EMPOWERMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE: AN INVESTIGATION OF

MEDIATING EFFECTS ON THE CORE-SELF EVALUATION, JOB

SATISFACTION, AND ORGANIZATIONAL

COMMITMENT RELATIONSHIP

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Alleah M. Crawford, daughter of Henry Wilson and Nata Kimbrough, was born on July 28, 1981 in Gainesville, Georgia. She attended Auburn University, graduating *magna cum laude* with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology in December 2002. She worked for the Hilton Garden Inn Auburn as the Assistant General Manager until she returned to Auburn University to pursue her Master's degree in January 2006. While working on her graduate degree at Auburn University in the Hotel and Restaurant Management program, she was a facilitator for the Alabama State Parks hospitality training, a student recruiter for the College of Human Sciences, and served as a graduate teaching assistant. She received her Master of Science degree in Nutrition and Food Science with an emphasis in Hotel and Restaurant Management in December 2006. Upon entrance into the doctoral program at Auburn University in January 2007, she began researching the areas of organizational culture and climate; employee well-being; and job satisfaction. She is married to John J. Crawford and they have one daughter, Faylee.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Job satisfaction and organizational commitment have each been a central focus of

human resources issues in hospitality for academicians and practitioners alike. These two

concepts have been examined in the literature and support has been garnered for the

strong relationship they share with each other (Knoop, 1995; Lam & Zhang, 2003;

Rayton, 2006; Silva, 2006; Vandenberg & Lance, 1992) as well as other important

organizational variables, including empowerment (Carless, 2004) and intention to quit

(Allen & Meyer, 1996; Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid & Sirola, 1998). One strong

relationship that has been established throughout job satisfaction research is with one's disposition, a natural inclination of mood or spirit. Core self-evaluation (CSE) as introduced by Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997) has received attention within the disposition literature. Core self-evaluation is defined as the basic assessment one makes about his/her abilities, competencies, and overall value (Judge *et. al,* 1997) and is a higher order trait comprised of self-esteem, locus of control, neuroticism, and self-efficacy.

Core self-evaluation literature has supported a strong relationship with job satisfaction (Judge, 1998, 2000, 2005), however there is a lack of understanding as to what process links these variables. Can the work environment play a role in this relationship? Work environment factors, such as employee empowerment and organizational climate were included in this study as potential mediators in order to assess the work environment's role in the core self-evaluation, job satisfaction relationship. Also, organizational commitment has not been included in the core self-evaluation literature. This study also sought to understand if any relationship existed between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment.

The sample consisted of 152 quick-service restaurant employees of one franchise with different levels of restaurant experience, education, and responsibility. Findings from the study did support mediation of job satisfaction and core self-evaluation as well as organizational commitment and core self-evaluation. These findings begin to fill the gap in the literature and have supplied a base of information for academicians to build upon for further development not only of the core self-evaluation concept, but also in understanding the relative importance of the workplace environment.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The relatively new concept of core self-evaluation (CSE) as introduced by Judge,

Locke, and Durham (1997) has received growing attention in the research literature.

Core self-evaluation is the basic assessment one makes about his/her abilities,

competencies, and overall value (Judge *et. al,* 1997). CSE was proposed by Judge *et al.*

(1997) as a higher order trait comprised of self-esteem, locus of control, neuroticism, and

self-efficacy. This higher-order trait was later tested and defended as such in the

literature (Dormann, Fay, Zapf, & Frese, 2006; Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2002;

Judge, Van Vianen, & DePater, 2004). Individuals with a positive core self-evaluation

assess themselves in a positive manner spanning all situations and settings in a consistent

manner (Judge, Van Vianen, & DePater, 2004). Positive self-evaluators see themselves

as qualified, worthy, and in command of their lives (Judge, Van Vianen, & DePater,

2004).

Core self-evaluation has been linked to job satisfaction in the literature not only as

a dispositional factor, but also as a predictor (Judge & Hulin, 1993; Judge, Locke, &

Durham, 1997). Job satisfaction has been defined as the sentiments one holds about his

or her job (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995). An important aspect in organizational literature,

job satisfaction has been linked to organizational commitment (Knoop, 1995; Lam &

Zhang, 2003; Rayton, 2006; Silva, 2006; Vandenberg & Lance, 1992), training (Owens,

2006), empowerment (Carless, 2004), customer satisfaction (Heskett, Sasser, &

Schlesinger, 1997; Rucci, Kim, & Quinn, 1998), and reduced intention to quit (Ghiselli,

La Lopa, & Bai, 2001).

Organizational commitment by employees is an important consideration for

hospitality organizations as employees are one of the greatest assets to a service provider.

An employee's organizational commitment has been linked to job satisfaction and this

relationship has been explained such that an employee must first be satisfied with his/her

job before he/she can be committed to the organization. This explanation raises several

questions about employee outcomes.

Can an organization's climate mediate the link between CSE and the employee

related outcomes, like those of job satisfaction and organizational commitment? What

about other organizational factors, such as employee empowerment?

Background and Significance of Study

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment have been a central focus for

academicians and practitioners alike. These two concepts have been examined in the

literature to determine possible antecedents and outcomes associated with each of these

organizational variables. One strong relationship that has been established throughout

job satisfaction research is with one's disposition, a natural inclination of mood or spirit.

When referring to a dispositional approach three basic assumptions are made, 1) a person

can be characterized by specific dimensions, 2) these dimensions are stable over time,

and 3) these dimensions can be used to predict behavior in situations (Staw & Ross,

1985). Dispositional theory has been related to the core self-evaluation concept

introduced by Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997). Core self-evaluation (CSE), the basic

assessment one makes about his/her abilities, competencies, and overall value is thought

to be a dispositional approach to viewing one's environment and fit in that environment.

Core self-evaluation has been linked to job satisfaction in the literature (Judge &

Hulin, 1993; Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997. Job satisfaction has been ranked as one of

the best predictors of work performance (Judge& Larsen, 2001), a difficult concept to

isolate and measure. Job satisfaction often has a strong relationship with organizational

commitment demonstrating that an employee must be satisfied with his/her job initially

for commitment to develop (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1982). This study is significant

for academicians and practitioners alike. The addition of core self-evaluation as a

potential predictor of organizational commitment attempts to extend the current CSE

literature by incorporating a widely studied and vitally important organizational factor.

As well, academicians can gain insight into the process by which job satisfaction shares a

relationship with disposition through the use of mediating variables. If mediation is

present there will be a decrease in the previously established relationship between job

satisfaction with disposition, and will create new ideas for research and study into other

factors effecting this relationship. Practitioners can gain insight into potential

environmental factors that may be controlled for or created in order to bring about

employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Statement of Problem

Although several studies have investigated the relationship between CSE and job

satisfaction there is a lack of understanding as to what process links these variables. As

well, there is a gap in the literature due to a lack of investigation into a potential

relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment. Studies have considered differing relationships with other variables in order to better understand the process, such as job characteristics (Judge*, Bono, & Locke, 2000), goal commitment and goal orientation (Taylor, 2004). Ultimately, as stated by Judge *et al.* (1998) there needs to be an investigation into variables that mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction (Erez & Judge, 2001; Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000). Two variables that are of particular interest in the hospitality industry are employee empowerment and organizational climate.

Within the hospitality industry there is a focus on employee empowerment allowing for immediate answers, action, and results for guests. Employee empowerment has been linked to job satisfaction and organizational commitment in previous research (Kazlauskaite, Buciuniene, & Turauskas, 2006; Savery & Luks, 2001), however employee empowerment has not been examined in the job satisfaction and CSE relationship context.

Organizational climate has an established link with job satisfaction (Carr, Schmidt, Ford,& DeShon, 2003; Patterson, Warr, & West, 2004; Yoon, Beatty, & Suh, 2001), in the literature. Although this link has been established, antecedents of it have not been included in research to date. One potential antecedent is core self-evaluation. Organizational climate is viewed as an aggregate at the individual level, the same unit of analysis as CSE, however organizational climate has not been examined in the job satisfaction and CSE relationship context.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was threefold. A replication of the previous core self-evaluation and job satisfaction relationship in the hospitality industry, specifically in the food and beverage segment, more specifically in quick service restaurants was the first purpose of this research. This is an important factor of the investigation in that industries are different with separate nuances, processes, and challenges. For this reason relationships that exist in setting or industry should be investigated in different settings and industry segments to gain a better, more accurate picture of how the relationship exists and how powerful it is in a specific setting.

Secondly, an extension of the core self-evaluation literature was sought by examining the relationship between CSE and an important organizational variable, organizational commitment. Can core self-evaluation predict an employee's level of commitment with their organization? This is an important factor of the investigation because commitment has been linked to other important organizational variables, such as job satisfaction (Gaertner, 1999; Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990; Mowday *et al.,* 1982; Wallace 1995) and turnover (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Understanding an antecedent of organizational commitment may provide tools and insight for practitioners and academicians alike.

Lastly, this study sought to investigate the process by which the internal concept of CSE is linked with outcomes including job satisfaction and/or organizational commitment, by including two external, environmental factors, employee empowerment and organizational climate as potential mediators. Previous research has suggested that CSE is a useful higher-order construct. Previous research is also incomplete (Erez &

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Judge, 2001) in that possible variables that contribute to job satisfaction have not been investigated, such as employee empowerment and organizational climate. Employee empowerment is a focus in hospitality research and practice currently. Organizational climate specific to the service industry is unique and important to understand in order to benefit the guest, employee, and all stakeholders.

This research aimed to replicate previous finding of the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998; Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000; Judge, Erez, Bono, & Locke, 2005) and to extend previous research by determining other factors that contribute the process of the afore-mentioned relationship. Through this replication and extension of previous research this study will provide a better understanding of the process by which one's dispositional characteristics help to evaluate their environment as well as an assessment of the effect the environment has on the relationships in question. Understanding the process by which CSE is linked to job satisfaction and potentially organizational commitment will provide benefit to all concerned, including insight in the process by which one's disposition is linked to job satisfaction and potentially organizational commitment, and a revelation of what external, environmental factors bridge these relationships.

Research Hypotheses

Following is the proposed model (Figure 1) and the stated research hypotheses for this study.
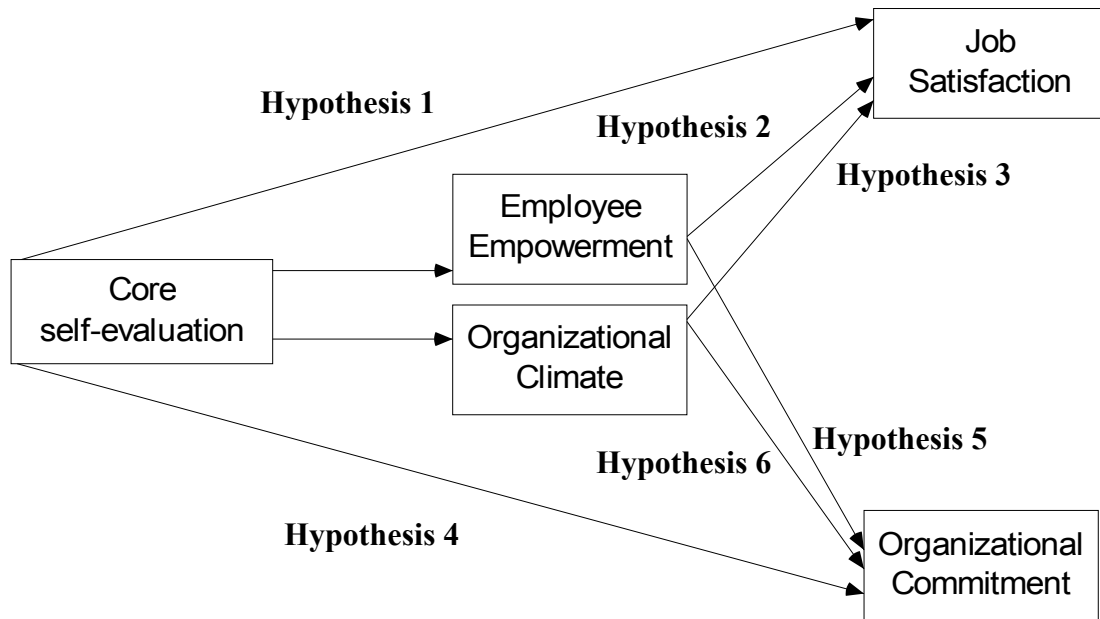
Figure 1. Proposed model with organizational climate, and employee empowerment as mediating variables.

Hypothesis 1: Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 5: Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 6: Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment.

Definition of Terms

Core self-evaluation: basic assessment one makes about his/her abilities, competencies, and overall value (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). A higher order construct that is composed of four specific traits; self-esteem, neuroticism (emotional stability), locus of control, and generalized self-efficacy (Judge & Bono, 2001).

Job satisfaction: the positive emotional state derived from the assessment of one's job as achieving or allowing for achievement of one's job values (Locke, 1969).

Organizational commitment: an employee's participation in, sense of belonging to, and emotional attachment with an organization (Allen & Meyer, 1996). This concept is comprised of three component parts: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). However, a single factor aggregate approach as suggested by Silva (2006) was selected for this study.

Employee empowerment: "individual and personal; it engages the employee at the level of emotion; it is about discretion, autonomy, power and control; and it is about responsibility, commitment and enterprise" (Lashley & McGoldrick, 1994, p. 26).

Organizational climate: an aggregate of an employee's perceptions of the policies, practices, and actions that are noticed, supported, and rewarded in a work environment (Schneider, 1985, 1990).

Mediator variable: a separate entity that intervenes in the effect of the stimulus on the behavior (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Quick-service restaurant: a facility that serves food in a limited time with limited service with the food to be consumed on or off site.

Pearson product-moment correlation: a parametric statistic whereby two continuous variables are analyzed to understand the relationship between the two variables, its strength and direction (positive or negative) (Leddy & Ormrod, 2005).

Regression analysis: a parametric statistic whereby the effectiveness of one or more variables to predict the value of another variable is determined (Leddy & Ormrod, 2005).

Path analysis: method by which the individual paths connecting one variable with another variable within a model are examined.

<div align="center">De-limitations</div>

Two de-limitations exist in this study and will be discussed in this section.

1. The company selected for this study has a reputation within the community at large as having a strong organizational culture, one that supports its employees and the local community. Therefore, this company was selected due to the expectation it would have a strong organizational climate associated with service and care that ultimately reflects the company's public reputation. This is why only a single, solitary company was utilized in this study.

2. The quick service restaurant setting was selected due to its transient nature, including transient guests and transient employees. This solitary setting was purposely selected to gain a better understanding of how the public reputation matches the opinion of employees in a setting that is normally filled with change. For this reason only one segment of the hospitality industry was selected.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hospitality Industry

The hospitality and tourism industry is the largest industry in the world (Olsen,

1996) and one of the fastest growing industries in the United States. For service

providers, specifically hospitality related companies and/or organizations the service

delivered to the consumer is the point of differentiation. Literature has supported the

notion that employee well-being, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment

are strong indicators of the quality of service delivered to the consumer by the employee

(Hoffman & Ingram, 1992; Little & Dean, 2006; Rogers, Clow, & Cash, 1994). As noted

by Smith, Gregory, and Cannon (1996) these employee attitudes have not received

enough attention in the expanding service industries.

Employee Well-being Facets

The more involved and satisfied employees are, the more they feel as though they

are important for and committed to the organization, therefore the better the quality of

service delivered to the guests (Berry, 1995; Heskett, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1997;

Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1991). Lashley and McGoldrick (1994) stated "The

nature of the [hospitality] business is such that the effective performance of people

literally defines business success" (p. 25). Employee attitudes, such as job satisfaction

and organizational commitment are results of employee well-being constructed of different internal and external factors.

A key contributing factor to employees' state of well-being is the environment that one works within. The environment can include several aspects, such as empowerment, layout of the work area, managerial style, and support, all factoring into the climate of an organization. Research in organizational climate has supported a strong relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction (Carr, Schmidt, Ford & DeShon, 2003; Patterson, Warr, & West, 2004; Yoon, Beatty, & Suh, 2001). Intuitively this makes sense as the climate one works in can have a great impact on how happy an employee is with the job, the people, and organization he works with on an everyday basis.

Another contributing factor to employees' state of well-being is how one internally views the world within which he lives and works. As introduced by Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997) the concept of core self-evaluation encompasses four personality traits, including self-esteem, neuroticism (emotional stability), locus of control, and generalized self-efficacy. Core self-evaluation is a higher order construct that has been researched and supported in the literature. A strong relationship has been found and supported in the literature between job satisfaction and CSE (Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998).

The Food and Beverage Segment

These work environment factors and employee attitudes are important in understanding how to create a point of differentiation in hospitality based on employees and employee delivered service. One segment of the hospitality industry where service is

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expected and the point of differentiation is the food and beverage segment. Recently

Riley (2005) described the food and beverage segment as "the 'rock n' roll' of hospitality

management-complex, risky, creative, glamorous, dirty and messy but definitely a

challenge" (p.92). As noted by Brymer (1998), the food and beverage segment of the

hospitality industry is the "most expansive and diverse of the hospitality businesses" (p.

6). The food and beverage segment employs over 8 million people in the United States

alone (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Included in this complex segment are the quick

service restaurants (QSR). Quick service restaurants are growing as "society has changed

and…the food and restaurant industry have popularised the notion of eating out to levels

not previously known" (Riley, 2005, p. 89). Quick service restaurants are defined as

restaurants that offer fast food and/or take-out and sell a specialty item, such as pizza or

chicken with limited pricing flexibility and a narrow price range (Emenheiser, Clay, &

Palakurthi, 1998; Muller, 1997). See Figure 2 for Muller's (1998) pricing typology of

products and competitive attributes.

Competitive intensity

High ◆ Pricing flexibility Low

Limited Great

Luxury / Wide	**Casual theme** ✧ Wide price range ◆ Limited flexibility	**Fine dining** ✧ Wide price range ◆ Great flexibility
Commodity / Narrow	**Quick service** ✧ Narrow price range ◆ Limited flexibility	**Midscale family** ✧ Narrow price range ◆ Great flexibility

Product type ✧ Price range
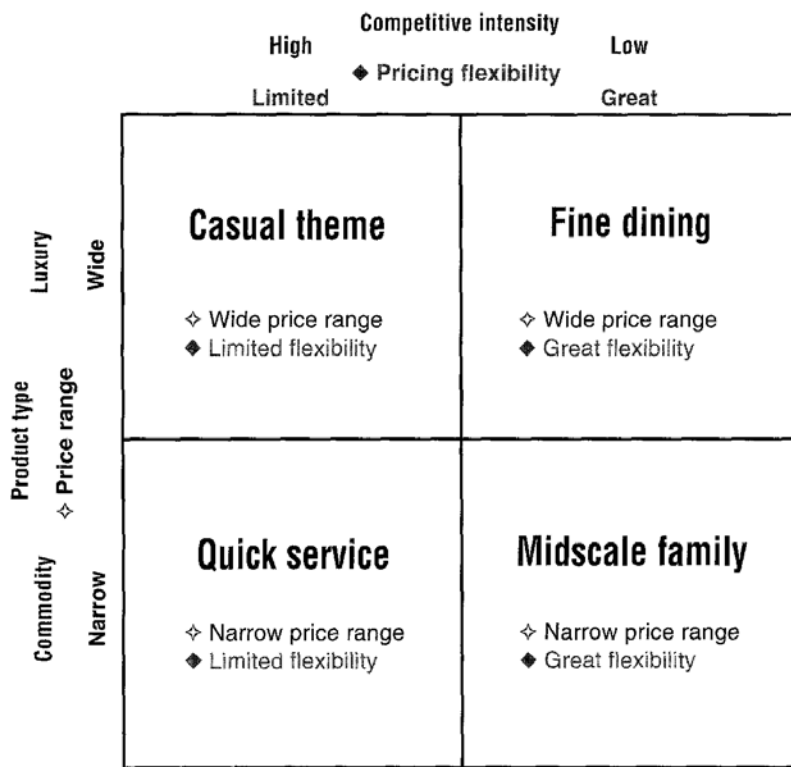
Figure 2. Pricing typology of products and competitive attributes (Muller, 1997, p. 67).

As Wong (2004) mentions, any relationships or patterns that exist between human resource variables should be determined and studied. For this reason and others the purpose of the study was threefold. A replication of the previous core self-evaluation and job satisfaction relationship in the hospitality industry, specifically in the food and beverage segment, more specifically in quick service restaurants was the first purpose of this research. Secondly, an extension of the core self-evaluation literature was sought by examining the relationship between CSE and an important organizational variable, organizational commitment. Lastly, this study sought to investigate the process by which the internal concept of CSE is linked with outcomes including job satisfaction and/or organizational commitment, by including two external, environmental factors, employee

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empowerment and organizational climate as potential mediators. To better understand the purpose of this study and its relevance to hospitality as a whole and the QSR segment, each of the previously mentioned variables will now be discussed following a brief framework for CSE, the dispositional approach.

Dispositional Approach

The dispositional approach accounts for one's personal traits and internal factors that are stable over time (Staw & Ross, 1985). The Big Five personality structure is one model that has been researched and validated within the personality literature (Cattell, 1943; Digman & Takemoto-Chock, 1981; Fiske, 1949; Goldberg, 1990; Norman, 1963; Thurstone, 1934). The Big Five structure includes five dimensions that each account for several personality traits an individual might display. The Big Five account for an individual's personality as well as traits and include the dimensions of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neurotocism. Each of these dimensions includes several personality traits. See Table 1 for a listing of traits that fall under each of the dimensions of personality.

Table 1

Personality dimensions and traits (Goldberg, 1990).

Personality Dimension	Positive Personality Traits of the Personality Dimension	Negative Personality Traits of the Personality Dimension
Openness	Intellectuality	Shallowness
	Curiosity	Unimaginativeness
	Creativity	Imperceptiveness
Conscientiousness	Dependability	Negligence
	Efficiency	Forgetfulness
	Persistence	Disorganization
Extraversion	Spirit	Silence
	Expressiveness	Aloofness
	Self-esteem	Passivity
Agreeableness	Cooperation	Bossiness
	Empathy	Belligerence
	Courtesy	Distrust
Neuroticism	Independence	Instability
	Placidity	Feat
		Insecurity

Other research in disposition has focused on examining individuals' dispositions and their ability to predict job satisfaction (Bowling, Beehr, Wagner, & Libkuman, 2005; Hampson, 1988; Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002; Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986; Staw & Cohen-Charash, 2005; Staw & Ross, 1985). The research has generally supported an initial finding by Staw, Bell, and Clausen (1986), "disposition is a significant predictor of job satisfaction" (p. 69). A key component of the disposition research has been to identify the different traits that predict job satisfaction. Judge and Bono (2001) proposed a higher order trait comprised of four specific dispositions, including self-esteem, neuroticism, locus of control, and generalized self-efficacy.

Core self-evaluation

The core self-evaluation concept was introduced as a higher order construct that is composed of four specific traits; self-esteem, neuroticism (emotional stability), locus of control, and generalized self-efficacy (Judge & Bono, 2001). Self-esteem, locus of control, and neuroticism appear to be the most frequently studied personality traits in personality and applied psychology (Judge & Bono, 2001). Although these traits are so widely researched, there has been a distinct development of these traits in association with employee attitudes, including job satisfaction, job performance, motivation, etc. over the past 14 years due to their inclusion in the core self-evaluation concept. See Figure 3 (Hiller & Hambrick, 2005) for a visual representation of the CSE concept and its configuration from the four traits, self-esteem, locus of control, generalized self-efficacy, and neuroticism (emotional stability).
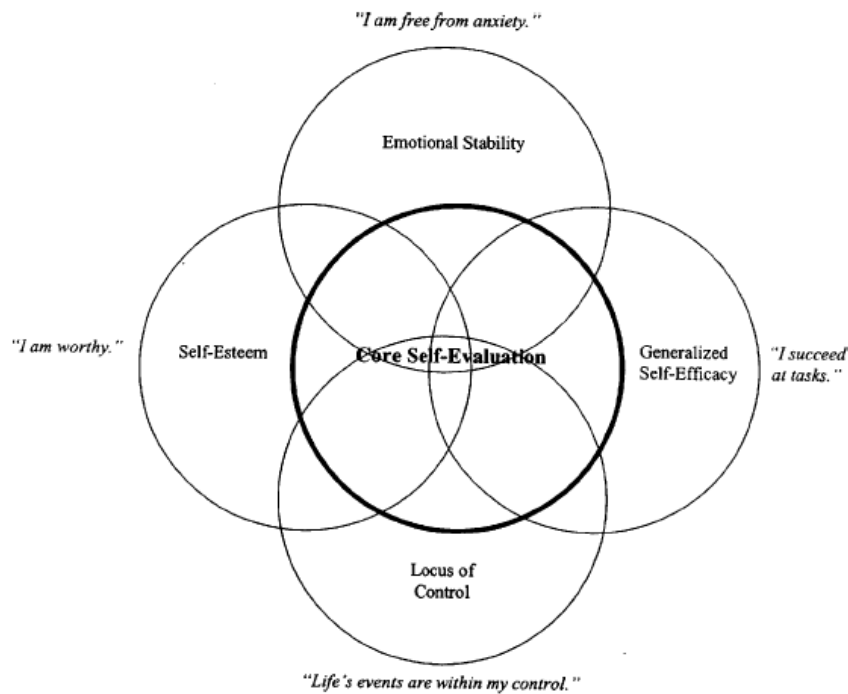
Figure 3. Core self-evaluation model (Hiller & Hambrick, 2005, p. 300).

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Self-esteem. Self-esteem is the fundamental evaluation one makes of him/herself.

This is the most basic core evaluation, in that it is the overall value one associates with

his/her person, self-worth (Harter, 1990). Self-esteem includes an individual's self-

acceptance, self-liking, and self-respect (Judge & Larsen, 2001). Self-esteem is a stable

trait with only short-term fluctuations (Costa & McCrae, 1994). It has been linked to

several outcome variables in research, including acceptance of change (Wanberg &

Banas, 2000); organizational commitment and motivation (Hui & Lee, 2000).

Locus of control. Locus of control is related to one's ability to control situations

and outcomes in his/her life. Rotter (1966) described locus of control as the extent to

which one believes he/she controls the events that take place in their life (internal locus

of control) or the extent to which one believes he/she does not control the events that take

place in their life and that the environment or fate does (external locus of control). Those

with an internal locus of control tend to have stronger job satisfaction in that they feel

they control their situation (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998).

Generalized self-efficacy. Self-efficacy according to Bandura (1997) is task

specific. Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997) extended this thought to a global level,

describing generalized self-efficacy as how one sees his/her ability to utilize motivation,

cognitive processes, and action to exercise leadership over the events in his/her life

(Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998).

Neuroticism (emotional stability). Neuroticism relates to a negative view of self-

esteem and is one of the Big Five personality dimensions. Neurotic individuals tend to be

shy, lack confidence, have high levels of guilt, and experience anxiety in new situations

and environments (Costa & McCrae, 1988). Neurotic individuals also tend to be less satisfied with themselves and their jobs (Clark & Watson, 1991).

Core self-evaluation was suggested as a higher order dispositional trait (Judge, Erez, & Bono, 1998) because the measures of the four component traits (self-esteem, locus of control, generalized self-efficacy, and neuroticism) shared strong empirical relationships and it was thought these traits had an underlying uniform construct. Judge *et al.* (2002) investigated the suggested higher order dispositional construct, CSE. The researchers employed four studies to assess CSE. Through a meta-analytic approach the investigators found that the four measures were in fact strongly related, with an average correlation of .60 (Judge *et. al,* 2002). Another finding revealed that the measures were not independent, and a higher-order latent factor is what explains the relationship among the traits (Judge *et. al,* 2002). Factor analytic research has also found that the four traits load on a single common factor not only in exploratory factor analysis, but also in confirmatory factor analysis (Erez & Judge, 2001; Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998).

Judge, Van Vianen, and De Pater (2004) reviewed the previous research into core self-evaluation as a higher-order latent trait. In their argument, the authors provide a detailed summation of the construct validity of the higher-order latent trait, core self-evaluation. Four issues, specific to assessing construct validity, were addressed; convergent validity, a lack of discriminant validity of the four traits, discriminant validity among other traits, and predictive validity.

To assess convergent validity the authors looked for correlations among the four traits (self-esteem, locus of control, generalized self efficacy, and neuroticism).

Substantial correlations were found among the four traits (.64 average) suggesting convergent validity.

Discriminant validity is defined as "differential associations with other, theoretically relevant variables" (Judge, Van Vianen, & De Pater, 2004, p. 329). Examples of other relevant variables would be job performance and job satisfaction (Judge, Van Vianen, & De Pater, 2004). Previous research conducted has shown, through a meta-analysis that the core traits do not have strong correlations with other relevant variables (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998), supporting a lack of discriminant validity of the four traits.

The third issue for supporting CSE as a higher-order trait is the presence of discriminant validity with other traits. Discriminant validity in this instance would show that the four core traits of CSE are distinct from other personality traits, such as those included in the Big Five model of personality. However, there seems to be a connection between the four traits and extraversion as well as conscientiousness, showing that CSE can not be independent of these traits (Judge, Van Vianen, & De Pater, 2004).

Lastly, predictive validity was assessed for the higher-order trait, CSE. Predictive validity is assessed by comparing how the higher-order trait predicts outcomes to how well individual core traits or other traits (such as those in the Big Five model) predict outcomes (Judge, Van Vianen, & De Pater, 2004). Through a meta-analytical approach Judge and Bono (2001) found that the correlation between job satisfaction and the aggregate of the four core traits was .41 as compared to .32 for the individual traits. As stated by Judge *et. al* (2004), the higher-order trait does predict outcomes, such as job satisfaction, better than the four core traits independent of each other.

Through the review of the literature provided by Judge, Van Vianen, and De Pater (2004) it seems that construct validity of the core self-evaluation higher-order trait is present. In accordance with Schwab (1980), the construct validity of CSE has been assessed and therefore can be accepted as a valid psychological concept.

Core self-evaluation has been linked to several outcomes, such as motivation, goal setting (Erez & Judge, 2001), and job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001), however job satisfaction is the most researched outcome associated with core self-evaluation (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Locke, 2005). Earlier research linked childhood personality and one's level of job satisfaction later in life (Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986) and sparked an interest for researchers in a person's disposition (personality) and level of job satisfaction (Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000). Since this earlier finding and the introduction of the core self-evaluation concept there has been a significant amount of research that has investigated the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. A review of this research and the relevant findings follows.

Judge, Locke, Durham, and Kluger (1998) tested a hypothesized model of the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction as well as life satisfaction. The authors found that not only did core self-evaluation have direct effects on life and job satisfaction, but also that core self-evaluation had indirect effects on life and job satisfaction. These effects were found to be consistent and independent of the job attributes (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998). From this research the authors state that the underlying cognitive process at work is that those with positive core self-evaluations view their jobs and lives in a positive light because they have the positive dispositional makeup to do so. Judge *et al.* (1998) also state that one's focus for

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discussing job attributes is focused on internal, intrinsic attributes (i.e. autonomy), as well as external attributes.

Later research performed by Judge, Bono, and Locke (2000) investigated the role of job attributes/characteristics in the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. The authors tested a hypothesized model, with job characteristics serving as a mediating variable. The focus for job characteristics was intrinsic and used perceived job characteristics and job complexity to operationalize intrinsic job characteristics. Judge *et. al* (2000) found that job characteristics did mediate the relationship between CSE and job satisfaction. Also, the authors investigated the stability of CSE in that they measured CSE in childhood and young adulthood. They found that these were significantly linked to job satisfaction in middle adulthood. One other interesting finding of this research was that CSE shared a direct relationship with job complexity.

Through a meta-analytic approach Judge and Bono (2001) aimed to assess the overall relationship between the core self-evaluation traits (self-esteem, locus of control, generalized self-efficacy, and neuroticism) and job satisfaction as well as job performance. The investigators utilized a sample of 216 studies with a total of 274 correlations to obtain a true score correlation for the relationship(s) in question. The findings were significant with the following correlations for job satisfaction and self-esteem (.26), internal locus of control (.32), generalized self-efficacy (.45), and neuroticism (.24). The findings were significant, although not as high as previous findings, with the following correlations for job performance and self-esteem (.26), internal locus of control (.22), generalized self-efficacy (.23), and neuroticism (.19). As

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stated by Judge and Bono (2001), these correlations signify that these four traits are some of the quintessential personality predictors of job satisfaction and job performance.

A final piece of research conducted by Judge, Erez, Bono, and Locke (2005) further investigated the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction as well as life satisfaction. The investigators also examined the role of self-concordance and goal attainment. The self-concordance model (Sheldon & Elliot, 1998) was used as an explanatory framework where one pursues a goal for one (or more) of the following reasons: a). external- one pursues a goal because of another's need or for an award that satisfies an indirect need, b). introjected- in order to avoid feelings of shame or guilt one will pursue a goal, c). identified- one pursues a goal because he/she feels that it is intrinsically important to have that goal, and d). intrinsic- one pursues a goal because of the feeling it provides (i.e. enjoyment).

The authors (Judge, Bono, Erez, & Locke, 2005) found that goal self-concordance had a relationship with not only job satisfaction, but also life satisfaction. Core self-evaluation was also positively related to goal self-concordance. Judge *et al.* (2005) offered the following explanation as the underlying framework for the relationship, stating "individuals with positive self-regard were more likely to pursue goals for intrinsic and identified (value-congruent) reasons" (p. 257).

The core self-evaluation scale was developed by Judge, Erez, Bono, and Thoresen (2002). Before the development of this scale each of the four core traits were assessed independent of the other three. Through this piece of research, the authors created a 12-item, 6 positively worded and 6 negatively worded measure of the higher-order trait, core self-evaluation. The 12-item scale was delivered to four samples and the coefficient

alpha reliability estimates ranged from .81 to .87 for the samples. The scale showed

acceptable levels of test-retest reliability and intersource level of agreement (Judge, Erez,

Bono, & Thoresen, 2002). All together the results reveal that the Core Self-Evaluation

Scale (CSES) is a useful tool in assessing the higher-order trait of core self-evaluation.

Best, Stapleton, and Downey (2005) extended the core self-evaluation literature

by investigating the relationship between CSE, job satisfaction, and burnout. Health care

employees were surveyed and the results supported the CSE, job satisfaction relationship

(Best *et al.*, 2005). Another significant finding was the direct relationship between CSE

and burnout as well as the indirect effect of CSE on job satisfaction, through job burnout

(Best *et al.*, 2005).

A 10-wave study was conducted by Wanberg, Glomb, Song, and Sorenson (2005)

that investigated job-search persistence. The 10-wave study took place over a total of

twenty weeks and included unemployed, unemployment insurance recipients. The

findings revealed a relationship between core self-evaluation and job-search persistence.

A positive core self-evaluation assists a job-search participant to continue looking for

employment despite rejections encountered during the job-search process (Wanberg *et

al.*, 2005).

Research into the CSE concept has revealed meaningful relationships with several

variables, including motivation, goal setting (Erez & Judge, 2001), job burnout (Best,

Stapleton, & Downey, 2005), job-search persistence (Wanberg, Glomb, Song, &

Sorenson, 2005), and job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001), however, job satisfaction is

by far the most researched outcome associated with core self-evaluation (Judge, Erez,

Bono, & Locke, 2005).

Job Satisfaction

As noted by Rayton (2006), "Job satisfaction is one of the most heavily researched employee attitudes over the last 50 years" (p.139). The definition of job satisfaction set forth by Porter and Lawler (1968) has three components, including nature of tasks, the setting and relationships, and lastly, the overall feeling associated with the job. With this definition one can understand that job satisfaction is broken down into intrinsic work satisfaction, extrinsic work satisfaction, and global (overall) satisfaction. For the purpose of this study only global (overall) satisfaction will be assessed. This was selected because it represents the summation of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and gives a better overall picture of an employee's level of job satisfaction.

In the vast literature based on job satisfaction one may find that job satisfaction has been investigated through differing methodologies, serving as a predictor, outcome, moderator, and/or mediator variable. Job satisfaction has been linked to organizational commitment (Knoop, 1995; Lam & Zhang, 2003; Rayton, 2006; Silva, 2006; Vandenberg & Lance, 1992), positive mood-inducing events (Brief, Butcher, & Roberson, 1995), life satisfaction (Schmitt & Pulakos, 1985), training (Owens, 2006), empowerment (Carless, 2004), customer satisfaction (Heskett, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1997), and reduced intention to quit (Ghiselli, La Lopa, & Bai, 2001).

With relationships to such crucial variables, it is easy to understand why job satisfaction has been researched as frequently as it has. The relationship between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction is important within hospitality due to the simultaneous nature of production and consumption of service (Kandampully, 2002). With customers "in the factory" so to speak, the employee-customer exchange must be

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correct and consistent. Heskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger (1997) described the relationship

between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction in such a way that employee

attitudinal variables (i.e. job satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty) affect the delivery of

service to the customer. The customer in turn makes judgments about the service and

product received. These judgments made by the customer ultimately determine the

resultant satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction with the service and product. Satisfied

employees deliver a higher service quality to customers, resulting in customer satisfaction

(Berry, 1995; Heskett, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1997; Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml,

1991)

The European Customer Satisfaction Index (ECSI) (ECSI Technical Committee,

1998) was developed to study customer satisfaction. One missing link in this model is

employee job satisfaction. Vilares and Coehlo (2003) argue that this is an important link

and that the model should be reconsidered to include this vital link in customer

satisfaction. The authors proposed a revised version of the ECSI and found that

incorporating employee job satisfaction better explained customer satisfaction than the

previous model (Vilares & Coelho, 2003).

Although the relationship between job satisfaction and customer satisfaction is

important, another important and widely acknowledged relationship in the literature is

that of job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has been conceptualized as an employee's

participation in, sense of belonging to, and emotional attachment with an organization

(Allen & Meyer, 1996). Organizational commitment exists within four factors:

commitment to the organization, commitment to top management, commitment to immediate supervisors, and commitment to work groups (Becker, 1992). This suggests a multi-factor model of organizational commitment, however, a one factor model of organizational commitment have also been used in the literature (i.e. Silva, 2006). Silva (2006) performed a confirmatory factor analysis and found that a one factor model of organizational commitment for measurement purposes was sufficient due to the fact all items loaded on one factor.

One well documented relationship is that of organizational commitment and its negative relationship with turnover and turnover intention (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid, & Sirola, 1998; Somers, 1995). One possible explanation for this relationship is that employees with high commitment may not intend to leave the organization due to a firm belief in the company and its mission (Dunham, Grube, & Castaneda, 1994). A second explanation for this well publicized relationship between organizational commitment and turnover is that employees with high commitment may be better able to deal with changes and possible equivocation, and be more likely to stay (Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, & Welbourne, 1999).

A second well documented relationship is that of organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Gaertner, 1999; Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990; Mowday *et al.,* 1982; Wallace 1995). Mowday *et al.* (1982) described this relationship in that job satisfaction is an antecedent of organizational commitment. An employee must be satisfied with his/her job initially for commitment to develop (Mowday, *et al.,* 1982).

Lam and Zhang (2003) stated that job satisfaction is a predictor of commitment. The authors studied this relationship in the fast food setting in Hong Kong. Their results

were consistent with previous research that these two variables, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, share a significantly strong relationship. This relationship exists in many settings and hospitality is no exception (Silva, 2006).

Using a bivariate probit model, Rayton (2006) was able to ascertain the interdependence or interconnection of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This model allowed the investigator to treat the variables as related to each other and connected in a fashion. In using the bivariate probit model, the covariance estimate is what one looks at to understand the interconnectedness of the variables. Rayton (2006) had a significant covariance estimate of 0.45, revealing that "workers who are 'more committed' than the model predicts are (on average) also 'more satisfied' with their jobs than the model predicts" (p. 147).

Through a review of the literature some distinct and noteworthy relationships have been discussed, including the relationship between personality, namely core self-evaluation, and job satisfaction. Another well established relationship in the literature is that of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In reflecting on these relationships the question of organizational factors arises. What organizational and managerial factors influence these relationships?

Although the dispositional approach has shown that the consensus is that dispositions can predict behaviors, it is still noted by many, including Brody (1988) that the influence of the environment must not be ignored. The environment, in which one interacts, is an important factor in understanding how the core self- evaluation and job satisfaction relationship exists. Environmental factors, such as organizational climate and

employee empowerment may in fact mediate this relationship, as a component piece of
the process.

Mediator Variables

Environmental factors may have an integral part in the pre-established CSE and
job satisfaction relationship. For this reason these environmental factors, organizational
climate and employee empowerment are thought hypothesized to mediate this
relationship. As described by Baron and Kenny (1986) "mediators explain how external
physical events take on internal psychological significance" (p. 1176). Figure 4 depicts
the relationship between the predictor, criteria, and mediating variables.

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                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │  Mediator   │
                    │  Variable   │
                    └─────────────┘
          a        ↗               ↘     b
  ┌─────────────┐                    ┌─────────────┐
  │  Predictor  │                    │  Criteria   │
  │  Variable   │───────── c ───────→│  Variable   │
  └─────────────┘                    └─────────────┘
```
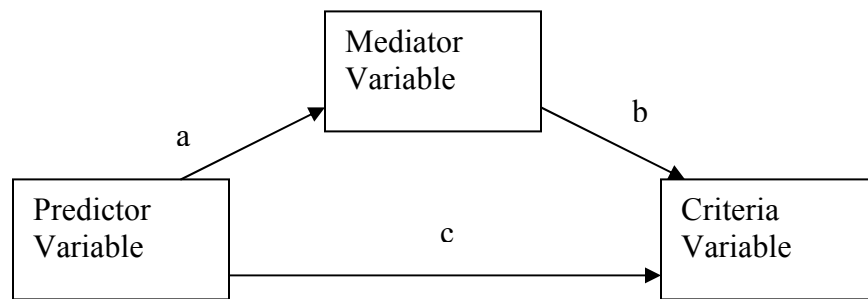
Figure 4. The causal paths for mediation.

The paths (a, b, and c) in Figure 4 visually represent the assumptions made when
using mediation. Assumption one (path a) is that there are differences in the predictor
that significantly account for differences in the mediator; assumption two (path b) is that
differences in the mediator significantly account for differences in the criteria variable;
and assumption three (path c) is that when paths a and b are controlled for there will no
longer be a significant (direct) relationship between the predictor and criteria variable
(Baron & Kenny, 1986).

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The two mediator variables included in this study are organizational climate and employee empowerment, representing the external environment influences on internal processes. Taylor (2004) examined two internal influences as mediators on the CSE and job satisfaction relationship. Goal commitment and job perception, two internal processes were shown to mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction, revealing an indirect effect created by the presence of internal processes (Taylor, 2004). With research supporting mediation, it is important to extend previous research by examining potential external influences on the pre-established core self-evaluation and job satisfaction relationship.

Organizational Climate

Although the organizational culture literature is vast and well developed, it exists at the organizational level, not as an aggregate at the individual level as does organizational climate. For this reason organizational climate was investigated in this study. A distinction between organizational climate and organizational culture must be made as they are related but two distinct concepts and may not be used interchangeably.

In order to fully understand organizational climate, one must also understand how it differs from organizational culture. The terminology "culture" originated in social anthropology with Tylor's (1887) work (Kotter & Heskett, 1992). Kotter and Heskett (1992) describe organizational culture on a continuum, ranging from a deep and invisible point to a surface and visible point. Figure 5 represents this continuum.

Invisible	*Shared values:* Important concerns and goals that are shared by most of the people in a group, that tend to shape group behavior, and that often persist over time even with changes in group memberships. Examples: The managers care about customers; executives like long-term debt.	Harder to Change
Visible	*Group behavior norms*: Common or pervasive ways of acting that are found in a group and that persist because group members tend to behave in ways that teach these practices (as well as their shared values) to new members, rewarding those that fit in and sanctioning those that do not. Examples: The employees are quick to respond to requests from customers; the managers often involve lower-level employees in decision making.	Easier to change

Figure 5. Continuum of organizational culture (Kotter & Heskett, 1992, p. 5).

An organization's culture can shape its strategy, leadership, customer relationships, and how knowledge is gathered, disseminated, organized, and used (Alvesson, 2002). Alvesson (2002) describes culture as a "frame of reference of beliefs, expressive symbols and values, by means of which individuals define their environment, express their feelings and make judgments" (p. 5). Another definition of culture, provided by Cooke and Szumal (1993), is the lasting beliefs and common behavioral expectations in a work/organizational unit.

Organizational culture is a result of the social system, work unit, or even department (Glission & James, 2002), whereas organizational climate is an aggregate of an employee's perceptions of the policies, practices, and actions that are noticed,

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supported, and rewarded in a work environment (Schneider, 1985, 1990). Previous research has supported that organizational culture and organizational climate are two distinct and unique concepts (Glission & James, 2002).

Through previous research into organizational climate, academicians have realized relationships between organizational climate and job satisfaction (Carr, Schmidt, Ford & DeShon, 2003; Patterson, Warr, & West, 2004; Yoon, Beatty, & Suh, 2001), customers' perceptions of employee service quality (Yoon, Beatty, & Suh, 2001), company productivity (Patterson, Warr, & West, 2004), performance (Carr, Schmidt, Ford, & DeShon, 2003; Kangis & Williams, 2000), psychological well-being and withdrawal behaviors (Carr, Schmidt, Ford & De Shon, 2003). Although there is a vast amount of literature on organizational climate and its relationship with different organizational and individual outcomes, it is important to identify specific elements of the work environment to investigate when conducting research in organizational climate (Tracey & Tews, 2004).

In accordance with Tracey and Tews' (2004) suggestion, one specific element of the work setting will be the focus of this organizational climate research, specifically service climate. This focus was selected due to its importance to success for hospitality establishments (Tracey & Tews, 2004). Settings where service is supported by management, service will be related to positive customer encounters, lending itself to better organizational performance via return behaviors and positive word of mouth (Juttner & Wehrh, 1994; Storbacka, Strandvik, & Gronroos, 1994).

Schneider, White, and Paul (1998) defined service climate as "employee perceptions of the practices, procedures, and behaviors that get rewarded, supported, and

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expected with regard to customer service and customer service quality" (p. 151).

Through work conducted by Schneider (Schneider, Parkington, Buxton, 1980; Schneider & Bowen, 1985) there has been a strong relationship realized between employee perceptions of the service climate and the resulting customer perceptions of the service quality. Job satisfaction has been discussed in the literature as a function of work-related aspects (Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992) and therefore it is likely that the level of service climate within the organization could serve as an aspect of job satisfaction.

Empowerment

Employee empowerment throughout the literature has differing conceptualizations; two conceptualizations noted in the literature include the relinquish of power from the managerial staff (Malone, 1997) and employee freedom (Menon, 1995). A less noted conceptualization of employee empowerment is a combination of the two mentioned above (Honold, 1997). The relinquish of power from the managerial staff was described by Malone (1997) as taking place in an organization that has several employees and therefore managers are less able to supervise and are forced to relinquish power and leave decisions up to subordinates. In this perspective of employee empowerment managers are seen as coaches (Honold, 1997) and employees are seen as empowered by delegated responsibilities from managers (Keller & Dansereau, 1995). The second conceptualization of employee empowerment is employee freedom. Freedom in decision-making and aspects of the job has revealed an increase in perceived self-control and therefore empowerment (Menon, 1995). Lastly, Honold (1997) noted that not only does empowerment have to be provided by the relinquish of power by the managerial

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staff, but employees have to be engaged in the freedom offered, providing the third

conceptualization of employee empowerment.

The conceptualization of employee empowerment helps to define the paradigm.

Employee empowerment has numerous definitions, each stemming from the

conceptualization of the paradigm. For the purpose of this study employee empowerment

is defined as Lashley and McGoldrick (1994) defined it through a summary of

empowerment literature, "individual and personal; it engages the employee at the level of

emotion; it is about discretion, autonomy, power and control; and it is about

responsibility, commitment and enterprise" (p. 26). See Table 2 for a listing of several

relevant definitions of employee empowerment that have been used throughout the

research and literature surrounding the concept.

Table 2

Definitions of employee empowerment.

Author(s) and date	Definition
Bowen and Lawler, 1992	Enabling employees to make decisions
Brymer, 1991	Management allows for more autonomy to front-line employees.
Evans & Dean, 2000	Giving employees the authority to satisfy customers through any means necessary without waiting for management approval.
Goetsch & Davis, 2001	Important employee involvement

One conventional thought found in the literature is the use of employee

empowerment as a management strategy. Nixon (1994) described a five point strategy

for empowerment, including: create a vision, take action where the greatest impact will

be, form strong relationship with fellow employees, generate a wide network, and utilize

internal and external support networks. Long (1996) stated that a yearly strategy

diagram, performance appraisal, and training/professional development are the three

objectives for achieving empowerment as a management strategy. Empowerment is a

concept thought to be effective and therefore, advocated for service organizations

(Sternberg, 1992).

Employee empowerment, while used as a management strategy in several

business organizations is also used in hospitality organizations as a means of creating

service quality, hence, creating a competitive advantage (Hirst, 1992; Hubrecht & Teare,

1993). Differentiating on the basis of service is a must for hospitality organizations and

by empowering the front-line employees they are able to provide better, faster service to

consumers. For this reason employee empowerment is thought to be a useful concept for

the service sector. Empowerment engages employees to become responsible for the

service encounter (Barbee & Bott, 1991) thereby creating an environment where

employees are emotionally invested (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Due to this noted

relationship it is increasingly important and urgent that human resource management

create strategies to employ the empowerment concept (Lashley, 1999).

One key piece of research related to employee empowerment is the development

of the Organizational Empowerment Scale (OES) (Matthews, Diaz, & Cole, 2003). The

OES breaks organizational empowerment into three dimensions, dynamic structural

framework (DSF), control of workplace decisions (CWD), and fluidity in information

sharing (FIS). Dynamic structural framework refers to a changeable set of guidelines an

organization provides to an employee that aids one in the decision making process

procedurally and behaviorally in a changing workplace (Conger & Kanungo, 1988;

Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997). Control of workplace decisions refers to an employee's ability

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to have input into every aspect of one's career (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Wilkinson, 1998). Lastly, fluidity in information sharing refers to the accessibility of all information concerning the company to all employees of the company (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Siegall & Gardner, 2000).

Using these three dimensions Matthews *et. al* (2003) developed the OES to measure organizational factors that affect the level of empowerment and employee feels at any given time. The 19-item scale provides information for organizations as to which dimension(s) are affecting the level of empowerment and it also provides the ability to attain an aggregate score of overall employee empowerment. Matthews *et. al* (2003) found that the OES was reliable (.91 for DSF, .90 for CWD, and .81 for FIS) and valid in that the three dimensions do influence one's perception of their level of empowerment. For this study, control of workplace decisions was not included as a relevant dimension of employee empowerment. Due to the transient nature of employees and clients in the quick service restaurant environment, it is necessary for employers to control workplace decisions. For this reason this dimension was not included in the instrument used to assess employee empowerment.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter provides a description of the research design, sample, data collection process, survey instrument, procedure, and data analysis techniques. All methods employed in the study were conducted to assess the research hypotheses. The purpose of the study was threefold. Initially, a replication of previous research on core self-evaluation and job satisfaction relationships and an extension of this research into the hospitality industry, specifically in the food and beverage segment, more specifically in quick service restaurants was conducted. Secondly, the core self-evaluation literature was extended by examining the relationship between CSE and an important organizational variable, organizational commitment. Lastly, this study sought to investigate the process by which the internal concept of CSE is linked with outcomes including job satisfaction and/or organizational commitment, by including two external, environmental factors, employee empowerment and organizational climate as potential mediators.

Stated Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were developed to assess the relationships in question within this study of quick service restaurant employees. These hypotheses reflect the threefold purpose of the study.

Hypothesis 1: Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 5: Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 6: Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment.

Research Design

In order to assess the stated hypotheses the research followed a prediction research design, described by Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) as providing information about "…the extent to which a criterion behavior pattern can be predicted" (p. 421) and collected cross-sectional data. Southeastern quick service restaurant employees of differing levels of restaurant experience, responsibilities, and education were included in the sample. Data was collected via a paper and pencil questionnaire format at a single point in time for all participating restaurant locations.

Sample

Qualitative. A focus group was performed in the early stages of the research. The purpose of the focus group was to further develop the survey instrument that would be used for data collection with the quantitative sample. The focus group consisted of 18

hospitality management students ranging from sophomore to senior standing, 14 of which identified themselves as currently working within the hospitality industry.

Quantitative. A franchised, quick service restaurant company was selected as the population for this research. This company was chosen due to its reputation of having a strong organizational culture. The company also has a positive public image for supporting its employees and local communities. Because of this high public regard, it was expected that this restaurant company, although franchised, would have a strong organizational climate associated with service and care among its employees. For these reasons, the parameters for the study were set to only include the one company selected for the population in this study.

A search for restaurant locations within an 85 mile radius of the Auburn University campus was conducted. The radius was determined due to the data collection technique employed in this study, on-site data collection by the principal investigator. This search returned 31 possible locations. From these 31 locations, four were not considered due to their licensed location agreement. A total of 27 restaurant locations were targeted. An announcement of the opportunity to participate in research was announced at a regional meeting for the restaurant company. Each owner/operator of the targeted restaurant locations were sent notification via email (see Appendix A) that stated a letter would arrive soon that outlined their opportunity to participate in research. The hard copy letter sent to each owner/operator (see Appendix B) described the study and the benefit of participation. Finally, each location was contacted via phone for a follow-up to answer any questions.

The sample consisted of 13 locations that agreed to participate, an initial 48% response rate. At each location restaurant owner/operators, general managers, supervisors, and front-line employees were all invited to participate in the research. Also employees from all levels of previous education and experience were also included in data collection. All participants were 19 years of age or older.

A total of 152 employees out of 239 present and able to participate (19 years of age or older) on the day of data collection completed the questionnaire. The response rate for this study was sufficient at 64%.

Data Collection Process

The principal investigator traveled to each of the 13 restaurant locations. Data was collected during the lunch and dinner shifts. Collecting data during these times of the day ensured that a complete day's labor was given the opportunity to participate as the lunch shift employees are present during morning and afternoon hours and dinner shift employees are present during the late afternoon to closing hours. In order to decrease coercion, the principal investigator resided on the restaurant floor and employees were able to participate at their leisure. The information letter, survey, and secured return box were all located at the same table as the principal investigator.

The questionnaire was paper-based format. Employees received an information letter (see Appendix D) explaining the study. A survey (see Appendix E) was then distributed to those wishing to continue with their participation in the research. Participants returned their survey via the secured return box provided. No surveys were left at the location for non-respondents; all surveys were collected on the individual collection date at each location.

Survey Instrument

The questionnaire used for this study was constructed from pre-existing reliable and valid multi-item scales. Demographic items were included to allow for descriptive statistics to be performed for an understanding of the sample. A focus group was conducted to ensure readability and clarity of the survey instrument. A panel of hospitality experts reviewed the survey as well. Revisions to the pre-existing scales were made as a result of the feedback from the focus group and the expert panel.

Core self-evaluation. To assess core self-evaluation, the Core Self-Evaluation Scale (Judge, Erez, Bono, and Thoresen, 2003) was used in its entirety. This scale was assessed by Judge *et al.* (2003) and reported a coefficient alpha of 0.84 supporting the scale's internal consistency. This scale consists of 12 items, each measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale, anchored by 1, "strongly disagree" through to 5, "strongly agree". This scale was not changed as a result of the feedback from the focus group or expert panel.

Table 3

Core self-evaluation items.

Core Self-Evaluation Scale

1. I am confident I get the success I deserve in life.

2. Sometimes I feel depressed.

3. When I try, I generally succeed.

4. Sometimes when I fail I feel worthless.

5. I complete tasks successful.

6. Sometimes I do not feel in control of my work.

7. Overall, I am satisfied with myself.

8. I am filled with doubts about my competence.

9. I determine what will happen in my life.

10. I do not feel in control of my success in my career.

11. I am capable of coping with most of my problems.

12. There are times when things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me.

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction was assessed using the shortened form of the Job Satisfaction Scale (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951). This scale has a total of 5 items, measured on a 5 point Likert-type scale, anchored by 1, "strongly disagree" through to 5, "strongly agree" and was used in its entirety. No changes were made to this multi-item scale as a result of the focus group or the expert panel review.

Table 4

Job satisfaction items.

Job Satisfaction Scale
1. Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.
2. I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.
3. Each day at work seems like it will never end.
4. I find real enjoyment in my work.
5. I consider my job rather unpleasant.

Organizational Commitment. The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979) was used to assess organizational commitment for this study. This scale has been supported in previous research as reliable with a coefficient alpha of 0.86 (Silva, 2006). Changes based on focus group and expert panel feedback were made to this scale, including the deletion of two items and re-wording of several. This scale is measured on a 5 point Likert-type scale anchored by 1, "strongly disagree" through to 5, "strongly agree". Table 5 depicts the items that were used on the instrument for this research.

Table 5

Organizational commitment items.

Organizational Commitment Scale

1. I am willing to put in a great effort above and beyond what is expected to help this organization be successful.

2. I tell my friends this is a great organization to work for.

3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization.

4. I would accept almost any job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.

5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.

6. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar.

7. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.

8. There's not too much to be gained by staying with this organization.

9. Often I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies related to important employee matters.

10. I really care about the fate of this organization.

11. For me this is the best of all possible organizations.

12. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.

13. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.

Employee Empowerment. Two of the three dimensions included in the

Organizational Empowerment Scale (Matthews, Diaz & Cole, 2003) were included in the

instrument for this research. The two dimensions from the Organizational Empowerment

Scale included in this research have been supported as reliable with a coefficient alpha of

0.91 (dynamic structural framework) and 0.81 (fluidity in information) (Matthews, Diaz,

& Cole, 2003). Control of workplace decisions was omitted due to the unique nature of

quick service restaurants. Dynamic structural framework and fluidity in information

were included in this 12 item Likert-type scale anchored by 1, "strongly disagree"

through to 5, "strongly agree". Some wording changes were made to items based on

feedback from the focus group and expert panel review.

Table 6

Empowerment items.

Empowerment Questionnaire

1. "Thinking out of the box" behavior is appreciated.

2. The company provides information on company goals.

3. The company provides information on how these goals will be accomplished.

4. Employees have a say in changing company policies.

5. The company does not encourage risk taking with regard to service

delivered.

6. While performing job duties, employees are not encouraged to use

independent problem-solving skills.

7. The company has established service delivery guidelines.

8. Employees are not provided with financial information for the company.

9. The company does not have a way to share information to all employees.

10. Employees have access to the information in their personal work-files.

11. The company publishes information on employee rewards.

12. Employees are provided with information about guests.

Organizational Climate. The Tourism and Hospitality Organizational Climate Scale-Revised (Manning, Davidson, & Manning, 2004) was used to measure the organizational climate within the quick service restaurant setting. This multi-item scale has been supported to reliably assess four dimension of service climate, including leadership facilitation and support; professional and organizational esprit; conflict and ambiguity; and workgroup cooperation, friendliness, and warmth with a coefficient alpha of 0.93 (Manning, Davidson, & Manning, 2004). This 12 item Likert type scale was anchored by 1, "strongly disagree" through to 5, "strongly agree". Alterations made to this multi-item scale included deletion of items and re-wording for clarity.

Table 7

Organizational climate items.

Organizational Climate-Revised

1. Tasks are clear in demands and criteria.

2. I help meet organizational goals through my job behaviors.

3. My supervisor understands and responds to my needs.

4. My supervisor makes me feel important and worthy.

5. My supervisor provides me with the resources I need to meet group goals.

6. We have a team effort in completing difficult tasks.

7. I take pride in the team I work with.

8. There is open communication and trust among my team members.

9. I work in a friendly environment.

10. Changes in policy and procedures are given to me.

11. Each department interacts in a friendly and cooperative way with other

departments.

12. I have opportunities for growth in this profession.

13. I have the supplies I need in order to do my job.

14. My organization provides me the opportunity for development of goals and

skills.

Demographic Information. Demographic items were included on the survey to assess differences and similarities within the sample of the larger population in question. Some of these demographic questions included, age, sex, level of education, position within the company, and length of employment.

Reliability and Validity. Reliability and validity of the measurement instrument were assessed. Reliability is described as consistency by Huck (2004). The internal consistency reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha was chosen due to its versatility with the use of continuous variables (Huck, 2004). The coefficient alpha of .70 cutoff (Nunnally and Berstein, 1994; Sapp and Jensen, 1997) was met and exceeded with each of the five scales employed within this study.

Validity, described by Huck (2004) as accuracy was assessed in two ways. Initially content validity, including clarity and readability of the items, was assessed by focus group work and a panel of industry experts. The focus group, made up of 18 hospitality management students, was asked to read the complete the survey. Feedback was requested from the participants regarding readability, language specific to the hospitality industry, clarity, and redundancy of items. The feedback provided by the focus group was used to revise the instrument and provided content validity for the instrument. The instrument was then reviewed by a panel of hospitality industry experts for readability, language specific to the hospitality industry, clarity, and redundancy of items. The feedback from the expert panel was used to revise the instrument and provided content validity for the instrument. Ultimately, the instrument was found to be valid.

Secondly, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to statistically assess the construct validity of the measurement instrument. It was prudent to assess the construct validity of the instrument in that the original, pre-existing reliable and valid scales were revised as a response to the feedback provided by the focus group and expert panel. The results of the exploratory factor analysis are reported in Chapter 4.

Proposed Model

The proposed model reflects the threefold purpose of this study. Initially a replication of the core self-evaluation, job satisfaction relationship and extension of this line of study to the food and beverage industry was sought. Secondly, the inclusion of organizational commitment as an employee outcome of core self-evaluation was sought. The investigation of empowerment and organizational climate as potential mediators of the above mentioned relationships was sought as a final purpose of the study.
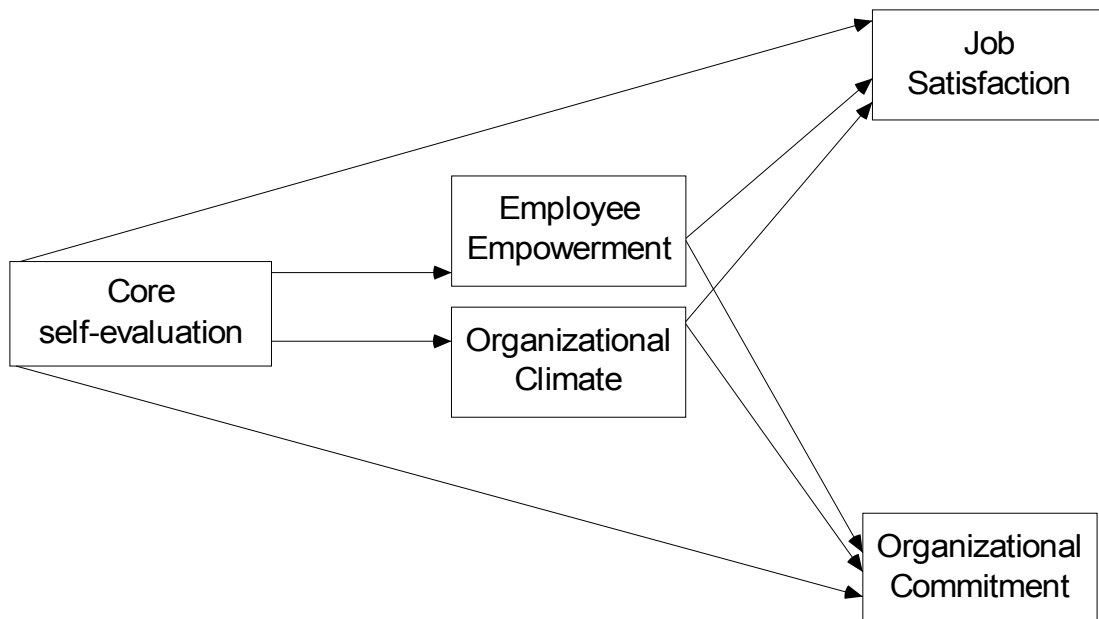
Figure 6. Proposed model of relationships.

Procedure

        A focus group consisting of 18 hospitality management students was conducted Clarity, readability, and redundancy of the items in the measurement instrument were assessed during the focus group. Fourteen of the participants identified themselves as currently employed and were representatives of the workforce within the hospitality industry. Participants were asked to read through the survey and complete it. Open ended questions were asked by the facilitator to assess clarity, readability, and redundancy of the instrument. Feedback was recorded and used in revising the instrument.

        The feedback provided by the focus group included suggestions for wording changes that more adequately reflected the hospitality industry and notations of items that seemed redundant in nature. This feedback was used to modify the instrument and provided content validity for the instrument.

        After the focus group was conducted, a panel of hospitality experts reviewed the instrument for readability, clarity, redundancy, and appropriateness of the questions for the intended audience. Based on the feedback gained from the expert panel the instrument was revised to the final format and provided content validity for the instrument.

        The final format of the instrument reflected the focus group and expert panel input. This instrument consisted of 56 items on a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1) and also included 5 demographic items. An exploratory factor analysis was performed to the total sample to assess the construct

validity of the instrument. Cohen's alpha was calculated to determine the reliability of each of the five scales used in the measurement.

Data Analysis Techniques

All data were analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 software. The data analysis techniques utilized for this study included descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation, simultaneous regression, and path analysis. Each multi-item scale was aggregated to represent the variable in question. These overall aggregate representations were used in simultaneous regression analyses and path analysis to assess for mediation.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to assess the core self-evaluation (CSE) and job satisfaction relationship that has been supported in the literature within the food and beverage segment of the larger hospitality industry. This study also expands the previous literature by assessing organizational commitment as an outcome of core self-evaluation as well as the potential mediating effects of external environmental factors of the work environment, specifically employee empowerment and organizational climate, on core self-evaluation (CSE), job satisfaction, and organizational commitment relationships.

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses performed for interpretation of the data. First, the demographic characteristics of the sample are presented. Second, a description of each of the five scales employed in the study will be presented. Third, the assessment of reliability and validity for each of the five scales employed in this study will be presented. Finally, the findings of the multiple regression and path analyses will be presented as a means for accepting or rejecting each of the six stated hypotheses. A discussion of the findings and their subsequent implications follows in chapter five.

Sample Demographics

The sample for this study consisted of 152 employees of a single quick-service food chain that is well-regarded in the public opinion for creating a supportive work environment and serving the resident communities. The total response rate for the study was 152 out of 239 potential employees, resulting in a 64% response rate. This small sample size and the large response rate adequately reflects the small size of the daily workforce utilized by the quick-service chain. A total of thirteen locations within the East Alabama and West Georgia region participated in the study.

The sample consisted of 152 restaurant employees with varying degrees of tenure and responsibility within the restaurant, and varying levels of education. The sample was also made up of participants that varied greatly in age, from 19 years of age to 75 years of age. Age was originally collected as a continuous variable and later recoded into four categories; 19-25, 26-35, 36-50, and 50 and above. Table 8 displays the frequency and percentage of the age categories for the sample.

Table 8

Age make-up of the sample

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
19-25	73	48.1
26-35	36	23.6
36-50	29	19.2
50+	10	6.8
Missing data	4	2.6

Two demographic factors that were assessed by the survey instrument included gender and position within the restaurant. Each of these variables had two categories, male and female for the gender item, and manager and line-level employee for the position within the restaurant item. Table 9 displays the frequency and percentage of each of the two items for the entire sample. Out of the 54 managers completing the questionnaire, there was not a large difference in gender with 25 male managers and 29 female managers.

Table 9

Gender and position within the restaurant for the sample

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	94	61.8
Male	57	37.5
Missing Data	1	0.7

Position	Frequency	Percentage
Manager	54	35.5
Line-level	96	63.2
Missing Data	2	1.3

Two final demographic items assessed by the survey instrument were level of education and length of employment with the company. Several categories were included in the level of education item and participants were asked to select which level he/she had completed. Five categories were included in the length of employment item on the survey. Employees that had been employed the longest, 5+ years, also had the greatest number of employees that had completed their bachelor's degree. Not surprisingly, management had almost double the number of participants that completed the bachelor's degree or higher (9) as compared to line-level employees (5). Table 10

displays the level of education and length of employment with the company for the overall sample.

Table 10

Level of education and length of employment of the sample

Level of Education Completed	Frequency	Percentage
Some high school	14	9.2
High school	50	32.9
Some college	63	41.4
Associate's degree	9	5.9
Bachelor's degree	12	7.9
Some graduate school	1	0.7
Master's degree	1	0.7
Missing data	2	1.3

Length of Employment	Frequency	Percentage
0-6 months	27	17.8
7-12 months	19	12.5
1-3 years	44	28.9
3-5 years	24	15.8
5+ years	35	23.0
Missing data	3	2.0

Measurement Instrument Properties

The measurement instrument used in this study was comprised of five individual, pre-existing valid and reliable scales. Each scale represented one of the five variables under investigation in this study, namely core self-evaluation, employee empowerment, organizational climate, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Although these scales were selected in their entirety at the initial stages of the research, the scales were altered as deemed necessary to accurately reflect the target sample, a quick service restaurant chain.

Redundancy of items, clarity, word usage, and readability were all considerations and the criterion for scale item deletion and alteration. These necessary alterations were determined through the use of a focus group and a panel of hospitality experts. Below are descriptions of each of the scales as well as the descriptive statistics for each item used in the final measurement instrument.

Core self-evaluation (CSE). Core self-evaluation, a higher order trait as introduced by Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997), was assessed through the Core Self-Evaluation Scale (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2002). The Core Self-Evaluation Scale consists of 12 items, six negatively worded and six positively worded. Table 11 illustrates the descriptive statistics for each of the 12 scale items after reverse coding the 6 negatively worded items, including the mean, standard deviation, and skewness.

Table 11

Descriptive statistics for the Core Self-Evaluation Scale

Core Self-Evaluation Scale	Mean	Σ	Skewness
1. I am confident I get the success I deserve in life.	3.93	0.98	-0.98
2. Sometimes I feel depressed.*	3.11	1.19	0.22
3. When I try, I generally succeed.	4.36	0.74	-1.67
4. Sometimes when I fail I feel worthless.*	3.36	1.20	-0.41
5. I complete tasks successful.	4.29	0.67	-1.09
6. Sometimes I do not feel in control of my work.*	3.29	1.32	-0.24
7. Overall, I am satisfied with myself.	4.16	0.91	-1.46
8. I am filled with doubts about my competence.*	3.89	1.08	-1.00
9. I determine what will happen in my life.	4.03	0.94	-1.11
10. I do not feel in control of my success in my career.*	3.71	1.25	-0.83
11. I am capable of coping with most of my problems.	4.18	0.78	-1.46
12. There are times when things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me.*	3.41	1.21	-0.23

* item was reverse coded

Job Satisfaction Scale. The shortened version of Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) Job Satisfaction Scale was utilized in this study. Two items were negatively worded and the remaining three were positively worded. The two negatively worded items were reverse coded before analyses were conducted on the data. Table 12 displays the descriptive statistics for each of the five items, including mean, standard deviation, and skewness.

Table 12

Descriptive statistics for the shortened version of the Job Satisfaction Scale

Job Satisfaction Scale	Mean	Σ	Skewness
1. Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.	4.04	0.89	-1.39
2. I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.	3.78	1.14	-0.93
3. Each day at work seems like it will never end.*	3.37	1.17	-0.59
4. I find real enjoyment in my work.	3.80	1.10	-1.08
5. I consider my job rather unpleasant.*	3.97	1.04	-1.27

* item was reverse coded

Organizational Commitment Scale. The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1982) was the basis for the measurement of organizational commitment for this sample. Changes were made based on the focus group and the expert panel's feedback. The scale used in the study contained 13 items, 5 negatively worded and 7 positively worded. Table 13 depicts the descriptive statistics for each of the 13 items after the 5 negatively worded items had been reverse coded.

Table 13

Descriptive statistics for the Organizational Commitment Scale

Organizational Commitment Scale	Mean	Σ	Skewness
1. I am willing to put in a great effort above and beyond what is expected to help this organization be successful.	4.45	0.70	-1.25
2. I tell my friends this is a great organization to work for.	4.25	0.91	-1.54
3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization.*	3.67	1.28	-0.78
4. I would accept almost any job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.	3.68	1.08	-0.51
5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.	4.10	0.90	-1.17
6. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar.*	3.44	1.23	-0.29
7. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	3.96	0.94	-1.08
8. There's not too much to be gained by staying with this organization.*	3.46	1.18	-0.51
9. Often I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies related to important employee matters.*	3.73	1.18	-0.70
10. I really care about the fate of this organization.	3.86	1.07	-0.78
11. For me this is the best of all possible organizations.	4.24	0.80	-0.86
12. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.	3.72	1.20	-0.66
13. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.*	4.45	0.84	-1.84

* item was reverse coded

Empowerment. The Organizational Empowerment Scale (Matthews, Diaz & Cole, 2003) was altered according to feedback from the focus group and hospitality expert panel. The scale used in this research included 12 items. Of these 12 items 8 were positively worded and 4 were negatively worded. Table 14 reveals the descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, and skewness for each item after the 4 items were reverse coded.

Table 14

Descriptive statistics for the Employee Empowerment Scale

Empowerment Questionnaire	Mean	Σ	Skewness
1. "Thinking out of the box" behavior is appreciated.	3.87	0.97	-0.71
2. The company provides information on company goals.	4.03	0.91	-1.30
3. The company provides information on how these goals will be accomplished.	3.87	0.96	-1.10
4. Employees have a say in changing company policies.	2.76	1.12	0.18
5. The company does not encourage risk taking with regard to service delivered.*	2.90	1.10	0.11
6. While performing job duties, employees are not encouraged to use independent problem-solving skills.*	3.76	1.09	-0.89
7. The company has established service delivery guidelines.	4.26	0.80	-1.47
8. Employees are not provided with financial information for the company.*	3.02	1.20	0.03
9. The company does not have a way to share information to all employees.*	3.57	1.08	-0.30
10. Employees have access to the information in their personal work-files.	3.25	1.08	-0.17
11. The company publishes information on employee rewards.	3.37	1.11	-0.39
12. Employees are provided with information about guests.	2.96	1.18	0.10

* item was reverse coded

Organizational Climate. The Tourism and Hospitality Organizational Climate Scale-Revised (Manning, Davidson, & Manning, 2004) was used in this research. The scale was altered due to the feedback from the focus group and the hospitality expert panel. All items on this scale were positively worded, therefore no items were reverse coded. Table 15 reveals the descriptive statistics for each of the 14 climate items, including the mean, standard deviation, and skewness.

Table 15

Descriptive statistics for the organizational climate scale

Organizational Climate-Revised	Mean	Σ	Skewness
1. Tasks are clear in demands and criteria.	4.03	0.86	-1.15
2. I help meet organizational goals through my job behaviors.	4.28	0.71	-1.02
3. My supervisor understands and responds to my needs.	3.95	1.03	-1.17
4. My supervisor makes me feel important and worthy.	3.91	0.95	-0.98
5. My supervisor provides me with the resources I need to meet group goals.	3.97	1.00	-0.94
6. We have a team effort in completing difficult tasks.	4.22	0.89	-1.67
7. I take pride in the team I work with.	4.29	0.77	-1.18
8. There is open communication and trust among my team members.	3.85	1.02	-1.03
9. I work in a friendly environment.	4.29	0.76	-1.01
10. Changes in policy and procedures are given to me.	3.99	0.86	-1.04
11. Each department interacts in a friendly and cooperative way with other departments.	3.83	0.94	-0.98
12. I have opportunities for growth in this profession.	3.93	1.05	-0.95
13. I have the supplies I need in order to do my job.	4.13	0.84	-1.15
14. My organization provides me the opportunity for development of goals and skills.	4.15	0.87	-1.10

Restriction of Range. One key conclusion that can be drawn from the descriptive

statistics is that the data reflects a restriction of range. Restriction of range is defined by

Meyers, Gamst, and Guarino (2006) as occurring when at least one variable in the study

lacks variation within the sample. A full examination of the concept of restriction of

range, its relation to this sample, and its limitation will follow in chapter 5.

Psychometric Performance of the Research Instrument

The purpose of this research is to attempt to replicate previous findings as related

to the core self-evaluation and job satisfaction relationship within the food and beverage

segment of the hospitality industry, specifically within the quick-service restaurant

setting. The second intent of this research was to investigate the direct relationship, if

one is apparent, between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment. Lastly this

research sought to examine the external, work environment and its potential mediating

effects on the previously listed relationships. The external, work environment was

operationalized as employee empowerment and organizational climate.

Although this research seeks to support or reject specific hypotheses, it is

important to assess the psychometric properties of the measurement instrument used to

gather the data needed to investigate the hypothesized relationships. This section

includes a description of the dimensionality of the scales used via an exploratory factor

analysis. Also included in this section are assessments of each scale's reliability and

validity, including content and construct validity.

Dimensionality of the Scales

Five separate pre-existing scales were combined to develop the research

instrument. These scales included the Core Self-Evaluation Scale, the shortened version

of the Job Satisfaction Scale, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire,

Organizational Empowerment Scale, and THOCS-R. Feedback was provided by a focus

group and a hospitality expert panel. Based on this feedback alterations were made to the

scales as a reflection of the intended audience.

Because of the changes made to the scales and the unique sample comprised of

quick-service restaurant employees a varimax rotated principal components analysis was

conducted. This study employed a principal components analysis, described by Meyers,

Gamst, and Guarino (2006) as a technique that allows one to identify smaller underlying

themes of the items. As Stevens (2002) stated principal components analysis is preferred

to other factor analysis techniques that yield similar results because principal components

analysis is more psychometrically sound. This study also employed a varimax rotation (a

commonly used technique) due to the ease of interpretation of the resulting factor

structure. This study adhered to the eigenvalue is greater than 1 criteria (EVG1),

described by Patil, Singh, Mishra, and Donavan (2008) "the main factor retention

criteria" (p.164). The rationale for EVG1 "is that a factor should account for the amount

of variation in at least on variable, which is one" (Patil, *et al.,* 2008, p. 164). Also,

loadings less than .40 were suppressed for interpretive purposes. This is in accordance

with Stevens (1992) suggestion that factor loadings greater than .40 are considerable

values. Below is a description of the factors that were revealed through the exploratory

factor analysis and how these findings compare to previous findings.

Core Self-Evaluation Scale. Initially, the data was assessed as factorable via the

KMO test of "sampling adequacy", .80 and Bartlett's test for sphericity, 389.61,

p.<0.001. The results of these tests assessed the data factorable and the factor analysis

was performed. The variamax rotated principal components exploratory factor analysis

revealed a three factor structure that explained 52.3% of the variance. Only factor

loadings of at least 0.40 were included in the factor. Eigenvalues for each factor were

greater than 1.0. The three factors were labeled self-worth, control, and success. Item 9

did not load on any of the factors, however post hoc analysis of the item did not provide

enough support to drop it from the scale for further analyses. Also, item 4 cross-loaded

on two factors but was included on Factor 1 (self-worth) as it had the stronger loading

and made more sense logically. Table 16 illustrates the factors that emerged, the items

included on each, and their loadings. (Please note: from this point forward the item

numbers are used instead of the full item statement. Item numbers correspond to the

items found in tables in chapters three and previously in this chapter.)

Table 16

Factors in the Core-Self Evaluation Scale

	Factor 1	**Factor 2**	**Factor 3**
	Self-worth	Control	Success
Item 2	.74		
Item 4	.54		
Item 11	.77		
Item 12	.74		
Item 6		.79	
Item 7		.42	
Item 8		.69	
Item 10		.62	
Item 1			.53
Item 3			.85
Item 5			.59
% of Variance	31.39%	11.37%	9.56%
Eigenvalue	3.77	1.37	1.15
Reliability (α)	.74	.65	.47

The three factor structure found in this research is supported through previous research, including Taylor (2004) who confirmed a three factor structure for core self-evaluation. According to the CSE theory, historically locus of control has not loaded strongly as a fourth factor. It was determined that a three factor structure is sufficient.

Job Satisfaction Scale

Initially, the data was assessed as factorable via the KMO test of "sampling adequacy", .80 and Bartlett's test for sphericity, 291.79, p.<0.001. The results of these tests assessed the data factorable and the factor analysis was performed. The varimax rotated principal components exploratory factor analysis employed for the job satisfaction scale revealed a one factor structure that explained 61% of the variance. Only factor loading of at least 0.40 were included in the factor. Eigenvalues for each factor were greater than 1.0. All five items loaded on the single factor, title overall job satisfaction and can be seen in Table 17.

Table 17

Factors in the Job Satisfaction Scale

	Factor 1 Overall Job Satisfaction
Item 1	.78
Item 2	.77
Item 3	.70
Item 4	.84
Item 5	.81
% of Variance	61.04%
Eigenvalue	3.05
Reliability (α)	.84

For this study the overall or global measure of job satisfaction was assessed. This was conducted so using the single factor job satisfaction scale. All five items in the scale loaded on a solitary factor, supporting the global or overall measure of job satisfaction.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

Initially, the data was assessed as factorable via the KMO test of "sampling adequacy", .88 and Bartlett's test for sphericity, 568.23, p.<0.001. The results of these tests assessed the data factorable and the factor analysis was performed. The varimax rotated principal components exploratory factor analysis revealed a three factor structure that explained 56.7% of the variance. Only factor loading of at least 0.40 were included in the factor. Eigenvalues for each factor were greater than 1.0. The three factors were labeled care for the organization, intent to leave, and loyalty. Item 9 cross-loaded on two factors, however it was determined that it would be included in Factor 2 (intent to leave) as it loaded stronger on this factor. The loadings and factors can be seen in Table 18.

Table 18

Factors for the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
	Care for organization	Intent to leave	Loyalty
Item 1	.70		
Item 2	.82		
Item 4	.71		
Item 7	.71		
Item 11	.72		
Item 12	.66		
Item 8		.77	
Item 9		.62	
Item 10		.70	
Item 13		.64	
Item 3			.82
Item 5			.42
Item 6			.55
% of Variance	36.51%	12.34%	7.85%
Eigenvalue	4.75	1.61	1.02
Reliability (α)	.82	.74	.43

Previous findings have supported both a single factor (Silva, 2006) and multi-factor structure of organizational commitment. Specifically a four-factor (Becker, 1992)

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structure was found, comprised of commitment to the organization, commitment to top management, commitment to immediate supervisors, and commitment to work groups. This study found a three factor structure of organizational commitment, namely care for the organization, intent to leave the organization, and loyalty to the organization.

Organizational Empowerment Scale

Initially, the data was assessed as factorable via the KMO test of "sampling adequacy", .73 and Bartlett's test for sphericity, 407.60, p.<0.001. The results of these tests assessed the data factorable and the factor analysis was performed. The varimax rotated principal components exploratory factor analysis revealed a four factor structure, however the fourth factor was uninterpretable. A three factor structure was accepted, reflecting flow of information, access to information, and guidelines. Only factor loading of at least 0.40 were included in the factor. Eigenvalues for each factor were greater than 1.0. Item 3 cross-loaded on both factors but was included on Factor 1 (flow of information) due to its higher loading. Item 8 also cross-loaded on two factors but was included on Factor 1 (flow of information) due to its higher loading. Table 19 displays the three factor structure and its item loadings.

Table 19

Factor loadings for the Organizational Empowerment Scale

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
	Flow of information	Access to information	Guidelines
Item 1	.70		
Item 2	.72		
Item 3	.62		
Item 4	.57		
Item 8	.48		
Item 9	.70		
Item 11	.66		
Item 10		.68	
Item 12		.81	
Item 6			.64
Item 7			.74
% of Variance	28.55%	12.84%	10.54%
Eigenvalue	3.43	1.54	1.27
Reliability (α)	.77	.52	.48

The Organizational Empowerment Scale (Matthews, Diaz & Cole, 2003) was designed to assess three components of empowerment, dynamic structural framework, fluidity in information, and control of workplace decisions. Only two of the three components were assessed in this study as control of workplace decisions was omitted

due to the unique nature of quick service restaurants. The data supported a three factor

structure of employee empowerment as shown in Table 19.

Organizational Climate Scale

Initially, the data was assessed as factorable via the KMO test of "sampling

adequacy", .89 and Bartlett's test for sphericity, 985.38, $p. < 0.001$. The results of these

tests assessed the data factorable and the factor analysis was performed. The varimax

rotated principal components exploratory factor analysis revealed a three factor structure,

explaining 61.7% of the variance. For this scale the Tourism and Hospitality

Organizational Climate Scale-Revised (Manning, Davidson, & Manning, 2004) was

utilized and alterations were made that reflected the feedback provided by the focus

group and hospitality expert panel. Only factor loading of at least 0.40 were included in

the factor. Eigenvalues for each factor were greater than 1.0. The factors extracted were

supervisory support, esprit de corps, and personal development. Items 6 and 11 cross-

loaded but were included on Factor 2 (esprit de corps) due to their higher loadings on this

factor. Also, items 10 and 13 cross-loaded but were included on Factor 1 (supervisory

support) due to their higher loadings on this factor. Table 20 displays the factors and

their loadings.

Table 20

Factor loadings for the THOCS-R

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
	Supervisory Support	Esprit de corps	Personal development
Item 3	.84		
Item 4	.86		
Item 5	.71		
Item 10	.49		
Item 13	.58		
Item 6		.66	
Item 7		.70	
Item 8		.79	
Item 9		.71	
Item 11		.47	
Item 1			.58
Item 2			.62
Item 12			.75
Item 14			.77
% of Variance	45.44%	8.41%	7.85%
Eigenvalue	6.36	1.12	1.10
Reliability (α)	.85	.82	.76

The THOCS-R (Manning *et al.,* 2004) supported a four factor structure assessing service climate, including leadership facilitation and support; professional and organizational esprit; conflict and ambiguity; and workgroup cooperation, friendliness, and warmth. This study supported a three factor structure similar to that of Manning, Davidson, and Manning (2004). While Manning *et al.* (2004) found conflict and ambiguity to be a factor and workgroup cooperation, friendliness, and warmth as the final factor, the study supported the personal development factor as the third factor.

Due to the alterations that were made to the original pre-existing scales their dimensionality within this sample needed to be assessed. This assessment allowed for a comparison of the previous scales to the scales used in this survey. Now that the dimensionality of each scale has been addressed and discussed, the issues of reliability and validity will be examined.

Reliability

Reliability is defined by Huck (2004) as the consistency of a measure. It is important to assess the reliability of each scale used so that one can understand to what extent the data are consistent. Internal consistency for each of the five scales used in this research was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Each scale used a 5-point Likert-type response format, ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". Table 21 illustrates the coefficient alpha for each scale used in the research, including the Core Self-Evaluation Scale, the shortened version of the Job Satisfaction Scale, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, Organizational Empowerment Scale, and THOCS-R. Alterations were made to the scales based on feedback from a hospitality panel of experts and a focus group.

Table 21

Coefficient alpha for each scale

Scale	# of items	Reliability
Core Self-Evaluation Scale	12	.79
Job Satisfaction Scale	5	.84
Organizational Commitment Questionnaire	13	.83
Organizational Empowerment Scale	12	.71
THOCS-R	14	.91

The coefficient alpha obtained for each of the scales are each above the .70 cutoff

(Nunnally & Berstein, 1994; Sapp & Jensen, 1997), assessing each scale as reliable. The

alterations made to the scales and the differing sample with which the scales are being

used makes it essential to assess the reliability of each. The scales overall performed

well, ranging from a = .71 for the empowerment scale to a = .91 for the organizational

climate scale. Both of these scales (and others) were altered based on feedback from the

focus group and the hospitality panel of experts regarding redundancy, readability, and

clarity of items.

Validity

Validity, described by Huck (2004) as accuracy was assessed in two ways.

Content validity also known as face validity was assessed through two means, a focus

group and a panel of hospitality experts. Secondly, an exploratory factor analysis was

conducted in order to statistically assess the construct validity of the measurement

instrument. Due to the alterations made to the pre-existing reliable and valid scales it was

important to assess the construct validity of the instrument. A description of each assessment of validity follows.

Content validity. In order to assess the measurement instrument's content validity a focus group consisting of 18 hospitality management students was formed. The focus group contained fourteen participants who self-identified as currently employed. It was felt that this group of students possessed an understanding of hospitality management concepts and were representative of workforce members within the hospitality industry.

The focus group began with a brief description of the project and the intended aims of the project. All participants were asked to read the information letter that each restaurant employee would be provided. Next, focus group members were asked to read through the survey and complete it with regard to their current employer or a past employer. After all participants completed the survey and open-ended questions were asked by the facilitator. The open-ended questions sought to assess the clarity of each item, the readability of each item, and any redundancy within the instrument.

The focus group noted a few redundant items within the survey. This was to be expected as two scales were assessing the work environment employees function in. The focus group also highlighted select vocabulary that was not pertinent to the hospitality industry. For example, one item asked if information about clients was given to employees. The focus group felt that the word choice was poor for a quick-service setting and the alternative "guest" was chosen to adequately reflect this specific hospitality segment. Overall, the focus group provided valuable feedback that was used to alter the instrument so that it would have a higher level of content validity.

After the focus group was conducted, a panel of hospitality experts reviewed the instrument for readability, clarity, redundancy, and appropriateness of the questions for the intended audience. This panel was comprised of educators, hospitality leaders, and survey design experts. Based on the feedback gained from the expert panel the instrument was revised to the final format. The instrument was found to have content validity as determined by the focus group and the hospitality panel of experts.

Construct validity. Construct validity is established through an examination of convergent and discriminant validity. A construct, according to Merriam and Simpson (2000) "is a theoretical explanation of an attribute or characteristic created by scholars for purposes of study. Constructs are abstract and, having not been observed directly, are not considered actual behaviors or events" (p. 161). To assess construct validity one must first assess how much these characteristics that are not directly observable are similar as they should theoretically be and represent the construct under investigation, therefore providing one with convergent validity. Second, one must assess the extent to which these characteristics that are not directly observable are able to discriminate from other, different constructs under investigation, therefore providing one with discriminant validity.

Convergent validity was supported through a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis of the factors extracted through the varimax rotated principal components exploratory factor analysis discussed for each scale in the previous section in this chapter, titled dimensionality of the scales. Convergent validity was supported for each of the scales measuring core self-evaluation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and

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organizational climate. Table 22 provides the correlation coefficient for the factors

extracted during the varimax rotated principal components exploratory factor analysis.

The Organizational Empowerment Scale did support convergent validity for the

first two factors, flow of information and access to information, as they shared a

statistically significant correlation coefficient ($r = .368$, $n = 152$, $p < .001$). The third and

final factor was not found to support convergent validity as it did not share a statistically

significant correlation coefficient with neither Factor 1 nor Factor 2. Looking at the third

factor, there is reason to believe that this factor would not converge on the other two as

the third factor assesses the guidelines of an organization, pre-established rules and/or

regulations one must follow when delivering service. This is drastically different than the

flow of information and the access of information for employees. This lack of a

significant relationship is understandable and makes sense logically.

Table 22

Correlation coefficients for factors

	CSE1	CSE2	CSE3	JS	OC1	OC2	OC3	EE1	EE2	EE3	Cl1	Cl2
CSE1												
CSE2	.52											
CSE3	.29	.39										
JS	.32	.38	.30									
OC1	.18*	.21	.28	.53								
OC2	.69	.80	.37	.35	.18*							
OC3	.32	.68	.67	.22	.23	.48						
EE1	.18*	.23	.28	.26	.39	.16*	.26					
EE2	.09	-.01	.18*	.18*	.21*	.03	.06	.37				
EE3	.22	.26	.24	.24	.27	.33	.20*	.09	.07			
Clim1	.27	.39	.26	.58	.49	.35	.33	.46	.20*	.11		
Clim2	.32	.37	.35	.58	.53	.31	.33	.38	.123	.29	.68	
Clim3	.28	.39	.41	.59	.63	.37	.35	.53	.32	.33	.60	.59

*p < .05, **p < .01**

As Huck (2004) stated, "It is not always easy to demonstrate that a measuring instrument is involved in a network of relationships where certain of those relationships are strong while others are weak" (p. 92). Discriminant validity was not supported for the scales used in this research, due to the strong correlation coefficients found between the factors of differing scales.

Validity is a property of the data created from the measurement instrument, not a property of the instrument itself (Huck, 2004). For this reason it is felt that the de-limitation of the single quick-service restaurant chain selected for study could have produced another restriction of range decreasing variability in the data and therefore producing strong correlation coefficients that do not in turn support discriminant validity. Although these constructs are distinct from one another logically, with a group of employees that were selected due to the company's high regard for employee welfare within the greater public's opinion, these constructs may be hard to distinguish from one another. For example, if an employee is satisfied with his job he is probably also committed to the organization and feels like he works in a supportive and caring climate.

Although discriminant validity was not supported, convergent validity and content validity were supported. Overall, the measures used in this research were found to be reliable and valid.

Testing of the stated hypotheses

This section will address each of the stated hypotheses. The acceptance and/or rejection of the stated hypotheses at a glance can be found in Table 23 following this section. Multiple regression was performed to assess the direct and indirect relationships within the proposed model and the stated hypotheses. Each of the scales was aggregated to find an overall score for each of five variables under investigation, including core-self evaluation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, empowerment, and organizational climate. Testing of the stated hypotheses was done so in accordance with Baron and Kenny's (1986) description of mediation (see Figure 7 for an illustration of the paths):

> A variable functions as a mediator when it meets the following conditions: (a) variations in levels of the independent variable significantly account for variations in the presumed medication (i.e., Path *a*), (b) variations in the mediator significantly account for variations in the dependent variable (i.e., Path *b*), and (c) when Paths *a* and *b* are controlled, a previously significant relation between the independent and dependent variables is no longer significant, with the strongest demonstration of mediation occurring when Path *c* is zero. (p. 1176).
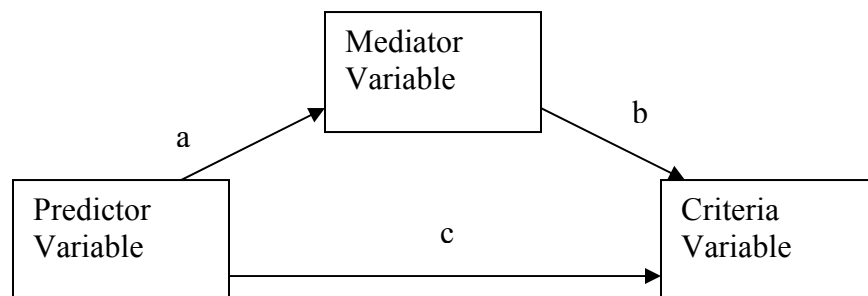
Figure 7. Mediation paths as described by Baron and Kenny (1986).

Hypothesis 1: Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction. In order to assess this relationship, a regression analysis was conducted and provided an $r^2 = .18$, $p < .001$. The direct relationship of core self-evaluation and job satisfaction was found to be significant ($\beta = .42$, $t(151) = 5.69$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 1 was therefore accepted. Figure 8 depicts the direct relationship (note: bold represents a significant finding).
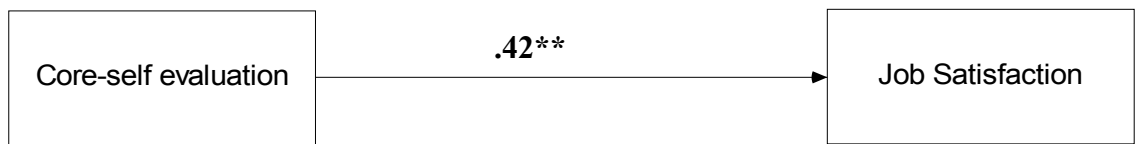
** $p < .001$

Figure 8. The direct relationship proposed between core-self evaluation and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. In order to assess this hypothesis Baron and Kenny's (1986) criteria for mediation was followed. Path *a* (core-self evaluation to employee empowerment) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed an $r^2 = .11$, $p < .001$. The first requirement, a significant Path a was supported ($\beta = .33$, $t(151) = 4.24$, $p < .001$). Next, the second requirement for mediation, Path *b* (employee empowerment to job satisfaction) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed a non-significant relationship ($\beta = -0.08$, $t(151) = -1.10$, n.s.). Finally, the third criterion for mediation, Path *c* (when Paths *a* and *b* are controlled for, a previously significant Path *c*

[as supported in Hypothesis 1] will be non-significant) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed a significant Path *c* (β = .73, t(151) = 10.28, p < .001). It was concluded that Hypothesis 2 was rejected as the data does not support the notion that employee empowerment mediates the relationship between core-self evaluation and job satisfaction. Figure 9 depicts the non-significant indirect relationship (note: bold represents a significant finding).

.33**   .-0.08

.73**

** p < .001

Figure 9. The proposed mediation of empowerment on job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. In order to assess this hypothesis Baron and Kenny's (1986) criteria for mediation was followed. Path *a* (core-self evaluation to organizational climate) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed an r^2 = .23, p < .001. The first requirement, a significant Path a was supported (β = .48, t(151) = 6.65, p < .001). Next, the second requirement for mediation, Path *b* (organizational climate to job satisfaction) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed a significant

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relationship (β = .68, t(151) = -8.92, p < .001). Finally, the third criterion for mediation,

Path *c* (when Paths *a* and *b* are controlled for, a previously significant Path *c* [as

supported in Hypothesis 1] will be non-significant) was assessed through a regression

analysis and revealed a non-significant Path *c* (β = .12, t(151) = 1.83, n.s.). It was

concluded that Hypothesis 3 was accepted as the data supported the notion that

organizational climate mediates the relationship between core-self evaluation and job

satisfaction. Figure 10 depicts the significant indirect relationship (note: bold represents
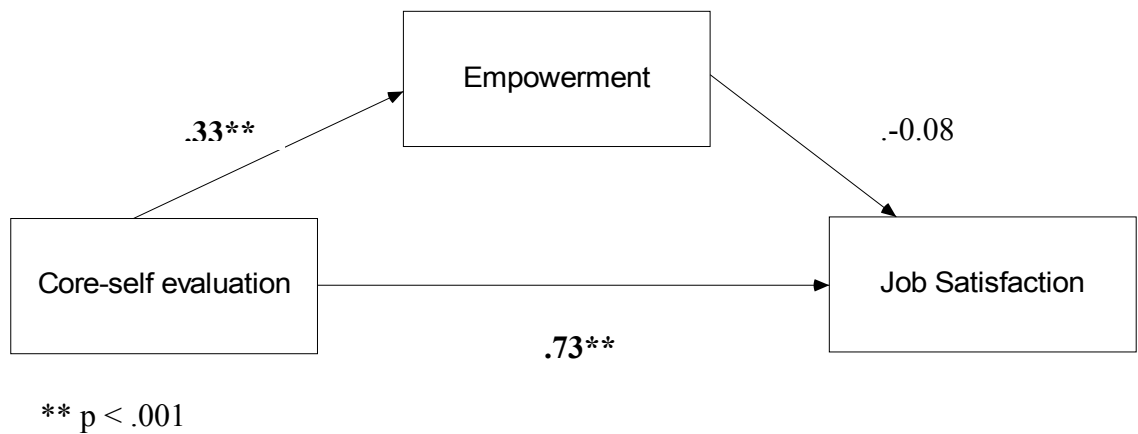
a significant finding).

.48**　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　**.68****

Organizational Climate

Core-self evaluation

Job Satisfaction

.12

　　** p < .001
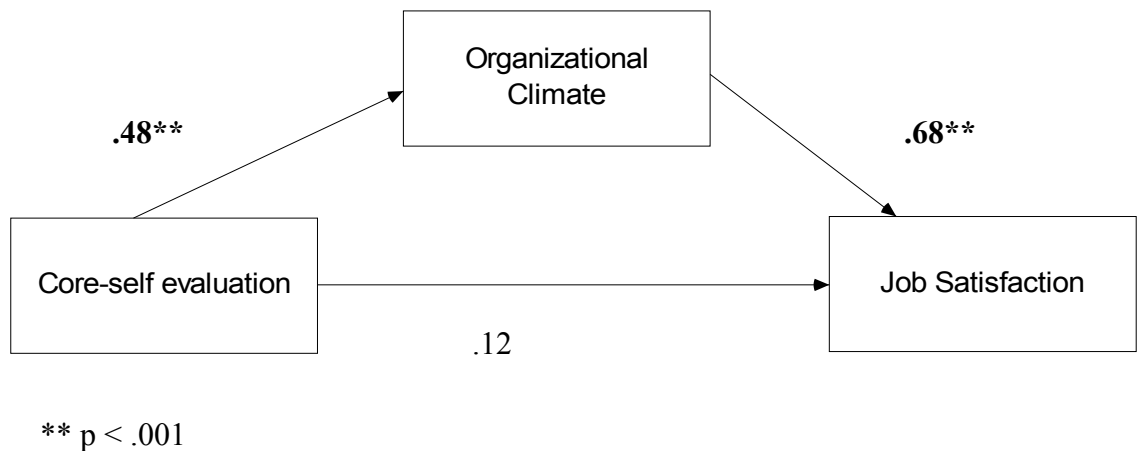
Figure 10. The proposed mediation of organizational climate on job satisfaction.

　　　　Hypothesis 4: Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with

organizational commitment. In order to assess this relationship, a regression analysis was

conducted and provided an r^2 = .15, p < .001. The direct relationship of core self-

evaluation and organizational climate was found to be significant (β = .39, t(151) = 4.92,

p < .001). Hypothesis 4 was therefore accepted. Figure 11 depicts the direct relationship

(note: bold represents a significant finding).

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| Core-self evaluation | **.39**** → | Organizational Commitment |

** p < .001
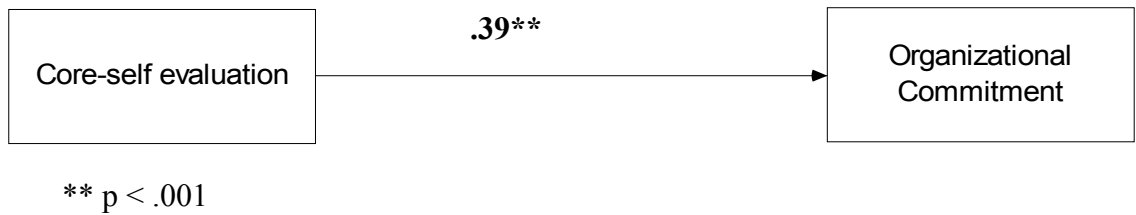
Figure 11. The proposed direct relationship between core-self evaluation and organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 5: Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment. In order to assess this hypothesis Baron and Kenny's (1986) criteria for mediation was followed. Path *a* (core-self evaluation to employee empowerment) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed an $r^2 =$ .107, p < .001. The first requirement, a significant Path a was supported (β = .33, t(151) = 4.24, p < .001). Next, the second requirement for mediation, Path *b* (employee empowerment to organizational commitment) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed a significant relationship (β = .20, t(151) = 2.87, p <.005). Finally, the third criterion for mediation, Path *c* (when Paths *a* and *b* are controlled for, a previously significant Path *c* [as supported in Hypothesis 4] will be non-significant) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed a non-significant Path *c* (β = .10, t(151) = 1.25, n.s.). It was concluded that Hypothesis 5 was accepted as the data supported the notion that employee empowerment mediates the relationship between core-self evaluation and organizational climate. Figure 12 depicts the significant indirect relationship (note: bold represents a significant finding).

.33**

Empowerment

.20*

Core-self evaluation

.10

Organizational Commitment
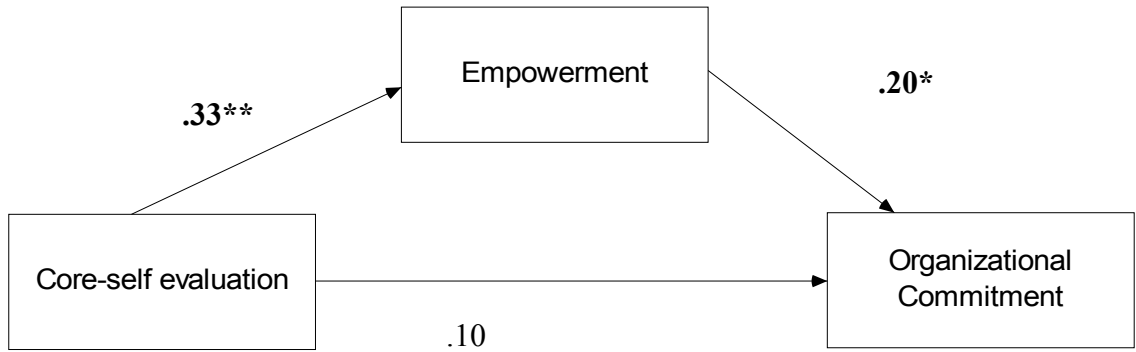
    * p < .005, ** p < .001

Figure 12. Proposed indirect relationship of empowerment on organizational

commitment.

    Hypothesis 6: Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core

self-evaluation and organizational commitment. In order to assess this hypothesis Baron

and Kenny's (1986) criteria for mediation was followed. Path *a* (core-self evaluation to

organizational climate) was assessed through a regression analysis and revealed an $r^2 =$

.23, p < .001. The first requirement, a significant Path a was supported ($\beta = .48$, $t(151) =$

6.65, p < .001). Next, the second requirement for mediation, Path *b* (organizational

climate to organizational commitment) was assessed through a regression analysis and

revealed a significant relationship ($\beta = .52$, $t(151) = 7.60$, p < .001). Finally, the third

criterion for mediation, Path *c* (when Paths *a* and *b* are controlled for, a previously

significant Path *c* [as supported in Hypothesis 4] will be non-significant) was assessed

through a regression analysis and revealed a non-significant Path *c* ($\beta = .10$, $t(151) =$

1.25, n.s.). It was concluded that Hypothesis 6 was accepted as the data supported the

notion that organizational climate mediates the relationship between core-self evaluation

and organizational commitment. Figure 13 depicts the significant indirect relationship

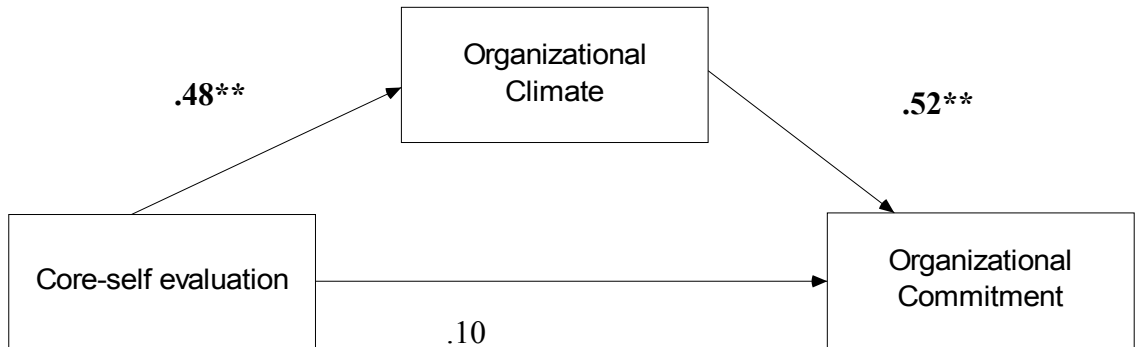(note: bold represents a significant finding).

** p < .001

Figure 13. The proposed indirect relationship of organizational climate on organizational

commitment.

Table 23

Acceptance and/or rejection of stated hypotheses at a glance.

Hypothesis	Accept or Reject
1. Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with job satisfaction.	Accept
2. Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction	Reject
3. Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction.	Accept
4. Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with organizational commitment	Accept
5. Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment.	Accept
6. Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment.	Accept

Fit of the Model

      Although the model was not addressed in the stated hypotheses it was decided that examining the fit of the model to the data was an important issue to address. In order to examine the fit of the model to the data Amos 16 was utilized. Results from the model did not support that all paths were significant. The three non-significant paths were from empowerment to job satisfaction, core self-evaluation to organizational commitment, and

core self-evaluation to job satisfaction. See Figure 14 for the results of the structural

equation modeling technique applied to the model, while Table 24 depicts the fit indices.
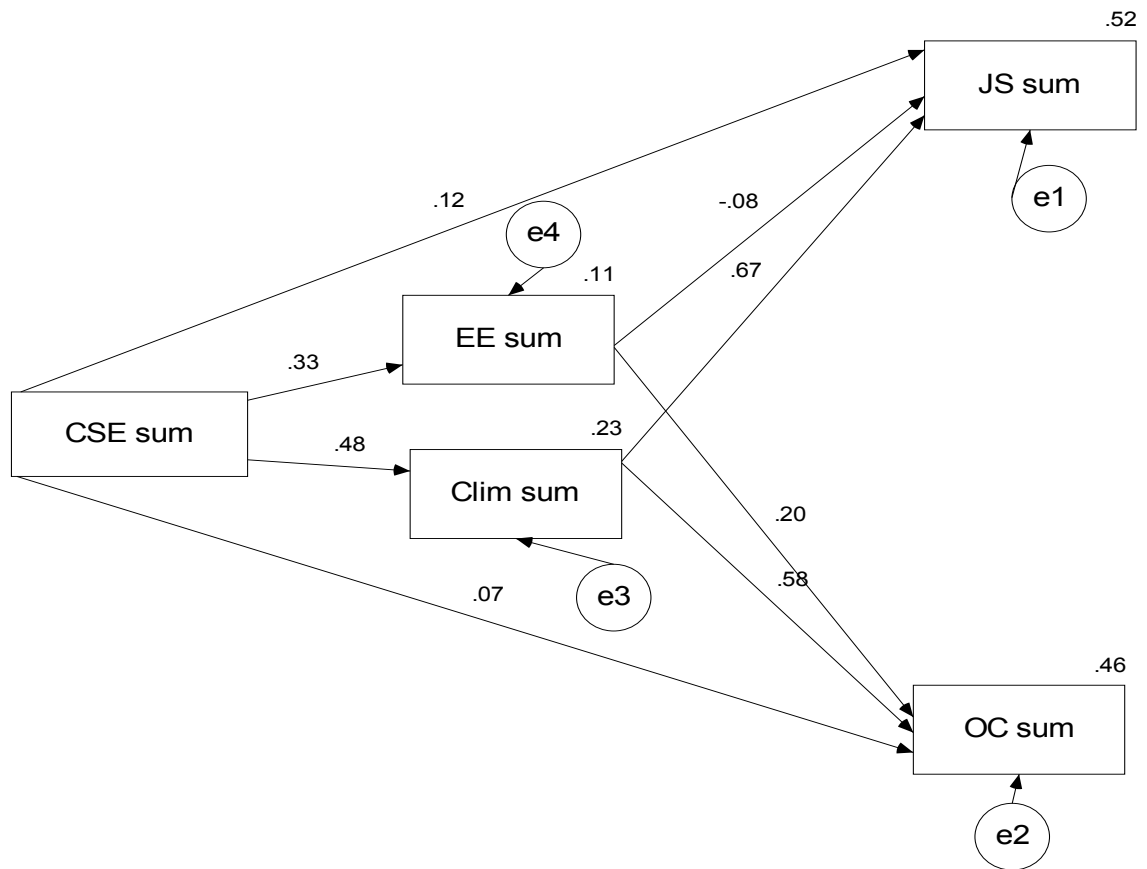
Figure 14. The path coefficients of the model.

Table 24

Fit Indices for Model

N	DF	CMIN	p value	CFI	NFI	RMSEA
152	2	53.71	P < .001	.834	.833	.414

Based on the fit indices it was determined that the model as a whole is not a good fit for the data and that the results are not generalizable as seen by the elevated root mean square error approximation (RMSEA) score. Although the model was determined not to be a good fit for the data, the paths were strong and supported mediation, the focus of this study. As Chin (1998) argues that although fit indices may be good the model may still be considered a poor model based on other measures, such as the paths of the model with coefficients of 0.20 and above to be considered meaningful. With Chin's (1998) argument in mind the model used in this study with its strong paths would be considered overall meaningful.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The discussion chapter is organized into six sections. First, a brief description

and purpose statement of the study will be given. Next, a review of the findings for each

stated hypothesis and a comparison of these findings to previous research will follow.

Third, a discussion of the limitations of this research will be presented. Fourth, an

examination of the contributions this research has provided to academicians and

practitioners will follow. Next, future research will be discussed. Finally, a brief

conclusion will be provided to summarize the discussion chapter and the research study

as a whole.

Introduction

This study focused on the quick-service market within the food service sector of

the hospitality industry. Quick-service restaurants are an already expansive market and

continue to grow and diversify (Brymer, 1998; Riley, 2005). The quick-service

restaurant is regarded to have high levels of employee turnover, causing a transient

workforce and high levels of transient customers, whose loyalty is increasingly difficult

to gain. This study sought to investigate the workplace environment, employee

disposition, and employee satisfaction of one specific quick-service restaurant company.

The study consisted of 13 locations within the East Alabama and West Georgia

geographical locations. A total of 152 employees participated in the study each with

varying degrees of education, experience, and responsibility within the restaurant The purpose of the study was threefold. A replication of the previous core self-evaluation and job satisfaction relationship in the hospitality industry, specifically in the food and beverage segment, more specifically in quick service restaurants was the first purpose of this research. This is an important factor of the investigation in that industries are different with separate nuances, processes, and challenges. For this reason relationships that exist in setting or industry should be investigated in differing settings and industry segments to gain a better, more accurate picture of how the relationship exists and how powerful it is in a specific setting.

Secondly, an extension of the core self-evaluation (CSE) literature was sought by examining the relationship between CSE and an important organizational variable, organizational commitment. Can core self-evaluation predict an employee's level of commitment with their organization? This is an important factor of the investigation because commitment has been linked to other important organizational variables, such as job satisfaction (Gaertner, 1999; Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990; Mowday *et al.,* 1982; Wallace 1995) and turnover (Allen & Meyer, 1996). Understanding an antecedent of organizational commitment may provide tools and insight for practitioners and academicians alike.

Lastly, this study sought to investigate the process by which the internal concept of CSE is linked with outcomes including job satisfaction and/or organizational commitment, by including two external, environmental factors, empowerment and organizational climate as potential mediators. Previous research has suggested that CSE is a useful higher-order construct. Previous research is also incomplete (Erez & Judge,

2001) in that possible variables that contribute to job satisfaction have not been

investigated, such as empowerment and organizational climate. Employee empowerment

is a focus in hospitality research and practice currently. Organizational climate specific

to the service industry is unique and important to understand in order to benefit the

guests, employees, and all stakeholders.

Findings

Chapter 4 reported the findings of the research. This section provides a

comparison of the findings for this research with findings from previous research. Also,

the relative importance of each novel finding is discussed.

Hypothesis 1: Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with job

satisfaction. Hypothesis 1 was supported with the data and therefore was accepted.

Previous research has supported the positive relationship between core self-evaluation

and job satisfaction (Best, Stapleton, & Downey, 2005; Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge,

Bono & Locke, 2000; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998; Rode, 2002). As Judge,

Erez, Bono, and Locke (2005) recognized, job satisfaction is the most researched

outcome of core self-evaluation.

Core self-evaluation as described by Judge and Bono (2001) is a higher order trait

that is composed of four traits, including self-esteem, neuroticism, locus of control, and

generalized self-efficacy. Although previous research has supported the relationship

between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction, it is important to attempt replicating

these findings in a variety of settings, including the food and beverage segment of the

hospitality industry. The food and beverage segment of the hospitality industry is a vast

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and prosperous segment. For this reason it is imperative to understand relationships that exist for employees of this large segment of the hospitality industry.

An early finding that linked childhood personality and job satisfaction later in life (Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986) created the foundation for later research investigating disposition (including core self-evaluation) and job satisfaction (Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000). Later research has continuously supported the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. The data gathered in this study supported previous findings in research, further supporting the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. These findings also draw a line of similarity between employees of quick service restaurants and other industries, expanding the understanding of the hospitality employee.

Hypothesis 2: Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. Hypothesis 2 was not supported with the data gathered for this study and was therefore rejected. Empowerment is described by Honold (1997) as the relinquish of power from the managerial staff and the engagement of employees in the freedom empowerment offers them. A potential explanation for the non-significant finding can be found by taking a closer look at the quick-service restaurant (QSR) and its challenges. The quick-service sector typically has a high employee turnover rate. For this reason, many QSRs may not be comfortable relinquishing power from the managerial staff (that has a lower turnover rate) to the front line employees (that may or may not be at work the next day).

Ultimately, there was not an indirect effect of core-self evaluation on job satisfaction through employee empowerment. This was an area that was lacking in the

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literature and therefore the non-significant relationship is important as it provides new information.

Hypothesis 3: Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. The data collected for this study supported the hypothesis, therefore it was accepted. Previous research has supported mediation of core self-evaluation and job satisfaction, including job characteristics (Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000; Taylor, 2004), burnout (Best, Stapleton, & Downey, 2005), and goal commitment (Taylor, 2004). To the researcher's knowledge, organizational climate has not been included as a potential mediator.

The support of Hypothesis 3 provides a novel finding for those interested in core self-evaluation, job satisfaction, and within the food and beverage segment of the hospitality industry. This finding supports the notion that the environment one works within can have an effect on an employee's job satisfaction, whether he/she is a positive or negative core self-evaluator.

Another interesting point of this finding is related to previous research findings. Previous research has supported the relationship of organizational climate and psychological well-being and withdrawal behaviors (Carr, Schmidt, Ford, & DeShon, 2003). The findings of this research relate to this previous finding in that the data supported a strong relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational climate, with core self-evaluation representing one's outlook on life, control over one's life, and overall assessment of one's self worth. Positive self-evaluators were more likely to view their organizational climate in a positive manner as compared to the Carr *et al.*(2003)

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findings where those with a positive psychological well-being were more likely to view their organizational climate in a positive manner and exhibit fewer withdrawal behaviors.

Hypothesis 4: Core self-evaluation will have a positive relationship with organizational commitment. The data collected for this study supported Hypothesis 4, therefore it was accepted. Organizational commitment as an outcome variable of core self-evaluation has not been examined within the literature. Many consider organizational commitment a by-product of job satisfaction and would not include it as a stand alone outcome. It was selected as an outcome variable for this study because it has been researched previously as an outcome variable independent of job satisfaction (Allen & Meyer, 1996). This novel finding is important in that using organizational commitment as an outcome variable of core self-evaluation proved to be important as these two variables shared a significant, positive relationship in this study.

Hypothesis 5: Employee empowerment will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment. The data collected for this study supported Hypothesis 5, therefore it was accepted. It is interesting to compare the findings that supported empowerment as a mediator of core-self evaluation and organizational commitment but did not support empowerment as a mediator of core-self evaluation and job satisfaction. A possible explanation is that employees that do feel they are empowered at work take greater personal responsibility for their work and the success of the company. In comparison, employees that do not feel they are empowered at work are less likely to be satisfied with their job.

Although employee empowerment did not have a mediating effect on job satisfaction, it has been supported in previous hospitality literature as a means of creating

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service quality, and therefore a competitive advantage (Hirst, 1992; Hubrecht Teare, 1993). Empowerment is an important ingredient in an organization as it engages employees (Barbee & Bott, 1991), creates emotional investment of employees (Conger & Kanungo, 1988), creates competitive advantage (Hirst, 1992), and has a relationship with organizational commitment. Empowerment must continue to be studied and analyzed for its relative importance in any organization, especially the service organization.

Hypothesis 6: Organizational climate will mediate the relationship between core self-evaluation and organizational commitment. The data collected for this study supported Hypothesis 6, therefore it was accepted. Once again, this finding attests to the importance of the environment that employees work within. This environment can have an effect on an employee's organizational commitment, whether he/she is a positive or negative core-self evaluator.

The findings of this research support previous findings within the core-self evaluation and job satisfaction literature. Novel findings provide a foundation for further inquiry into organizational commitment. Also, novel findings highlight just how important the external work environment is, supporting the notion that the external environment can mediate the relationship between internal disposition and outcomes of that disposition, including job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Limitations

Limitations for this study do exist and will be discussed in this section. Some of these limitations include exclusion of non-English speaking persons, single source bias, and restriction of range. Each of these limitations, a description of each, and how they affected the study follows.

The survey and information letter were only offered in English. The inclusion of a Spanish survey would have provided the opportunity for the Latino population to have a voice in this study. The food and beverage segment of the hospitality industry employed 1,674,000 Latinos in 2007 (U.S. Department of Labor). With this large amount of the Latino population employed within food and beverage, the results are not as generalizable without their inclusion. Only English-speaking Latinos were included in the study.

Single source bias occurs when all variables being examined in a study are assessed in the same manner, for all variables. This study used one survey as a measure of all 5 variables in the study. Each participant rated their level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment; the organization's level of empowerment and climate; and lastly their own core-self evaluation. To avoid single source bias a company's measure of their employee's job satisfaction would serve a separate source and reduce bias. Although this is a limitation of the study, the measures used by other parties are not necessarily valid and reliable, therefore it was agreed upon to use a single source for all data collection. This ultimately means that there may be some bias in the data due to the single source collection method employed.

In discussion of the limitations of this study the de-limitations must also be considered. The de-limitations, which provide the scope of the study, included the quick-service restaurant with its transient nature, and one particular quick-service restaurant company. The company selected for the study has a public reputation as caring for its employees and caring for the community. These de-limitations were selected knowingly

and purposefully, however they created a limitation for the overall study, restriction of range.

One key conclusion that can be drawn from the descriptive statistics found in Chapter 4 is that the data reflects a restriction of range. Restriction of range is defined by Meyers, Gamst, and Guarino (2006) as occurring when at least one variable in the study lacks variation within the sample. This is illustrated in this study and sample. By looking at the mean value and standard deviation for each scale item one can conclude that the data lacks variance. The lack of variance in the scores of the sample decreases how generalizable the scores are to the greater population of quick-service restaurants and/or food and beverage employees at large. This restriction of range created by the de-limitations of the study ultimately does not provide the most accurate picture of the greater population and therefore the results are not generalizable. This is further illustrated by the root mean square error approximation (RMSEA) score of the proposed model, seen in Chapter 4.

Contributions

This section will highlight the contributions of this research. Practitioners and academicians alike will find this research informative and important. This section is divided into two parts, the first addressing how the findings of this research are important to and may be used by practitioners within the hospitality industry. The second section addresses how the findings of this research are important to and may be used to further the hospitality literature.

Practitioner. This research provides significant contributions to practitioners within the hospitality industry. Those that will find this most informative are human

resource professionals, general managers, and training and development professionals. This section will highlight the important contributions of this research for practitioners in the hospitality industry.

Selecting the employees that will be satisfied and committed to an organization is key to keeping those very same employees with the organization. The findings of this study revealed a significant positive relationship between core-self evaluation, the basic assessment one makes about his/her abilities, competencies, and/or self-worth, and job satisfaction as well as organizational commitment. An employee that is a positive self-evaluator will regard his/her abilities, competencies, and/or self-worth as being satisfactory. An employee that is a negative self evaluator will regard his/her abilities, competencies, and/or self-worth as being unsatisfactory.

One's core self-evaluation is related to job satisfaction in that a positive self-evaluator is more likely to feel satisfied with his/her job and a negative self-evaluator is more likely to feel less satisfied with his/her job. The same holds true for organizational commitment. One's core self-evaluation is related to organizational commitment in that a positive self-evaluator is more likely to feel committed to the employing organization and a negative self-evaluator is more likely to feel less committed to the employing organization.

Hospitality professionals that are responsible for selection should consider the disposition of those being considered for hire with the company. Selecting employees that are positive self-evaluators will produce employees that are more likely to be satisfied with the job and feel committed to the organization. Previous research has supported the relationship between organizational commitment and intention to quit.

Therefore, positive self-evaluators will feel satisfied, committed, and are less likely to leave the organization, helping practitioners to combat the exorbitant turnover rate associated with the hospitality industry.

The environment that employees work in on a daily basis is an important factor in predicting how satisfied and committed employees will be. It is imperative that practitioners realize they can create an environment that fosters satisfaction and commitment among employees. Two means of creating this environment are employee empowerment and organizational climate.

This research supported a three factor structure of employee empowerment, including flow of information to employees, employees' access to information, and guidelines. Practitioners can use this as a guideline for creating and maintaining an environment where employees can make independent, informed decisions, based on information and established guidelines. Many practitioners are not willing to relinquish control to employees, however through company provided information and company developed guidelines, practitioners may feel comfortable in relinquishing control to informed employees that can make informed decisions sans management.

Employee empowerment is only one means of creating an environment that fosters satisfaction and commitment to the organization. The organizational climate that one works within is also an important factor in employee welfare.

This research supported a three factor structure of organizational climate, including supervisory support, esprit de corps, and personal development. An organization that supports its employees, creates a feeling of camaraderie and teamwork among the employees, and provides opportunities for professional and personal

development is one that provides an organizational climate that fosters employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Human resource professionals and general managers alike can work to put in place a climate that provides these component parts of a positive and supportive work environment. The advantage to creating this environment for practitioners is the "buy-in" of employees to the organization through satisfaction and commitment.

Ultimately, there are tools available to hospitality practitioners that want to take advantage of them. These tools, specifically the work environment can be used to foster personal investment into the company, "buy-in" among employees, decreased turnover; job satisfaction, and organizational commitment of employees. Important contributions of this research exist for hospitality practitioners. This section has addressed these contributions and discussed ways they may be applied by human resource professionals, general managers, and training and development professionals.

Academicians. It was important for this study to make a contribution to previous research and study in general while having a specific notable contribution to the hospitality literature. This research produced several important contributions to research and study in general and to the hospitality field specifically. A discussion of these contributions follows.

The first purpose of this research was to replicate previous findings with regard to the relationship between core self-evaluation and job satisfaction. Research regarding this relationship has been conducted in several industries, including the service industry, but not specifically in the hospitality industry. This study provided a replication of previous findings in the literature, however this relationship was examined within the

food and beverage segment of the hospitality industry, more specifically quick service restaurants.

This research has provided an extension of hospitality related research as well as a replication, providing stronger support for the core self-evaluation and job satisfaction relationship. This in turn opens up avenues to further develop the core-self evaluation concept as a whole and specifically within hospitality. Also, the research has provided a foundation for future research to build upon when studying the quick-service restaurant setting as it remains to be viewed as transient in nature and the literature relating to the quick service restaurant is relatively small compared to other segments of the hospitality literature.

A second contribution of this research for the hospitality literature is the inclusion of the proposed model in the research. Although the fit of the model to the data was not hypothesized, the findings were included. This provides researchers with an initial model that can be re-specified in order to create a better overall understanding of the mediation of core-self evaluation and outcomes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The development of a reliable model will provide practitioners with valuable and application-based information that can be used to better their organizations.

Although pre-existing scales were utilized and altered according to the focus group and hospitality panel of experts' feedback, each was assessed for their reliability and validity specific to this study and its sample. An initial factor-structure was proposed for each scale, findings supported these factor-structures for some scales and proposed new factor-structures for other scales. Findings of this research ultimately supported the use of these measures as reliable and valid. This information can be used in future

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research choosing to utilize these same scales and in scale development related to core-self evaluation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee empowerment, and organizational commitment.

This research provided significant contributions to practitioners within the hospitality industry and to the current and future body of hospitality literature. Those within the hospitality sector can use the information gained from this study and apply it within their organizations. The contributions to those researchers of disposition and/or hospitality-related factors, can be used in future research.

Future Research

Although this research provided significant contributions to the hospitality industry and the academic literature, future research will continue to develop each variable in this study. Suggestions for future research follows.

An initial suggestion for future research is a replication of this study across the quick-service restaurant segment employing the same de-limitations as this study. A comparison of those findings and the findings of this research would provide a better understanding of the phenomena studied.

A greater look at the techniques which may be used to create a work environment that fosters job satisfaction and organizational commitment should be conducted. While this study found that employee empowerment and organizational climate have a mediating effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, other variables related to the work environment may have similar effects. Findings that identify additional mediators would assist practitioners in the understanding of creating job

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satisfaction and organizational commitment and add to the academic literature related to human resources and the importance of the workplace environment.

Another consideration for future research closely follows the previous suggestion. Could employee empowerment and organizational climate be collapsed to represent a higher order construct, workplace environment? Investigation into this should be considered, measured, and represented within a model for evaluation. Again, this would assist practitioners in the understanding of creating job satisfaction and organizational commitment and add to the academic literature related to human resources and the importance of the workplace environment.

A potential confounding variable in this study was the employee's prior knowledge of the company and the public's opinion of how it treats its employees. This should be controlled for in future research. This would strengthen the study and allow for a comparative analysis of those with previous knowledge of the company to those without previous knowledge of the company. Does previous knowledge of the company's policies and climate prime the employee in their personal view of the company's policies and climate?

A final suggestion for future research is to replicate this study without employing the same de-limitations. A comparative analysis would provide an important contribution to the hospitality literature and shed light on the strength of the mediating effect of workplace environment on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Also, other segments within the hospitality industry should be studied. While quick-service restaurants are regarded as being transient in nature, the private club segment does not

experience this high degree of constant change. Does the nature of the segment have an effect on the relationships supported in this study?

This research provides a foundation for other research. Future research can further develop core-self evaluation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee empowerment, and organizational climate. Future research may also take into considerations limitations of this study and safeguard against those to receive more generalizable results. There is a broad area within the study of core-self evaluation, workplace environment, and the hospitality industry for future research and a better understanding of important relationships that may ultimately be used to enhance knowledge, understanding, and the hospitality industry as a whole.

Conclusion

This research has provided significant contributions to the academy, researchers of core-self evaluation, researchers of hospitality management, and practitioners of hospitality management. These findings may be used to enhance management's understanding of employee well-being and disposition. This research also provides a foundation that others may build upon in order to extend the knowledge base and understanding of important hospitality industry related factors. Employees are an important asset to employers, therefore it is imperative that employers have a clear grasp of how to best select, develop, and retain successful employees for a successful organization.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE TO RESTAURANT LOCATIONS

Dear ▉▉▉▉▉▉ Owner/Operators,

 Hello, my name is Alleah Crawford and I am Ph.D. student at Auburn University in Hotel and Restaurant Management. I am writing to tell you all of a free research opportunity available to you. I am currently working on my dissertation and would like to use ▉▉▉▉▉ employees as my sample population. Currently six other ▉▉▉▉▉ restaurants (in the Auburn/Opelika and Montgomery areas) have agreed to participate in the research project.

 The topic of my research is employee satisfaction and organizational commitment as related to employee empowerment and the workplace setting. Data will be collected through a survey, completed by employees, and distributed and collected on site by me.

 You will be receiving a letter in the next few days, further describing the study, benefits of participation, and the data collection process. If you have any questions before receiving the letter please do not hesitate to contact me at 334 319-2901 or by email crawfam@auburn.edu.

 I am very excited about the possibility of working with a company known for its values, such as ▉▉▉▉▉. I look forward to working with you, providing you with valuable information, and completing the requirements of the doctoral program.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Alleah Crawford
Hotel and Restaurant Management
Auburn University

APPENDIX B

LETTER CORRESPONDENCE FOR RESTAURANT LOCATIONS

November 5, 2007

Mr. ███████ ████████

███████████████████████

Fayetteville, GA 30215

Dear ████████:

I recently emailed you regarding this letter and the opportunity to join six other ██████ █ restaurants (in the Auburn/Opelika area) in exciting research being conducted by the Hotel and Restaurant Management program at Auburn University. I am a doctoral candidate performing a study that seeks to investigate the effect of empowerment and organizational climate on employees' job satisfaction and commitment.

Please note: No identifying information of the employee, management staff, or location will be used or reported. You may be asking "What is in this for me". The answer is free research and analysis of the ████████ East Alabama and West Georgia region with a comparative analysis of your store compared to others (not identified by location or name) participating in the study.

As mentioned previously, I will visit your location, distribute surveys to your employees, and collect them on an agreed upon date. If you are interested in taking part of this opportunity your only requirements are to sign (include name, title, and location) and date the enclosed memo; mail it back to me in the addressed, stamped envelope; and establish a convenient date for me to visit and collect data.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me via phone (334)319-2901 or email crawfam@auburn.edu with any questions or concerns. I look forward to working with a company known for its strong corporate values and caring for its employees. I hope to hear from you soon!

Sincerely,

Alleah Crawford, M.S.
Hotel and Restaurant Management Program
Auburn University

Enclosure

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

AUBURN

UNIVERSITY

Office of Human Subjects Research
307 Samford Hall
Auburn University, AL 36849

Telephone: 334-844-5966
Fax: 334-844-4391
hsubjec@auburn.edu

January 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM TO: Alleah Crawford
                               Nutrition and Food Science

PROTOCOL TITLE: "Employee Empowerment, and Organizational Climate: An Investigation of
                             Mediating Effects on the Core Self-Evaluation, Job Satisfaction, and
                             Organizational Commitment Relationship"

IRB AUTHORIZATION NO: 07-203 EP 0712

APPROVAL DATE: December 13, 2007
EXPIRATION DATE: December 12, 2008

The above referenced protocol was approved by IRB Expedited procedure under 45 CFR 46.110 (Category #7):

> "Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to,
> research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural
> beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history,
> focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance
> methodologies."

You should report to the IRB any proposed changes in the protocol or procedures and any unanticipated
problems involving risk to subjects or others. Please reference the above authorization number in any future
correspondence regarding this project.

If you will be unable to file a Final Report on your project before December 12, 2008, you must submit a
request for an extension of approval to the IRB no later than November 28, 2008. If your IRB authorization
expires and/or you have not received written notice that a request for an extension has been approved prior to
December 12, 2008, you must suspend the project immediately and contact the Office of Human Subjects
Research for assistance.

A Final Report will be required to close your IRB project file. You are reminded that you must use the
stamped, IRB-approved information sheet (enclosed) when you consent your participants.

If you have any questions concerning this Board action, please contact the Office of Human Subjects Research.

Sincerely,

Niki L. Johnson, JD, MBA, Director
Office of Human Subjects Research
Research Compliance Auburn University

Enclosure
cc: Dr. Doug White
     Dr. Susan Hubbard

APPENDIX D

INFORMATION LETTER FOR PARTICIPANTS

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES

NUTRITION & FOOD SCIENCE

AUBURN
UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION LETTER
for a Research Study entitled
"Employee Empowerment and Organizational Climate: An Investigation of
Mediating Effects on the Core-Self Evaluation, Job Satisfaction, and
Organizational Commitment Relationship"

You are invited to participate in a research study to assess the importance of one's work environment on their level of job satisfaction and commitment. The study is being conducted by Alleah Crawford, Doctoral Candidate, under the direction of Dr. Susan S. Hubbard, Associate Dean and Professor in the Auburn University Department of Nutrition and Food Science. You were selected as a possible participant because you are employed with ▮▮▮▮▮ and are age 19 or older.

If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire. Your total time commitment will be approximately fifteen minutes. We ask you to complete this survey in a private location of your choosing. When you complete your survey please return it to the sealed drop box within the restaurant. There are no risks associated with participating in this study. There are no significant benefits to you by participating in this study. There are no costs associated with participating in this research.

If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can not be withdrawn because it does not contain identifiable information. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the Department of Nutrition and Food Science or the Hotel and Restaurant Management Program.

Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. In order to protect your privacy and the data you provide no information will be provided to your employer. Information collected through your participation may be published in a professional journal, presented at a professional meeting, and/or used to complete the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

If you have questions about this study, please ask them now or contact Alleah Crawford at (334) 844-4273 or Dr. Susan S. Hubbard at (334)844-4790. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO. THIS LETTER IS YOURS TO KEEP.

Investigator's Signature   Date   Co-Investigator's Signature   Date
1/22/08   1/22/08

Alleah Crawford   Susan Hubbard
Printed Name   Printed Name

Page 1 of 1

The Auburn University
Institutional Review Board
has approved this document for use
from 12/13/07 to 12/12/08
Protocol # 07-203 EP 0712

328 SPIDLE HALL

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SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Employee Welfare Survey

Directions: For each question below, check beside the answer that best describes you.
Age: _____years of age　　　　　　　　　　　Gender: ____Male ـــــــFemale 　　　　　Position: ___Line-level ___Manager
Education completed: ___Some high school ___High school ___Some college ___Associate's degree ___Bachelor's degree ___Some graduate school ___Master's degree
Length of employment with company: ___0-6 months ___7-12 months ___1-3 years 　　　　　　　　　___3-5 years ___5+ years

Directions: For each question below, circle the number to the right that best fits your opinion with the statement. Use the scale above to match your opinion.

Question	Agreement with the statement				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am confident I get the success I deserve in life.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Sometimes I feel depressed.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I try, I generally succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Sometimes when I fail I feel worthless.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I complete tasks successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Sometimes, I do not feel in control of my work.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Overall, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am filled with doubts about my competence.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I determine what will happen in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I do not feel in control of my success in my career.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am capable of coping with most of my problems.	1	2	3	4	5
12. There are times when things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me.	1	2	3	4	5

Question	Agreement with the statement				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
13. Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Each day at work seems like it will never end.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I find real enjoyment in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I consider my job rather unpleasant.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am willing to put in a great effort above and beyond what is expected to help this organization be successful.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I tell my friends this is a great organization to work for.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I feel very little loyalty to this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep work for this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar.	1	2	3	4	5
24. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.	1	2	3	4	5
25. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
26. There's not too much to be gained by staying with this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Often I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies related to important employee matters.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I really care about the fate of this organization.	1	2	3	4	5

Question	Agreement with the statement				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
29. For me this is the best of all possible organizations.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.	1	2	3	4	5
31. "Thinking out of the box" behavior is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5
32. The company provides information on company goals.	1	2	3	4	5
33. The company provides information on how these goals will be accomplished.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Employees have a say in changing company policies.	1	2	3	4	5
35. The company does not encourage risk taking with regard to service delivered.	1	2	3	4	5
36. While performing job duties, employees are not encouraged to use independent problem-solving skills.	1	2	3	4	5
37. The company has established service guidelines.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Employees are not provided with financial information for the company.	1	2	3	4	5
39. The company does not have an efficient way to share information with all employees.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Employees have access to the information in their personal work files.	1	2	3	4	5
41. The company publishes information on employee rewards.	1	2	3	4	5
42. The company provides employees with information about guests.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Tasks are clear in demands and criteria.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I help meet organizational goals through my job behaviors.	1	2	3	4	5
45. My supervisor understands and responds to my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
46. My supervisor provides me with the resources I need to meet group goals.	1	2	3	4	5

Question	Agreement with the statement				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
47. My supervisor makes me feel important and worthy.	1	2	3	4	5
48. We have a team effort in completing difficult tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
49. I take pride in the team I work with.	1	2	3	4	5
50. There is open communication and trust among my team members.	1	2	3	4	5
51. I work in a friendly environment.	1	2	3	4	5
52. Changes in policy and procedures are given to me.	1	2	3	4	5
53. Each department interacts in a friendly way with other departments.	1	2	3	4	5
54. I have opportunities for growth in this profession.	1	2	3	4	5
55. I have the supplies I need in order to do my job.	1	2	3	4	5
56. My organization provides me the opportunity for development of goals and skills.	1	2	3	4	5

Additional comments: