors of workplace involvement and enthusiasm. In addition, we anticipate that, because of its affective content, work alienation complements conscientiousness in predicting aspects of workplace adjustment that reflect affective experiences pertaining to specific endeavors and settings.

Most widely used personality assessment inventories are composed of items thought to generalize across situations. Recent research, however, has shown that incorporating a specific situational context (i.e., work) in the wording of personality inventory items enhances their accuracy in predicting workplace experiences (Schmit, Ryan, Stierwalt, & Powell, 1995). This is thought to be so because the wording of nonsituational items (e.g., "I am persistent") as opposed to contextual specific items (e.g., "I am persistent at work") may elicit different responses. Some respondents, for example, may consider only work-related experiences in replying to noncontextual items, whereas others may reflect on their overall life experiences. In particular, Schmit et al. have shown that by providing a common frame of reference, context-specific items (i.e., items that specifically refer to behavior at work) improve the criterion-related validity of conscientiousness scores.

Thus, the present study incorporates frame-of-reference effects by using work-specific measures of dependability and achievement orientation to assess work conscientiousness. Our intention in doing so is to maximize the validity of dependability and achievement orientation in accounting for variance in selected workplace adjustment variables and, therefore, to provide a stringent test of the usefulness of work alienation, in complementing conscientiousness, as a predictor of adjustment relating to specific work roles.

Research Question

The primary research question the present study thus addresses is whether work alienation complements work conscientiousness by explaining incremental (unique) variance in selected aspects of adjustment and involvement in a work situation. Because important affect-related experiences are often not detected by

behavioral measures, House, Shane, and Herold (1996) considered psychological reactions to a work setting to be valuable criteria in researching possible manifestations of individuals' response propensities. Consistent with the measures of workplace adjustment used by Saks (1995), the criteria chosen for study (i.e., job involvement, affective organizational commitment, affective occupational commitment, overall job satisfaction, and volitional absence) all reflect aspects of adjustment to specific work roles. To this end, we use hierarchical regression analysis to test the extent to which work alienation explains unique variance in these criteria beyond the variance accounted for by work conscientiousness, controlling for sources of self-report method variance.

Hypothesis. Work alienation accounts for incremental variance in job involvement, affective organizational commitment, affective occupational commitment, overall job satisfaction, and volitional absence beyond the variance accounted for by work conscientiousness components (dependability and achievement orientation) and variables used to control for sources of self-report method variance (self-deception and negative affectivity).

Method

Self-Report Control Variables

Whenever self-report methods are used to measure variables in conducting research, there exists the possibility that common method variance (i.e., percept-bias) inflates or upwardly biases relations among focal variables. Spector and Brannick (1995) specifically identified social desirability and negative affectivity as sources of method variance that result from respondents' personalities. Therefore, they recommended that these potential causes of method variance be measured and statistically controlled in studies where percept-percept bias is an issue.

Social desirability is a tendency for study participants to claim socially desirable or favorable psychological and behavioral characteristics. Self-deception was used in this study as a social desirability control variable because it represents the type of response distortion most likely to bias responses under anonymous survey administrations (Barrick & Mount, 1996; Paulhus, 1984). Those who score high on measures of self-deception present themselves as psychologically well-adjusted, achievement-oriented, and having positively biased self-images (Barrick & Mount, 1996; Paulhus, 1991; Paulhus & Reid, 1991). If self-deception is related to self-reports of the work-specific variables included in this study, it could cause the observed relationships among these variables to be inflated. Thus, we controlled for self-deception in testing the study hypothesis.

Another response tendency that has been shown to generate method effects by spuriously inflating relations among self-report variables is the general tendency to respond to affective items in a similar way. This response bias is captured in the negative affectivity construct. Because negative affectivity reflects a pervasive tendency to perceive and interpret a wide range of phenomena in a negative and dissatisfied light (Burke, Brief, & George, 1993; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998; Watson & Clark, 1984), there exists a concern that negative affectivity potentially biases the relations among self-reports of affect-related variables (Burke et al., 1993; Spector & Brannick, 1995; Williams, Gavin, & Williams, 1996). Negative affectivity, therefore, was also included as a control variable in this study.

Participants and Data-Collection Procedures

We used two samples as data sources for this study. To lessen the possible effects of priming and consistency between the study's predictors and criteria as a result of common method variance, a data-collection strategy adapted from Williams et al. (1996) was employed with each sample. Accordingly, two waves of questionnaires were used to measure the focal variables and were administered at separate points in time. The first questionnaire included the measures of work-in-general response tendencies (predictor variables) to be examined, as well as the control variable(s). All criterion variables were measured on a second questionnaire administered either 2 weeks (Sample 1) or 3 weeks later (Sample 2).

Sample 1. The first sample was recruited from 180 full-time employees working at the corporate headquarters of a *Fortune 200* financial-services corporation. The jobs represented in the sample involved written and oral communications with customers. Participant-generated codes served as the means for matching questionnaires collected over the two time periods. Participants answered the questionnaires at their workstations and, upon completion, deposited them into a sealed collection box at a centralized departmental location. Fully completed questionnaires were returned by 130 respondents, constituting a Time 1 response rate of 72%. The second questionnaire was administered 2 weeks later. Administration of the follow-up questionnaire (Time 2) yielded 99 usable, matched pairs of questionnaires. These questionnaire pairs constituted a Time 2 response rate of 76% (99/130) and an overall response rate of 55% (99/180).

The final respondent sample was predominantly female (87%), with an average educational level of some formal education beyond high school. Racial composition of the final sample was as follows: White (69%), Black (19%), Hispanic (7%), and other (5%).

Sample 2. Data for the second sample were collected from employed adults working full time and enrolled in graduate and undergraduate classes at a metropolitan state university that offers academic courses on weekday evenings and

weekends. As with the first sample, participant-generated codes served as the means for matching questionnaires collected over the two time periods. Fully completed questionnaires were returned by 327 respondents out of 409 potential participants, constituting a Time 1 response rate of 80%. Administration of the follow-up questionnaire 3 weeks later (Time 2) yielded 250 usable, matched pairs of questionnaires. These questionnaire pairs constituted a Time 2 response rate of 76% (250/327) and an overall response rate of 61% (250/409).

The final respondent sample was predominantly female (73%), with an average age of 35 years. Most participants were graduate students (78%) with the remainder (22%) being undergraduate students. Respondents reported their job titles, which are summarized by the following categories: teacher (47%), administrative/managerial (18%), clerical/secretary (10%), school administration (7%), school counseling (6%), finance/analyst (4%), sales/customer service (4%), technical/science (2%), counseling (1%), and law enforcement (1%). Racial composition of the final sample was as follows: White (67%), Black (29%), Hispanic (2%), and other (2%).

Measures: Predictor Variables

The predictor and control variables were measured in the first questionnaire. All criterion variables appeared on the second questionnaire. Self-deception was used as a control variable in both samples. Given the need to minimize the length of the questionnaires for Sample 1, negative affectivity was not included in the first questionnaire completed by this sample. Negative affectivity, however, was included and was used as a control variable in Sample 2. Volitional absence was employed as a dependent variable in Sample 1. Unless otherwise noted, a 6-point response scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*) accompanied all items composing the multi-item measures on the questionnaires.

Work alienation. Work alienation was assessed by 10 items adapted from a 12-item measure developed by Maddi et al. (1979); items are presented in the Appendix). One item concerning a career dealing with matters of life and death and one item concerning a more dangerous job being better were deemed inappropriate for the study and were omitted. Several remaining items were slightly altered to improve readability. A high work-alienation score reflects a generalized disengagement and detachment from work (Kobasa et al., 1982). A sample item is, "I find it difficult to imagine enthusiasm concerning work." Alphas for the measure were .74 in Sample 1 and .81 in Sample 2.

Dependability. Work-specific dependability was assessed by 13 items selected from the NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (NEO PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992) to measure persistence, determination, and reliability concerning work-related endeavors. Eight of the 13 items came from the eight-item self-discipline

subscale intended to tap the ability to begin tasks and carry them through despite boredom and other distractions (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Five of the self-discipline subscale items contained no reference to work and were, following the suggestions of Schmit et al. (1995), altered to include a work referent. A sample item is, "I have a lot of self-discipline concerning work."³ The remaining five items were taken from the NEO PI-R dutifulness subscale and were used specifically to measure dependability. Two of the five items offered no contextual frame of reference and were therefore altered to create a work-specific context for all of the items (Schmit et al., 1995). A sample item is, "When I make a commitment concerning work, I can always be counted on to follow through." Alphas for the 13-item measure were .79 in Sample 1 and .85 in Sample 2.

Achievement orientation. Work-specific achievement orientation was measured by the eight-item achievement striving subscale of the NEO PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Seven of the achievement striving items contained no reference to work and were therefore modified to be work-specific, based on Schmit et al.'s (1995) recommendations. A high achievement-orientation score reflects high aspiration levels and the tendency to strive for accomplishment in one's work. A sample item is, "I strive to achieve all I can concerning work." Alphas for the achievement orientation measure were .69 in Sample 1 and .67 in Sample 2.

Measures: Control Variables

Self-deception. Self-deception, included in the first questionnaire for both samples, was used in this study as a social desirability control variable. Ten items from the self-deception subscale of the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR; Paulhus, 1991) were employed to assess the extent to which one claims a positively biased self-image relating to rationality and judgment. A sample item is, "I always know why I do the things I do." We used the standard, dichotomous scoring procedure that was recommended by Paulhus (1991) and employed by Barrick and Mount (1996). Only responses of 5 (*agree*) or 6 (*strongly agree*) were scored; these responses were assigned 1 point each. Thus, the 10-item score could range from 0 to 10. Higher scores indicate greater self-deception. Alphas were .75 in Sample 1 and .72 in Sample 2.

Negative affectivity. Negative affectivity, included in Sample 2, was assessed by 10 items from the Negative Affectivity Scale (Levin & Stokes, 1989). A high score indicates a pervasive tendency to perceive and interpret a wide range of

phenomena in a negative affective manner. A sample item is, "I almost always expect the worst to happen." Alpha for the measure was .78.

Measures: Criterion Variables

The criterion variables were included in the second questionnaire for both samples. Volitional absence was assessed in Sample 1. All other criteria were assessed in both samples.

Job involvement. Paullay et al.'s (1994) 13-item job-involvement-role measure was employed to evaluate the extent to which employees were engaged psychologically in the tasks that comprised their jobs. A sample item is, "I am absorbed in the type of work that I do in my present job." Alphas were .84 in Sample 1 and .86 in Sample 2.

Organizational commitment. Meyer, Allen, and Smith's (1993) six-item affective organizational commitment measure was used to gauge an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in one's work organization. A sample item is, "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization." Alphas were .88 in Sample 1 and .89 in Sample 2.

Occupational commitment. Blau's (1988) seven-item career-commitment measure was used to assess respondents' affective commitment to their current line of work. A sample item is, "I like my current occupation too well to give it up." Alphas were .82 in Sample 1 and .89 in Sample 2.

Overall job satisfaction. Overall job satisfaction, the extent to which individuals like their jobs (Spector, 1997), was measured with two items. The single-item job-in-general measure used by Judge, Cable, Boudreau, and Bretz (1995) and by Scarpello and Campbell (1983) was employed along with a 5-point response scale ranging from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 5 (*very satisfied*). For the second overall job-satisfaction item, Andrews and Withey's (1976) *delighted-terrible* 7-point response scale was used by respondents in responding to the question, "How do you feel about your job overall?" These two overall job satisfaction items were combined to form a composite measure with alphas of .85 in Sample 1 and .87 in Sample 2.

Volitional absence. The volitional-absence measure was intended to reflect an affective or emotive source of motivation (Bagozzi, 1992; Lazarus, 1991). Because of its nature, it thus could not be culled from organizational records and could only be assessed through self-report. To assess volitional absence in Sample 1, Meyer et al.'s (1993) self-reported measure of voluntary absence was used. Respondents in Sample 1 were asked to report how many days they were absent from scheduled work over the last year because they did not feel like going to work. This measure used a free-response format, as recommended by Johns (1994), to mitigate common method variance concerns. It was anticipated that this type of absence would occur relatively infrequently in Sample 1. In this vein,

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Hackett (1989) reported an analysis indicating that range restriction may attenuate observed relationships with absence frequency in many studies. Consequently, the 1-year time interval was intended to be long enough to enhance reliability and variance, but short enough to minimize memory loss and underreporting of absences.

Self-report measures of absence often have some advantages over archival data, and evidence exists supporting their reliability and validity (Harrison & Shaffer, 1994; Johns, 1994; Spector, 1987). For example, the average of the reliability coefficients of single-item, self-reported absence measures reported in Johns' (1994) review is .60. This value compares favorably to the mean interrater reliability estimate of .52 for supervisory ratings of overall job performance resulting from Viswesvaran, Ones, and Schmidt's (1996) meta-analysis of the reliability of job performance ratings.

Results

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations for all study variables. Self-deception correlated with dependability ($r = .28$ in Sample 1; $r = .45$ in Sample 2) and achievement orientation ($r = .28$ in Sample 1; $r = .28$ in Sample 2). The relation between self-deception and the two facets of work conscientiousness is consistent with theory and with prior empirical results that show that high scorers on self-deception present themselves as achievement oriented (Barrick & Mount, 1996; Mount & Barrick, 1995). Self-deception also correlated with negative affectivity ($r = -.45$ in Sample 2). This result comports with other research showing that social desirability and negative affectivity are related (Spector & Brannick, 1995; Watson & Clark, 1984).

Work-Conscientiousness Measurement Model

Prior to testing the study hypothesis, we tested the work-conscientiousness measurement model used in this study. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test whether dependability and achievement orientation are two distinct components. A comparison of two-factor and one-factor models tested the discriminant validity of dependability and achievement orientation for both samples. The two-factor model was the hypothesized measurement model. Because this comparison involved hierarchically nested models, the chi-square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2$) indicated which model best fit the data. Goodness of fit was also evaluated by the chi square/degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) and three indexes proposed by Bentler (1992) and Bollen (1989): normed fit index (NFI), nonnormed fit index (NNFI), and comparative fit index (CFI). Values of the NFI, NNFI, and CFI indexes that are greater than .90 are generally considered to indicate a good model fit.

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Study Variables

Variable	Sample 1		Sample 2	
	M	SD	M	SD
1. Alienation	2.53	0.69	NA	2.15
2. Dependability	5.11	0.50	NA	5.06
3. Achievement	4.47	0.57	NA	4.50
4. Self-deception	3.75	2.70	NA	3.47
5. Affectivity	NA	NA	NA	3.15
6. Involvement	4.68	0.65	NA	4.89
7. Organization	4.20	1.07	NA	4.33
8. Occupation	3.57	1.01	NA	4.22
9. Satisfaction	4.25	1.05	NA	4.70
10. Absence	1.56	2.25	—	NA

Note. Sample 1 values are located to the left of the diagonal. For Sample 1, $n = 96$ to 99; correlations with absolute values of .21 or greater are significant at $p < .05$, two-tailed. Sample 2 values appear to the right of the diagonal. For Sample 2, $n = 250$; correlations with absolute values of .13 or greater are significant at $p < .05$, two-tailed. NA = not applicable. Alienation = work alienation; Achievement = achievement orientation; Affectivity = negative affectivity; Involvement = job involvement; Organization = affective organizational commitment; Occupation = affective occupational commitment; Satisfaction = overall job satisfaction; Absence = volitional absence.

Table 2

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Dependability and Achievement Orientation Measures

Model ^a	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	NFI	NNFI	CFI	$\Delta\chi^2$ (df)
Sample 1							
One-factor	33.23	9	3.69	.87	.84	.90	
Two-factor	24.84	8	3.10	.91	.87	.93	8.39 (1)**
Sample 2							
One-factor	32.83	9	3.65	.95	.94	.96	
Two-factor	7.82	8	0.98	.99	1.00	1.00	25.01 (1)***

Note. $n = 130$ for Sample 1. $n = 250$ for Sample 2. NFI = normed fit index. NNFI = non-normed fit index. CFI = comparative fit index.

^aTwo-factor models are hypothesized in each comparison.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Bentler (1992) recommended a sample size to estimated parameter ratio of at least 5:1 to derive reliable parameter estimates. To adhere to Bentler's recommendation and to be procedurally consistent in conducting all of the confirmatory factor analyses, we used the procedures outlined by Brooke, Russell, and Price (1988) and Mathieu and Farr (1991) to form three indicators of dependability and three indicators of achievement orientation in both samples. Indicator scores were computed by averaging across the items composing each indicator. EQS (Bentler, 1992) was used to analyze the resultant 6×6 covariance matrices.

Table 2 presents the confirmatory factor analysis results. The chi-square difference test results indicate that, for both samples, the hypothesized two-factor model resulted in a better fit than did the one-factor model. Moreover, the other fit indexes confirmed the chi-square difference test results and suggest that the two-factor model generally produced an excellent fit to the data. The confirmatory factor analysis results in both samples thus demonstrate that dependability and achievement orientation were nonredundant variables.

Study Hypothesis Test

We conducted hierarchical regression analysis (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) to test the study hypothesis. For each regression equation, the first hierarchical step involved the entry of the control variable(s). Self-deception was the control variable in Sample 1; self-deception and negative affectivity were the control variables in Sample 2. The two work-conscientiousness variables were entered at the second step of each hierarchical regression model. The study hypothesis was

tested by entering work alienation in the regression equations at the third hierarchical step. This procedure examines the contribution of work alienation beyond that of the variables entered at the two preceding steps in accounting for variance in each criterion variable (George, 1991).

Table 3 shows the hierarchical regression analysis results for Sample 1. The variance inflation factors for the four predictors in the complete equations ranged from 1.04 for work alienation to 1.29 for dependability. Neter, Wasserman, and Kutner (1990) proposed that a variance inflation factor greater than 10 indicates that collinearity may be influencing least-squares estimates. The values observed in Sample 1, therefore, indicate that multicollinearity among the predictor variables was not a concern. Self-deception was entered first in each equation and failed to account for variance at any of the criteria. Dependability and achievement orientation were entered at the second hierarchical step. These two work-conscientiousness variables together accounted for incremental variance (ΔR^2) in two criteria: job involvement ($\Delta R^2 = .14, p < .01$) and affective organizational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .10, p < .01$). The inclusion of work alienation at the third step of the hierarchical analysis resulted in incremental variance explained for all five criteria: job involvement ($\Delta R^2 = .04, p < .05$), affective organizational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .07, p < .01$), affective occupational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .09, p < .01$), overall job satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .15, p < .01$), and volitional absence ($\Delta R^2 = .12, p < .01$). The study hypothesis was therefore supported in Sample 1.

Table 4 shows the hierarchical regression analysis results for Sample 2. The variance inflation factors for the five predictors in the complete equations ranged from 1.19 for work alienation to 1.92 for dependability. As was true in Sample 1, the values observed in Sample 2 indicate that multicollinearity among the predictor variables did not affect the least-squares estimates (Neter et al., 1990). Self-deception and negative affectivity were entered at the first step of the hierarchical regression analysis in each equation. Together, these two control variables accounted for variance in each criterion variable: job involvement ($\Delta R^2 = .05, p < .01$), affective organizational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .04, p < .01$), affective occupational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .03, p < .05$), and overall job satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .05, p < .01$). Dependability and achievement orientation were entered at the second hierarchical step and together explained incremental variance in all four criteria: job involvement ($\Delta R^2 = .25, p < .01$), affective organizational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .10, p < .01$), affective occupational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .09, p < .01$), and overall job satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .08, p < .01$). When entered at the third step of the hierarchical analysis, the inclusion of work alienation resulted in incremental variance explained for all four criteria: job involvement ($\Delta R^2 = .09, p < .01$), affective organizational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .12, p < .01$), affective occupational commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .14, p < .01$), and overall job satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .15, p < .01$). As was true for Sample 1, the hierarchical regression results in Sample 2 supported the study hypothesis.

Table 3

Sample 1 Hierarchical Regression Results

	Job involvement		Affective organizational commitment	
	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β
Step 1: Control variable	.01		.00	
Self-deception		0.03		0.00
Step 2: Conscientiousness	.14**		.10*	
Dependability		0.10		-0.02
Achievement orientation		0.30**		0.29**
Step 3: Work alienation	.04*		.07**	
R^2	.19	.15	.17	.13

Note. $N = 96$. β is the standard regression coefficient when all four independent variables are entered in each complete equation. ΔR^2 is the incremental variance explained by the variable or variable set entered at each hierarchical step. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Discussion

The present study sought to investigate whether work alienation is a meaningful individual-difference variable that captures a notable portion of the affective experience of the individual worker. In doing so, it represents the first attempt to examine the validity of work alienation as a general tendency to respond to specific endeavors and settings in an unenthusiastic and uninvolved manner.

The results of this study suggest that work alienation is a relevant predictor of work-related adjustment. As hypothesized, data from separate samples indicate that work alienation accounted for incremental variance in forms of workplace adjustment that reflect affective experiences in specific work situations (i.e., job involvement, affective organizational commitment, affective occupational commitment, overall job satisfaction, and volitional absence) beyond the variance accounted for by work-specific conscientiousness (i.e., dependability and achievement orientation) and variables used to control for sources of self-report method variance (i.e., self-deception and negative affectivity). Given the stringent nature of the hierarchical regression procedure used to test the study

Dependent variables

	Affective occupational commitment		Overall job satisfaction		Volitional absence	
	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β
Step 1: Control variable	.01		.00		.00	
Self-deception		0.07		0.03		0.00
Step 2: Conscientiousness	.06		.06		.03	
Dependability		0.09		-0.01		-0.09
Achievement orientation		0.15		0.20		-0.06
Step 3: Work alienation	.09**		.15**		.12**	
R^2	.16	.12	.21	.18	.15	.11

variables have been entered in each complete equation. ΔR^2 is the incremental variance

hypothesis (Judge & Cable, 1997), our results demonstrate the usefulness of work alienation and support its legitimacy as an individual-difference construct.

The regression coefficient for work alienation was significant in the complete models for all outcome variables across both study samples. This result suggests that work-alienated employees are unlikely to experience positive encounters and interactions at work. From a practical perspective, the likely resulting negative and adversarial consequences would be expected to surface in numerous ways. For example, the relationship that work alienation demonstrated with volitional absence indicates that employees alienated from work may manifest their dissatisfaction in more frequent absences.

Among the two work-conscientiousness components, achievement orientation proved to be the better predictor of the study's criteria. In the complete regression models, the coefficient for achievement orientation was significant in the equations predicting job involvement and affective organizational commitment for Sample 1, and in all four equations for Sample 2. This finding is congruent with research supporting the validity of achievement orientation as a predictor of work-related criteria (Hough, 1992; Hough et al., 1990; Mount & Barrick, 1995; Schneider & Hough, 1995). In fact, research suggests that achievement

orientation accounts for the validity of conscientiousness in predicting motivation-related criteria (Kanfer & Heggstad, 1997; Mount & Barrick, 1995).

Because self-report methods were used to measure the variables in this study, there exists the possibility that common method variance (percept-percept bias) influenced the observed relationships. For both samples, the self-deception regression coefficient was nonsignificant in every equation. This finding is consistent with the results of two meta-analyses; the first (Moorman & Podsakoff, 1992) demonstrating that social desirability does not significantly influence the relationships among variables, such as need for achievement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment; and the second (Ones, Viswesvaran, & Reiss, 1996) showing that social desirability does not affect the relationships between personality factors and competence-related criteria.

The regression coefficient for negative affectivity (Sample 2) was also nonsignificant in every equation in which it was entered. This finding comports with recent studies concluding that negative affectivity does not significantly bias relations among substantive affect-laden variables measured through self-report (e.g., Munz, Huelsman, Konold, & McKinney, 1996; Williams & Anderson, 1994; Williams et al., 1996). In conjunction with our strategy of measuring the study's criterion variables several weeks after its predictor and control variables, the nonsignificance of the control variables suggests that common method variance was not a significant problem (Spector & Brannick, 1995).

Work alienation demonstrated the same pattern of relative incremental variance explained among the four attitudinal criteria within each of the two samples. In Sample 1, work alienation accounted for the most incremental variance in overall job satisfaction (15%), followed, in order of magnitude, by affective occupational commitment (9%), affective organizational commitment (7%), and job involvement (4%). This pattern of incremental variance explained by work alienation (in terms of relative magnitude among the attitudinal criteria) was replicated in the second sample. In Sample 2, work alienation accounted for the following amounts of incremental variance in the criteria: overall job satisfaction (15%), affective occupational commitment (14%), affective organizational commitment (12%), and job involvement (9%). Potential percept-percept bias among the self-report measures in this study cannot account for this consistent pattern of disparate incremental variance explained within each sample because it would inflate covariation among the types of variables included in this study to an equivalent degree (Crampton & Wagner, 1994; Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998; Mayer & Schoorman, 1992; Roznowski & Hanisch, 1990).

The pattern of relative incremental variance explained by work alienation may provide insights into its substantive nature. The fact that work alienation accounted for more incremental variance in overall job satisfaction and affective occupational commitment than in affective organizational commitment and job involvement suggests that work alienation may be associated with individuals'

Table 4 Sample 2 Hierarchical Regression Results

Dependent variables	Step 1: Control variables			Step 2: Conscientiousness			Step 3: Work alienation			R ²
	Ad-justed R ²	β	ΔR ²	Ad-justed R ²	β	ΔR ²	Ad-justed R ²	β	ΔR ²	
Job involvement	.05**	.06	.07	.25**	-.01	.01	.39	-.09**	.37	.39
Affective organizational commitment	.04**	-.03	-.05	.10**	0.08	.09**	.25	.12**	.23	.25
Affective occupational commitment	.03*	-.03	-.05	.09**	0.08	.09**	.26	-.037**	.24	.26
Overall job satisfaction	.05**	-.03	-.05	.08**	0.01	.08**	.28	-.041**	.27	.28
		.00	-.09		-.01	-.01		-.043**		.27

Note: $n = 250$. β is the standardized regression coefficient when all five independent variables have been entered in each complete equation. ΔR^2 is the incremental variance explained by the variable or variable set entered at each hierarchical step.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

perceptions of overall fit with their jobs and line of work. Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 1997) and Kanungo (1979, 1982) suggested that a generalized apathy toward and lack of involvement in work (i.e., work alienation) results from people perceiving that work does not contribute to the attainment of their own personal goals or salient needs. Although we can only conjecture at this point, perhaps subjective evaluations of person-work-role congruence and perceptions of the instrumentality of work form response tendencies that, in turn, play an important role in workplace adjustment.

In this vein, there are several plausible implications for the management of alienated workers. For one, the notion that employers should consider person-organization match, in addition to person-job match, as part of the staffing process is gaining greater recognition (Heneman, Heneman, & Judge, 1997). According to Heneman et al., the match between person and organization (as a broad entity) involves considerations regarding organizational values, new job duties, multiple jobs, and future jobs. More comprehensive and effective staffing systems will presumably improve the adjustment of hires to their new jobs and workplaces. In addition, employers may design jobs around the needs, interests, and capabilities of individuals in a fashion that cultivates opportunities for employees to satisfy their needs and attain personal goals through their work. Finally, perhaps alienated workers stand to benefit from occupational and career-interest assessments that provide constructive feedback and guidance designed to improve person-vocation congruence. Such interventions may improve some individuals' outlook toward and adjustment to their work roles.

Although overtones of causality have been implied throughout this study, its cross-sectional design does not support the conclusion that achievement orientation, dependability, and work alienation cause specific work-related responses. It is possible that attitudes and behaviors concerning one's present job, organization, and occupation influence work-specific behavioral tendencies (dependability and achievement orientation) and work-specific affective response tendencies (work alienation). For example, although work alienation and work conscientiousness are conceptualized as general tendencies related to the work domain, they can be influenced by encounters with specific situations (House et al., 1996). This allows for the possibility that work conscientiousness and work alienation can be affected by a person's experiences in a particular work setting. Nevertheless, research using a predictive validation strategy has supported the direction of causality assumed throughout this study (Barrick & Mount, 1996).

In that the present study provides initial evidence supporting the validity of work alienation as an individual-difference factor, much remains to be learned about the work-alienation construct. For example, the distinctiveness of work alienation from other attitudes toward the work domain in general (e.g., work centrality, work locus of control) should be explored. In addition, the question of whether work alienation has a dispositional basis is a topic for future research to

pursue. Although Kobasa et al. (1982) considered work alienation to be part of a personality disposition, no evidence exists to date that supports this conceptualization. However, there is also no evidence against the possibility that work alienation has some dispositional roots.

It should be noted that in this study, work alienation did positively correlate with the personality trait of negative affectivity ($r = .22, p < .01$, two-tailed) in Sample 2. Moreover, there is growing evidence that some attitudes, including some narrowly conceived ones, have a nontrivial genetic component (Tesser, 1993). Accordingly, although all attitudes are developed through experience, the possibility that work alienation has a dispositional element and is consequently somewhat enduring cannot be ruled out as yet. Future research should investigate causal relations, over time, between work alienation and relevant variables, such as affective traits and states (e.g., George, 1996; George & Brief, 1996), motivational traits and skills (e.g., Kanfer & Heggstad, 1997), job characteristics (e.g., Rentsch & Steel, 1998), and person-vocation congruence (e.g., Hogan & Blake, 1996), in addition to outcome variables such as those included in the present study.

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Appendix

Work Alienation Items Used in Present Study

1. Those who work for a living are manipulated by those who run things.
2. I wonder why I work at all.
3. Most of work life is wasted in meaningless activity.
4. No matter how hard you work, you never really seem to reach your goals.
5. I find it difficult to imagine enthusiasm concerning work.
6. It doesn't matter if people work hard at their jobs; only a few "higher ups" really profit.
7. Ordinary work is too boring to be worth doing.
8. I feel little need to try my best at work for it makes no difference anyway.
9. I don't enjoy work; I just put in my time to get paid.
10. I find it hard to believe people who actually feel that the work they perform is of value to society.

Note. Items 1, 3, 6, 8, and 9 were slightly altered from the corresponding items in the Maddi, Kobasa, and Hoover (1979) measure. For example, in Maddi et al.'s original measure, Item 8 reads "no need" rather than "little need."

The Promotion of New Behavior by Forming an Implementation Intention: Results of a Field Experiment in the Domain of Travel Mode Choice¹

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In the context of an experimental field study, it is analyzed whether furnishing a goal intention with an implementation intention (Gollwitzer, 1993) increases the probability that a new behavior is enacted. For this purpose, 90 students who did not normally use public transportation were asked to test (just one time) a special public transportation offer they had never used before. With a nonobtrusive questionnaire manipulation, the subjects of the experimental group were stimulated to form an implementation intention. The results show that forming an implementation intention significantly increases the probability of enacting the goal intention; that is, testing the public transportation offer. The theoretical and practical implications of this finding are discussed.

Although attitudes may sometimes be directly linked to behavior without a mediating role of behavioral intentions (Bentler & Speckart, 1979; Fazio, 1990), intentions have generally been found to be important mediators of the attitude-behavior relationship, as is postulated in Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action and its successor, the theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1985, 1991). The TPB postulates three conceptually independent determinants of an intention to perform a behavior: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm regarding the behavior, and perceived behavioral control. The more favorable the person's attitude and subjective norm regarding the behavior and the greater the person's perceived behavioral control, the stronger is the intention to perform the behavior. Intention is conceptualized in the TPB as a summary of the cognitive and affective mechanisms through which attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control direct future behavior.

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