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Organisational Commitment: Employer Expectations in the Context of Taiwanese Organisations

Kuan-Fang Lee

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of
Sheffield Hallam University
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Organisational Commitment: Employer Expectations in the Context of Taiwanese Organisations

Kuan-Fang Lee

ABSTRACT

The research deals with an alternative view to understanding organisational commitment within the context of Taiwanese organizations, namely organisational demand-side commitment (ODC). ODC is based on an organisational perspective, which renders this study quite distinct from the prior traditional studies.

The overarching research aim that guided this study was, “Does an organisation require different degrees of commitment from its employees, and does it have different expectations from its individual employees according to their different position characteristics?” The exploration of the dynamic relationships, that exist between the commitment expected by the organisation and the commitment freely given by its employees, was based upon 40 in-depth interviews with senior HR managers, line managers and workers in Taiwan-based firms. This formed the basis for an exploratory study to develop a theoretical model of ODC. Subsequently, quantitative analytical methods were employed to test the resulting hypotheses.

With the uniqueness of ODC as a concept and an analytical tool, data were collected from 1,380 individuals employed in 60 Taiwan-based firms. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and regression analysis were used to analyse and interpret the data. The results found a significant positive correlation between ODC and the position characteristics of Demand-Side Commitment: authority, complexity and exclusivity of skills. Through the PCA, two sub-dependent variables ‘identity’ and ‘turnover’ were extracted, with the former acting as a stronger predictor of ODC than the latter. It was shown that the finding could draw both employers and employees to enhance mutual identity with each other to secure the desired balance between expectation and achievement.

The contribution of this thesis to the study of organisational commitment is that the framework presented in this study focuses on the organisational demand-side commitment, which not only rests principally on the development of the linkage from employer to employee, but also forms the basis to conduct further research on this two-way linkage in the future.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The author of this doctoral thesis pursued his higher degree at Sheffield Business School in the UK, and was awarded the M.Sc in Human Resource Management in October 2000, in conjunction with the Postgraduate Certificate of the Institute of Personnel and Development. At that time, his role in Taiwan was as a senior executive in a boarding school, Huey Deng High School. The author has been a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) since 1999, and has since lectured at Ching Kuo Institute of Management in Taiwan whilst also carrying out the role of HR consultant to Keelung Hospital and Keelung City Hall.

It was his personal experiences in the workplace, in his role as a Chief Executive within quite an old organisation, which aroused his motivation and interest in the field of research. This interest arose from his informal observations of organisations in Taiwan, which had subsequently led to his interviewing employees and human resource (HR) managers in various organisations. He found these informal observations quite fascinating, to the extent that he developed a desire to engage in formal investigations and research into organisational commitment. The informal investigations which aroused his initial interest are included as illustrative cases in Appendix 2.

Here Organisational Commitment should be briefly defined as mutual promise and undertaking between employers and employees, which will be developed in later chapters.

There were several issues which arose from these informal observations, issues which are found to occur quite frequently within a Taiwanese organisational context. Of all of these issues, there were three which ultimately led to the emergence of the research theme of 'organisational commitment' as the basis for this doctoral thesis.

These three issues are described as follows:

Issue One:

The author's informal observations had revealed that organisations in Taiwan have a propensity for hiring and retaining employees with low levels of organisational commitment as a result of the organisation's own needs; and indeed, there were even examples of such employees sometimes being promoted or accruing additional bonuses or fringe benefits.

Issue Two:

The observations further revealed that Taiwanese organisations had a tendency to demote or dismiss employees with high levels of organisational commitment as a result of the employer's own worries and scruples, or even reduce the salary of such employees if they were to be allowed to stay.

Issue Three:

Taiwanese organisations do not always nurture organisational commitment amongst their individual employees; indeed, in some cases, they may actually try to lower the commitment of employees with naturally high commitment levels, if their intention is to wish such employees to leave of their own accord or to deal with the problems caused by over-committed employees.

These three issues were confirmed through illustrative cases presented in the Exploratory Research of Chapter 3, and the confirmation was obtained from workers' and managers' perspectives. The illustrative cases showed that the organization might raise or lower its expectations of the individual employees, as well as take either a position-promotion or position-demotion strategy in order to re-establish equilibrium between employers and employees, which in turn corresponded to the Eastern perspective: the mutual decline or growth of Yin and Yang. The confirmation of these three issues offered a more solid foundation in developing the research hypotheses in this thesis.

However, as will be revealed later in this thesis, within the vast majority of the prior studies in this field, the focus is invariably placed on commitment to the organisation on the part of the employee along with various issues including Issue 3 that organisations need to deal with in order to secure such commitment from their

employees. However, despite the author's rather puzzling informal observations, it became clear that precious little research had been undertaken into the extent to which organisations actually require the commitment of their employees; thus, the whole issue of organisational commitment appears to be one which is simply taken for granted.

Based upon the three observed scenarios outlined above, this research employs deductive methodology to establish the extent to which organisations may actually require the commitment of their employees, and indeed, whether organisations need such commitment at different levels from different types of employees. The study is undertaken in Taiwan, and therefore considers the issues of employment and organisational philosophy in a Taiwanese organisational context.

The foundation for this thesis, as outlined above, explains the author's devotion to establishing a sound theoretical framework, which is briefly expressed as follows:

An organisation will demand different degrees of commitment from its employees, and have different expectations of individual employees, according to their different positions.

The commitment that an organisation demands from its employees in various positions is referred to throughout this thesis as 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC), whilst the commitment that individual employees provide to

the organisation is referred to as ‘employee supply-side commitment’ (ESC). Thus, ODC refers to ‘demand’ whilst ESC refers to ‘supply’.

The underlying tenet of this thesis is grounded in a systematic view of the organisation (as a working unit) and organisational commitment, taking an example from a Western perspective of an organisation as an equilibrium system:

“The idea that the organization is a system has its roots in the more general proposition that all aspects of the natural and social world can be described as systems. This concept, called General Systems Theory ...” “This relates to the idea that all systems want to attain a position of equilibrium; they have a sense of natural balance.” “Overheated and failing organizations need, according to systems theory, to be able to re-establish equilibrium.”

(McAuley, 2007: 69)

This perspective, which is similar to the Eastern philosophical thought on ‘harmony between Yin and Yang’, suggests that equal emphasis should be placed on employees and organisations, since the issue of human relations is essentially concerned with the various problems involved in communication and understanding between individuals, groups and organisations. It is also inherently concerned with the problems of mutual development between individuals and organisations.

This thesis highlights the crucial importance of gaining a sound understanding

of the meaning of organisational commitment, not only to facilitate effective research, but also to enhance effective practical management. No matter whether a relationship between researchers and respondents, or between employers and employees is, there is an obvious need for all parties to recognize that organisational commitment does not necessarily have the same meaning for everyone, essentially because the ways that things are conceived by people are naturally based on their own perceptions. Thus, any perception of the meaning and importance of organisational commitment will undoubtedly differ from one person to another, and from one organisation to another, particularly when it is regarded as a personal niche detached from the standpoints or perspectives of the organisation or of other employees or colleagues.

A detailed discussion in Chapter 2 demonstrates the numerous definitions and research approaches that have been adopted within the extant literature on organisational commitment-related issues over the past five decades. In addition to 'organisational commitment', there are various other forms, including 'employee commitment', 'career/professional commitment', 'work/job commitment', 'supervisory commitment', and so on.

If each of these types of commitment is to be regarded as being of any considerable value, or indeed, indispensable, then in terms of both academic

research and practical management, the term 'organisational commitment' needs to be reassessed so as to be in keeping with the actual connotation of the word 'organisation'. The term cannot possibly be regarded as a part of employee commitment, otherwise there would be no need for the term 'organisational commitment' to even exist, given that it could be replaced by any of the aforementioned types of commitment.

The basic definition of 'commitment', as proposed in this thesis, is that it represents a 'promise', a 'pledge', an 'undertaking' or an issue of 'mutual trust'. In this sense, there is a clear requirement to distinguish between the existing definition of 'employee commitment' and the widely accepted definition of 'organisational commitment', essentially because the two are quite distinct concepts, with the former naturally adopting an employee perspective, whilst the latter also naturally adopts the perspective of the organisation.

Arguably, employee commitment should be redefined as the promise, pledge, undertaking or trust that is provided by employees towards the organisation, whilst organisational commitment should be defined as the promise, pledge, undertaking or trust that is provided by the organisation towards its employees. If an organisation is to effectively manage its organisational commitment, it needs to strike the right balance between the commitment freely given by its employees, and the

commitment that is expected from such employees by the organisation. In short, it is argued in this thesis that organisational commitment is not an issue to be discussed purely from an employee perspective, since there is also a need for analysis from an organisational perspective. Whilst expanding the range of the existing traditional models of organisational commitment theory, such an approach may also correspond to the research aims identified in the next section.

1.2 Research Aims

The research aims of this study are to set out to confirm (or refute) the initial hypothesis formulated during the early stage of this research through deductive methodology, and thereafter, following such confirmation (or refutation) of the hypothesis and inferences, to provide some possible solutions to the confusing issues outlined above. Thus, the research aims are: (i) to explore whether Taiwanese organisations always nurture organisational commitment amongst their individual employees and what the dynamic relationships are that may exist between the commitment expected by the organisation and the commitment freely given by its employees; (ii) to examine the extent to which organisations tend to require different characteristics from employees in different positions within the organisation, as derived from their organisational design.

Predictions were made and surveys subsequently carried out on a large-scale

sample comprising of mainly Taiwanese citizens. A questionnaire was designed to gather statistical data from the organisational (demand) side. On the one hand, such an approach creates a reasonable, concrete and more accurate method of measurement capable of distinguishing between organisational demand-side commitment and employee supply-side commitment. On the other hand, this approach can also provide HRM and HRD practitioners with more effective predictions, in support of their effective utilization of resources and financial investment decisions.

Given that traditional organisational commitment refers almost exclusively to ESC – the commitment provided by employees to their organisation – the issues have been widely explored since the concept of organisational commitment was first proposed by Whyte (1956). However, given that the focus since then have been on the issue of ESC, the state of equilibrium (or disequilibrium) may never have been fully understood. Thus, a new concept is offered in this thesis, ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC), which should function as a balancing force for the organisation, and which may help it to achieve a desired state of equilibrium. Hence, the concept of ODC would be explored, discussed and analyzed in the subsequent chapters of this thesis along with carrying out an investigation into the relationships existing between position characteristics and ODC.

As boldly announced by a Dickens character in *A Christmas Carol*:

“I will live in the past, the present, and the future. The spirits of all three strive with me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.”

What we can take from this, is that the courses of action that individuals take can determine their future; similarly a course of action that is taken by an organisation can also foreshadow its further development, particularly if it chooses to persevere on its present course. If, however, the organisation chooses to depart from its original course, then this may lead to changes in certain expected and predicted developments.

Based upon the evolutionary process of organisational commitment, one thing that we can say for certain is that, in terms of employee commitment, many organisations have gained no benefit whatsoever, essentially as a result of the failure to ensure that their employees remain fully updated, particularly in terms of ongoing skills training and personal development, or through invalid or ill-considered strategies. On the other hand, however, many other organisations have enjoyed continued prosperity based upon the regular updating of employee skills and the adoption of strategies with much greater relevance to their organisations.

Thus, by remembering and learning from the experiences of the past (whether they be good or bad), by examining the present situation, and by putting in place feasible plans for the future, there will be an increasing likelihood, amongst both

employers and employees alike, of identifying and securing the desired balance between expectations and achievement.

1.3 Thesis Structure

The structure of this thesis is organized as follows:

Chapter 1 serves as the introduction to the whole thesis, providing a brief overview of the research background, the dynamic issues of organisational commitment and the major aims of the study.

A review of the relevant and extant literature on organisational commitment is provided in Chapter 2, which describes the background to the issues for exploration in the evolution of 'Western-style' organisational commitment, whilst also highlighting the potential problems (theoretical defects or confusing issues) arising from the application of Western-style organisational commitment models to organisations within an Eastern context.

Chapter 2 also delves into the concepts of the equilibrium that is established between an organisation and its employees based upon 'Organisation Theory' (McAuley et al., 2007: 102-107), which is similar to the Eastern concept 'harmony between Yin and Yang', as illustrated in Figure 2-7. The concept of Yin-Yang thought is advocated by the Taoist School. The correlated management perspective that is derived from the equilibrium or disequilibrium of the interactional relationships

between Yin and Yang arising from the commitment between employers and employees enables us to see more clearly in terms of the employee supply-side commitment (ESC) and organizational demand-side commitment (ODC). Furthermore, it also encourages us to explore and verify how the employer's expectations (i.e. ODC) can influence organizational commitment.

The primary focus in Chapter 3 is essentially on an exploration of the research hypotheses presented in this thesis; all of these hypotheses are based upon (i) the author's prior experiences within the workplace; (ii) the author's own conceptual framework; (iii) a substantial period of painstaking research; (iv) input based upon the theories of various experts; and (v) observed phenomena obtained from the interviews with the respondents holding different positions, as presented in the exploratory study.

The processes involved in both the reasoning and the corroboration of all of the hypotheses are thoroughly elaborated and expounded in this chapter, which also goes on to explain the development of the research concepts and framework design for this thesis. This chapter also presents the definitions of the variables. Finally, based upon the illustrative cases, Chapter 3 also presents a discussion and analysis of the adjustable and regulatory strategies that may be adopted by organisations aimed at striking a balance between ESC meet ODC.

Chapter 4 provides an explanation of the research design and the measurement methods adopted for all of the variables used in this study, whilst also providing a description of elucidating the data collection methods. The chapter goes on to describe the ‘quantitative analysis’ approach adopted for this study.

The validation of the instruments for the measurement scales is presented in Chapter 5, which essentially ensures confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that the requirements for any specific intended use or application of an instrument, such as a questionnaire survey, have been fulfilled. This chapter also describes the pretest procedure carried out on a sample of 180 respondents, and providing a description of the samples to be examined. Finally, all of the item, validity and reliability analyses adopted in this study are described in this chapter, providing the basis upon which the modification of the questionnaire was subsequently carried out.

Chapter 6, which is entitled ‘Results and Discussion’, refers to the examination and analysis of the six hypotheses in this chapter pertaining to the six position characteristics and ODC. These results are substantiated by means of a large number of samples and the application of tests for statistical levels of significance. Chapter 6 also attempts to approach the research aims outlined earlier in this chapter, relating to those factors which can affect an organisation’s demand for commitment

from its employees.

Finally, a summary of this research is presented in Chapter 7, along with the conclusions drawn from it, which further summarizes the significance of this thesis, whilst also providing recommendations for follow-up research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter features a review of a considerable body of prior work on organisational management and development in preparation for an in-depth examination of reciprocal commitment within Taiwan-based organisations. The issues focused upon here include the current definitions and meanings of both ‘commitment’ and ‘organisational commitment’, the concepts, perspectives and achievements, and the problems associated with traditional organisational commitment. This literature review is carried out in a systematic and comprehensive way, with the aim of providing a general overview on the concept of the commitment provided by employees to their organisation, prior to proceeding with a discussion on the related problems.

A major drawback within the extant literature on commitment is that it appears to be entirely one-sided; that is, the focus is invariably placed on the commitment which employees provide to their organisation. Thus, a primary aim of this thesis is to redress the balance by exploring the commitment shown by organisations to their employees. This features as a key topic in the later chapters of this work, where strong emphasis is placed on the importance of examining the balance between the expectations of the organisation and those of its employees.

Hence, an alternative view is presented in this thesis, referring to the Western system of 'equilibrium' and Taiwanese philosophical thought (Tai Chi) based on the 'harmony between Yin and Yang'. The latter concept has inspired the author to analyze the interactions between 'power' and 'dependence' as key research issues relating to organisations and their employees; these are used to probe the organisation's demand for, and response to, organisational commitment. More specifically, the concept of harmony between Yin and Yang represents a pivotal argument in Eastern relational philosophy in this thesis, with particular emphasis being placed on Taiwan. It is argued that the ability of any business or organisation to maintain its management and operations at optimal levels is largely dependent upon whether it follows this 'harmony' principle, the importance of which is highlighted in the following sections.

The successive movements of Yin and Yang constitute what is referred to as "the course of things in the universe". If applied to a business or organisation, the Yin (the lunar, the shade, the feminine) refers to the internal demand on the part of the organisation, whilst the Yang (the solar, the bright, the masculine) refers to the external supply on the part of employees. The main priority is to identify the organisation's specific needs in order to ensure that the efforts and/or contributions of its employees meet organisational expectations, thereby achieving a balance between the organisation and its employees, a concept similar to the Western 'equilibrium' system.

Put simply, if harmony between Yin and Yang is found to exist, then the organisation and its employees will clearly be communicating effectively with each other and working towards common goals, thereby indicating that congruence exists between the aims of all of the parties involved. As such, the commitment expected by the organisation from its employees will be in line with the commitment supplied by these employees to their organisation.

This chapter is divided into nine sections. Section 2.2 provides the definition of commitment, as well as a discussion on its actual meaning, followed in Section 2.3 by the conceptualisation of various types of commitment. Some key conceptual limitations within the extant literature on commitment are highlighted, leading to suggestions on the need for new approaches to research in this area. The study loci for traditional commitment, involving the various components of commitment (including both its 'nature' and 'focus'), are presented in Section 2.4. The relationship between commitment and the psychological contract, for both organisations and employees, is examined and discussed in Section 2.5; this analysis is based upon an investigation of the 'equilibrium' view of commitment from the perspectives of the expectations of both individual employees and the organisation.

Section 2.6 provides a description of the development of the author's alternative view on the relationships between dependence, power, equilibrium perspectives and

organisations. The factors contributing to the creation of this alternative view, the relationship between the position structure characteristics of employees and the demand-side commitment of organisations are examined in Section 2.7. Based upon the issues examined in Sections 2.6 and 2.7, an alternative model of organisational commitment is subsequently proposed in Section 2.8. Finally, specific research directions are identified aimed at clarifying the role of commitment in the practical relationships between organisations and their employees. A flowchart diagram of the structure of this chapter is provided in Figure 2-1.

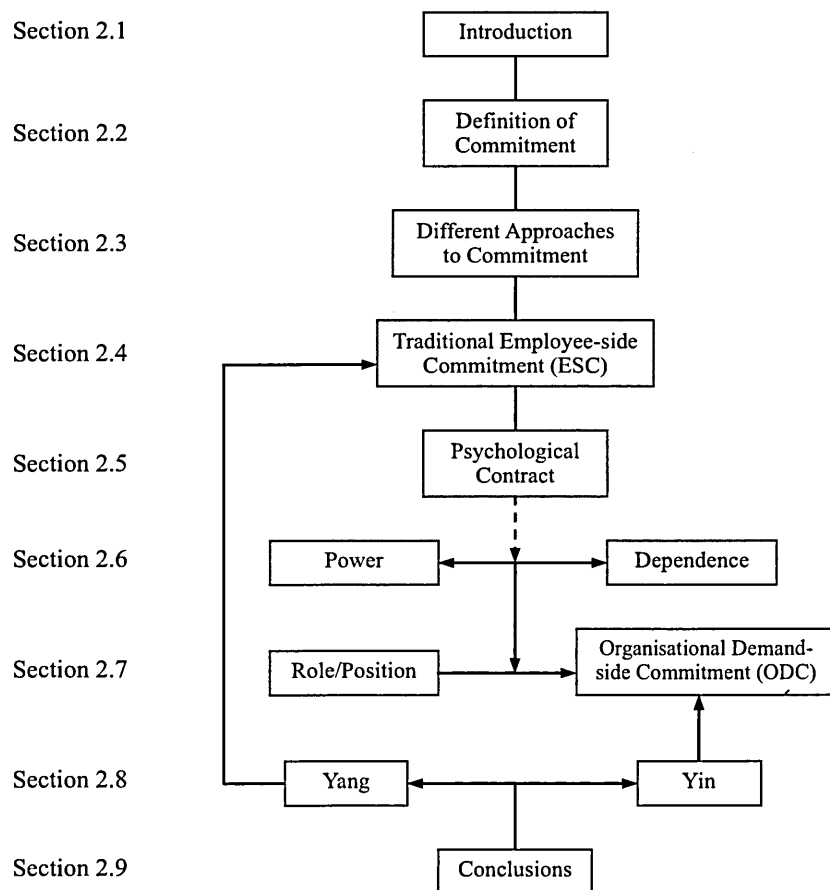


Figure 2-1 The Structure of Chapter 2

2.2 Definition of Commitment

As reflected in popular usage, the term 'commitment' refers to acts of doing, promising, pledging or giving in trust (Guralnik, 1982); according to *the Analects of Confucius*, it refers to interpersonal and mutual entrustment, sincerity and truthfulness. So important is the idea of commitment that vows are exchanged throughout the world, in both formal and informal ways, to establish a recognised bond between one person and another, one organisation and another, or between people and organisations.

From the two alternative definitions of commitment provided above, it is clear that the word 'commitment' itself has the common elements of a promise, a pledge or mutual entrustment. The element of mutual entrustment is also reflected in traditional Taiwanese Confucian philosophical thought, within which there is a strong belief that the concept of commitment actually refers to a dynamic, as opposed to a static state, and that this dynamic state is bidirectional, as opposed to unidirectional; this is essentially what ensures the continuation of such commitment.

We may tend to think of commitment simply in terms of feelings of obligations or emotional attachment; however, over the past 15 years, a growing consensus has emerged in which commitment within organisations has come to be viewed as a multi-dimensional construct; this new consensus seems to be at odds with much of the extant literature, since the majority of the prior studies have tended to focus on

commitment as a single dimension (the traditional view of the commitment shown by employees to their organisation) which is generally regarded as epitomising 'organisational commitment'. As such, attempts at viewing commitment within organisations as a multi-dimensional construct have become distorted; that is, a rather unfortunate phenomenon has arisen whereby the part (single-dimensional organisational commitment) has been taken to be the whole (multi-dimensional organisational commitment), leading to the total disregard of any existence of demand-side commitment from organisations.

This general concept can be illustrated by examining the marketing literature, within which numerous studies have identified commitment as an important component of successful marketing relationships, essentially because it promotes cooperative behaviour (see Dwyer, Schurr and Oh, 1987; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; and Garbarino and Johnson, 1999). The general premise is that any relationships which are characterised as being based upon mutual cooperation between two parties are more likely to be long-term, participative and focused on achieving service quality. In business-to-business relationships, such as those between a service provider and a client, the level of commitment becomes evident through investment decisions which seek to establish and maintain long-term, mutually beneficial outcomes (Beaton and Beaton, 1995).

Nevertheless, despite the extensive interest in commitment – mainly within the psychological and organisational behaviour literature – within the various types of relationships, there appears to have been very little empirical research undertaken on the actual meaning of commitment, the processes underlying such commitment, and the ways in which they affect the outcomes. Much of the psychological literature has tended to focus on specific instances of commitment, such as that between spouses, whilst the organisational behaviour literature primarily addresses the relationship between organisations and their employees.

In addressing other ‘foci of commitment’ (entities to which one is committed), such as that of employees to their customers, or of customers to the organisation, a number of studies have tended to apply models borrowed from the organisational behaviour literature, such as Bettencourt (1997) and Frow (2007); however, several other studies argue that there may be deficiencies in the way that commitment is conceptualised based upon these models (Randall, 1990; and Meyer and Allen, 1997). This suggests the need for a reassessment of the overall meaning of ‘commitment’.

Formal commitment promises a safe place in which to develop and grow as human beings, where people promise each other the right to be themselves without being rejected by others. Cases where commitment is broken are often defined in moralistic terms, with a tendency to obscure the deeper dynamics; but, of course, if

the dynamics were to be fully understood, this could ultimately lead to more responsible behaviour. We can gain a fairly good understanding of the ways in which natural boundaries occur at physical, emotional, mental and spiritual friction points – where one person’s ‘territory’ ends and that of another person or organisation begins – thereby creating challenges, essentially as a result of the differences between the perceptions and experiences of each of the parties involved; however, the fact that these differences exist does not necessarily mean that either party is wrong.

Anxiety will naturally develop and grow where differences are erroneously perceived, especially when there is some significant failure in communication. The ongoing development and continuation of the current level of intimacy between two parties requires absolute faith and continuing communication in order to effectively negotiate a shared reality of experience, whilst carefully respecting each other’s ‘boundaries’; there is, however, a need to determine how these boundaries are drawn and whether there is a more accurate way of measuring where they should lie. These issues could be regarded as key factors in determining whether ‘commitment’ can be effectively maintained.

An early model, which has since received considerable attention, is the three-component model developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). The model is based on

their observations that the definitions of commitment which existed at that time reflected at least three distinct themes: an affective emotional attachment towards an organisation (affective commitment); the recognition of the costs associated with leaving an organisation (continuance commitment); and the moral obligation to remain within an organisation (normative commitment).

2.3 Approaches to Commitment in Different Organisational Settings

2.3.1 Employee Commitment

The concept of employee commitment lies at the heart of any analysis of human resource management (HRM) or human resource development (HRD). Indeed, the rationale for introducing HRM/HRD policies is essentially to raise levels of commitment to bring about positive outcomes; such is the importance of this construct. Yet, despite the wealth of literature surrounding ‘commitment’, it seems that very little is understood of what managers actually perceive the term to mean when evaluating the motivation and performance of their subordinates.

Various studies have been instrumental in identifying types of employee commitment as constructs that are seen as crucial to gaining a firm understanding of employee attitudes and behaviour within organisations. One particular study defines commitment as “the level of attachment which an employee has to ‘some’ aspect of work” (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001).

This specific definition of commitment, with the emphasis on the word ‘some’, potentially refers to any person, group, organisation or thing, essentially because it is a one-sided perspective, the commitment which the employee provides to the organisation. This has given rise to various commitment concepts and measures, as a result of which, when carrying out research into employee commitment, it appears that the following phenomena may exist: (i) an overlapping of the various definitions of commitment; (ii) conflict between the various definitions; and (iii) ambiguity of the concepts (Figure 2-2).

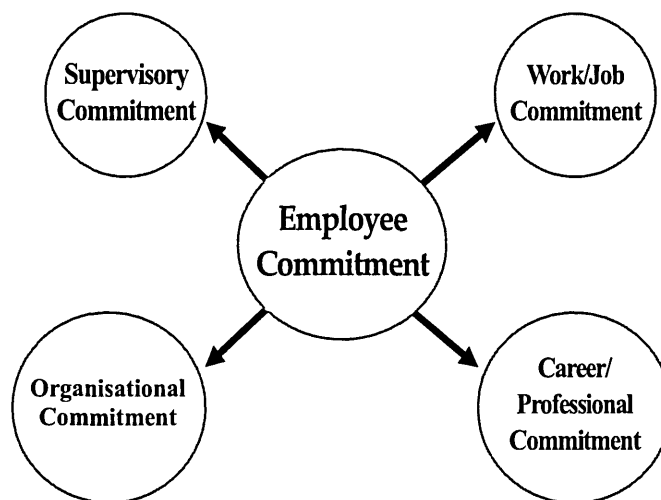


Figure 2-2 The Ambiguous Concept of Employee Commitment

Source: Sorted out by the author.

It would seem fairly obvious from Figure 2-2 that ‘organisational commitment’ represents only one of the various facets of the commitment that employees exhibit in order to show their devotion to the organisation; in other words, ‘employee commitment’ ought to be distinguished from ‘organisational commitment’. Indeed,

within the prior organisational behaviour literature, much of the theoretical interest has tended to focus on commitment to the organisation; however, a distinction of 'employee commitment' which can be made is the 'foci of commitment' (Reichers, 1985), referring to the goals and values of multiple groups to whom an employee is attached.

There are also concerns with regard to the conceptualisation of 'commitment', with some debate as to whether the sub-concepts are components of the whole or whether the separate components should be aggregated (Benkhoff, 1997); indeed, there has been ongoing discussion over these issues for several decades. More details on this issue will be presented in the next section.

Reichers noted that the organisation comprises of a number of components, each with its own specific goals and values; for example, owners, professionals, managers, work groups and customers. Dual-foci commitment, where a person is attached to two different foci, is a unique construct which has different explanatory power to that of commitment to an individual focus (Becker and Billings, 1993; Bemmels, 1995; Frow, 2007).

This clearly has important implications for employee-customer relationships; for example, if employees are committed to the organisation, but not to the customer, it may well be that they are bound by organisational rules (Organ and Ryan, 1995), and

these may actually have negative impacts on the service received by the customer.

This perspective is supported by Hartline and Ferrell (1993), who found that employee commitment to the organisation has a negative correlation with customer-perceived service quality.

2.3.2 Commitment to the Organisation (Traditional Organisational Commitment)

There are two dominant conceptualisations of organisational commitment within the sociology literature relating to: (i) the loyalty which is shown by employees towards their organisation; and (ii) the intention of such employees to stay with the organisation. According to Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), the definition of loyalty represents “the degree to which an employee identifies with the goals and values of the organisation and is willing to exert efforts to help it succeed” (quoted in Muthuveloo and Rose, 2005: 1079).

Loyalty is essentially based upon a sense of duty and responsibility towards the organisation, and also represents an affective response to the organisation, as well as identification with it. As noted in one particular study, “loyalty is argued to be an important intervening variable between the structural conditions of work, and the values and expectations of employees, and their decision to stay, or leave” Muthuveloo and Rose (2005: 1080). Intent to stay is the degree of likelihood of an employee maintaining membership in an organization (Iverson, 1992; Mueller et al.,

1994; Price and Mueller, 1981, 1986a). Intent to stay (or leave) refers to an employee's behavioral intentions, and has been demonstrated to exert a strong negative influence on actual turnover (Bluedorn, 1982; Iverson, 1992; Mueller et al., 1992).

Within the two dominant conceptualisations of organisational commitment referred to above, indirect inferences are made on the commitment expected by organisations, since organisations generally expect all of their employees to remain with them; however, in practice, they do not necessarily expect all of their employees to have the 'desire to remain'. This phenomenon clearly highlights a certain deviation, which essentially results from the fact that the definition of 'commitment', and the correlated issues, are invariably based upon the perspectives of employees.

Although the present study specifically addresses commitment to the organisation (traditional organisational commitment), it also considers career and work commitment, as well as supervisory commitment, with the overall aim of clarifying the conceptual meanings of all of these different types of commitment. Given that these four dominant conceptualised definitions are grounded only in employee-side perspectives, this also indicates the potential for complex situations of conflict and bias to become evident when attempting to carry out research into organisational commitment.

2.3.3 Career/Professional Commitment

Career commitment refers to a person's identification with, and involvement in, their occupation. Much of the extant literature refers to similar or related concepts, including occupational commitment, professional commitment, career significance, cosmopolitan/local distinctions and professionalism. Common to all of these factors is the critical notion of people being committed to their career, or occupation, as opposed to being committed to the organisation in which they work (Rahman and Hanafiah, 2002).

2.3.4 Work/Job Commitment

The term 'work commitment' refers neither to commitment to the organisation nor to a person's career, but to employment itself. People who are committed to working possess a strong sense of duty towards their work, and place intrinsic value on work as a central issue of interest and importance in their lives. This form of commitment gives rise to terms such as motivation, job involvement, work involvement and work as a central life interest (Naquin and Holton, 2002).

Although it is expected that work commitment will be related to both organisational commitment and career commitment, the extant empirical literature clearly shows it to be distinct from these two specific forms. As such, there is some recognition of potential blind spots in all of the inferences on traditional

organisational commitment, insofar as, under the overall concept of 'work commitment', employees with high levels of commitment do not necessarily have the same high level of commitment to the organisation which employs them.

2.3.5 Supervisory Commitment

In an Eastern setting, supervisors may well be the most important members of organisations for employees, not only in Taiwan, but also in China. Acting as an agent of the organisation, the supervisor often interacts with employees on a daily basis, enacting both formal and informal procedures of organised activities, and most importantly, serving as the direct administrator of rewards to subordinates (Farh, Podsakoff and Organ, 1990).

Despite the importance of supervisors in employment settings, as compared to the considerable body of literature on organisational commitment dating back to the 1950s, research into commitment to supervisors began much more recently, with some of the earliest examples being provided by Becker (1992), Gregersen (1993), Becker et al. (1996) and Chen et al. (2002). It is also clear that research into the level of commitment given to supervisors has invariably been conducted in Western settings. According to Redding (1990), in People's Republic of China, a cultural setting where an employee's loyalty is to a person (e.g. a supervisor) is more important than that to an institution.

It is therefore worth recognising that, as different objects of work commitment represent distinct attitudes, we should expect to find differential effects on behavioural outcomes. As such, researchers should attempt to match the focus of their independent variables with the focus of their work outcome variables (Becker, 1992). The issue of organisational commitment within the private sector has generally received significant research focus over the past 25 years; this review further describes the recent historical development of organisational commitment, with its relevance being presented in the following section.

2.4 Study Loci for Traditional Organisational Commitment

Although much of the literature on traditional organisational commitment tends to focus on the commitment of employees to various aspects of their work, a key issue in this thesis is the attempt to gain an understanding of the expectations of the organisation from individual employees. We therefore set out in this section to review the literature on traditional employee commitment to organisations.

Whyte (1956) was the first to present the concept of the 'organisation man', and being a sociologist, he explained that the general concept was quite sceptical, since it was based upon the idea that people working in organisations, such as advertising, marketing and large industries – which at that time were very new – might tend to become over-committed. An 'organisation man' sees the whole organisation as a

holistic group, in the firm belief that the group is the source of creative power, the facilitator of a sense of belonging, and the provider of ultimate needs.

Hence, from the outset, traditional organisational commitment in this thesis has followed the same traditional conceptual models that have already been delved into by numerous researchers. Such traditional models have provided the catalysts which have stimulated researchers to carry out further studies into organisational commitment (e.g., Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982; Reichers, 1985; Wallace, 1995; Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002; and Roodt, 2004).

Some of the findings of these various studies have shown that organisational commitment bears more predictive utility than job-satisfaction (Shore, Thornton and Newton, 1989; Shore, Newton and Thornton, 1990; Somers and Birnbaum, 1998; and Siders, George and Dharwadkar, 2001); indeed, according to Cohen and Freund (2005: 331) “the type of work-related commitment under consideration might have some bearing on how commitment might direct behavior in organisations”.

The notion that attitude acts as a guide to behaviour is a point which has been discussed and studied with considerable enthusiasm, whilst organisational commitment is an issue which has provided researchers with opportunities to carry out ongoing empirical studies and theory development. As a result, the subject has not only affected the intensity of employee’s involvement within organisations, but

also highlighted the attitudes and intentions which link them to such organisations.

Despite all of this, in those studies examining the types of organisational commitment discussed here, the focus is invariably placed on an employee perspective. What has not been discussed is the definitive attitudes and intentions of organisations that directly link them to their employees. This gives rise to questions relating to whether organisations exercise the same attitudes and intentions towards individual employees, and how the actual differences between so-called 'organisational commitment' and 'employee commitment' can be identified.

2.4.1 Commitment to the Organisation

Although research into, and the development of, organisational commitment have been ongoing for a considerable period of time, consensus has still not been reached within academic circles regarding a descriptive definition of 'organisational commitment'. Thus, given the increasing popularity of the overall concept of commitment, researchers have, over the years, turned their attention to multiple facets of commitment (see Reichers, 1985, 1986; Becker, 1992; McElroy et al., 1993; and Clugston, Howell and Dorfman, 2000).

In addition to the strong emphasis on the organisation as the focus for commitment, certain other foci have also been suggested, including occupation, senior management, supervisors, work units, co-workers and customers (Becker,

1992; Becker and Billings, 1993; Meyer, Allen and Smith, 1993; Gregerson, 1993; Becker et al., 1996; and Knippenberg and Schie, 2000).

The various definitions relating to organisational commitment that have been built up over the years are shown in Table 2-1, and as we can see from this table, it is abundantly clear that when carrying out studies into organisational commitment, academics or experts in different research fields will tend to employ one of the numerous definitions of organisational commitment in order to serve their own research purposes.

Table 2-1 Historical Definitions of Organisational Commitment

Academic Studies	Definition
Whyte (1956)	An 'organisation man' works for an organisation and is under the jurisdiction of this organisation. An organisation man regards the whole organisation as a holistic group and firmly believes that this group is the source of creative power and a sense of belonging of ultimate needs.
Kanter (1968)	Organisational commitment arises if social participants have the desire to freely give their energy, capabilities and loyalty to a social system.
Sheldon (1971)	Organisational commitment is the attitude or propensity of employees towards the organisation in which they work. It can make employees believe that they are linked with, or affiliated to, the organisation.
Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972)	Organisational commitment is a structural phenomenon resulting from the existence of transactions or exchanges involving high stakes or investment between an individual employee and the organisation.
Buchanan (1974)	Organisational commitment refers to the partial and emotional links between individual employees and relationships with: (i) the goals and values of the organisation; (ii) their role, goals and values; and (iii) the fate of the organisation.
Porter et al. (1974)	Organisational commitment is the degree of an individual employee's identity with, and involvement in, an organisation.
Salancik (1977)	The behavioural state of employees is expressed through 'organisational commitment', and in the process of making such commitment, employees gain the belief which supports their devotion to all activities relating to the organisation.

Table 2-1 (Contd.)

Academic Studies	Definition
Wiener (1982)	Inner, normative pressure makes individual employees endeavour to reach the goals and benefits of the organisation; this inner pressure has three special properties, which are: (i) a reflection of the fact that individual employees can make sacrifices for the benefit of the organisation; (ii) a demonstration that employees possess continuity behaviour which the environment fails to control; and (iii) an indication that individual employees may spend considerable amounts of their time participating in organisation-related activities.
Meyer and Allen (1991)	Organisational commitment is the emotional link which individual employees have with their organisation. Employees realise the significant costs which they have to bear if they decide to leave the organisation. Such employees also know what obligations they must fulfill if they decide to continue working for the organisation.
Meyer and Allen (1997)	A committed employee is defined as being one who “stays with an organisation, attends work regularly, puts in a full day and more, protects corporate assets, and believes in the organisational goals”. Such employees positively contribute to the organisation because of their commitment to the organisation.
Zangaro (2001)	Organisational commitment means that an employee is prepared to accomplish a future commitment or obligation to someone or something.
Cole and Bruch (2006)	Organisational commitment is the emotional link and involvement which individual employees have with the organisation in which they work.

Source: Compiled by the author.

However, regardless of the type of ‘commitment’ on which their research focuses, such studies invariably include the words ‘organisational commitment’ within the research title, despite the fact that this renders the title too general. This has, therefore, created increasingly complex concepts referring to the subject of organisational commitment as a whole, and indeed, Meyer and Allen (1997) acknowledge that the relationship which employees establish with an organisation may reflect varying degrees of three commitment components, namely, ‘affective’, ‘continuance’ and ‘normative’ commitment. It is, however, of some importance that the strength of each should be considered individually, essentially because there will

be fundamental differences in the behaviour associated with each component.

It is, nevertheless, clear that very few studies have in fact drawn this distinction, although one example is provided by Becker et al. (1996), who carried out a survey of the literature linking employee commitment and job performance. They noted that the earlier studies had failed to distinguish between the individual foci and motives of commitment, and that such studies had therefore provided inconclusive evidence of any potential linkage. In contrast, their study identified different foci of commitment within the organisation and found that commitment to supervisors was positively related to performance, whilst commitment to the organisation had only a weak correlation.

Becker et al. (1996) provided support for some of the earlier studies in which it was suggested that it may be useful to identify a profile of the commitment offered by individual employees (Reichers, 1985; Allen and Meyer, 1990; and Becker, 1992). Based upon the traditional definitions of organisational commitment, this would help to distinguish between the individual foci that are important to each individual and to identify the strength of the affective, continuance and normative components of commitment that are associated with each individual. It is, therefore, quite clear that these three aspects of organisational commitment have different definitions and methods of measurement, some of which are more useful than others.

The 15-question 'Organisational Commitment Questionnaire' (OCQ), compiled by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) and adapted by the Taiwanese scholar, Wu (1982), has been widely employed in research into the various relationships that are found to exist between organisational commitment and other variables, and indeed, with some success. Needless to say, many of the studies into organisational commitment in Taiwan have followed Wu (1982) to employ the OCQ when carrying out their own related research.

The OCQ is therefore also adopted as a construct tool for the measurement of organisational commitment in the present study; however, the use of the measure here differs significantly from its use in other studies, in that the focus in the present study is placed on research into commitment from an organisational perspective, involving the organisation expectations of, and its reactions to, the commitment shown by its employees. The questionnaire in this study is adapted and entitled the 'Organisational Demand-side Commitment Questionnaire' (ODCQ), further details of which are presented in Chapter 4.

2.4.2 Multi-dimensional Models of Traditional Organisational Commitment

The diversity of the contents of multi-dimensional frameworks can lead to real difficulties in developing a general model of organisational commitment, so what needs to be considered here is the two dimensions of: (i) the expectations of the

organisation with regard to particular employees; and (ii) the reaction of the organisation to the commitment provided by these particular employees. As shown in Appendix 1, there has been a distinct absence of this type of focus in the prior research into traditional organisational commitment.

Building on the work on changes in attitude and behaviour undertaken by Kelman (1958), O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) developed a multi-dimensional framework based upon the notion that commitment symbolises an attitude towards the organisation which is developed through different mechanisms. The central theme is that commitment has three different forms, compliance, identification and internalisation.

Using twelve items to describe the dimensions of organisational commitment, O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) presented several instrument measures of psychological attachment aimed at providing support for their three-dimensional structure. However, in attempts to distinguish between identification and internalisation, this model has been shown to be extremely complex (see Caldwell et al., 1990; O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell, 1991; Sutton and Harrison, 1993; and Vandenberg and Scarpello, 1994). The measures were essentially found to strongly correlate with each other, whilst also exhibiting similar correlation patterns with other variables (for explanations of the problems, refer to Becker et al., 1996).

Accordingly, O'Reilly and his colleagues subsequently went on to combine the internalisation and identification items in order to create one generic form which they described as 'normative commitment' (O'Reilly et al., 1991). Normative commitment refers to the level of commitment which is provided by employees to their organisation essentially based upon their feelings of obligation (Meyer and Allen, 1991). This type of commitment may, of course, be derived from a variety of sources; for example, an organisation may choose to invest considerable amounts of valuable resources into the ongoing training of its employees, who may then feel that they are under a certain moral obligation to exert extra effort into their work, and ultimately, to remain with the organisation.

Normative commitment can, however, also arise even before an employee joins the organisation, through historical family links or processes of socialisation that require continuing loyalty to one organisation. Consequently, such employees may choose to stay with the organisation simply because they believe that they should. Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that these components are not mutually exclusive, implying that employees could be simultaneously committed to an organisation through affective, continuance and normative commitment at varying levels of intensity; indeed, employees could, at any point in time, have a commitment profile reflecting high or low levels of each of the components (Meyer et al., 2002), with

these different profiles eventually leading to different workplace behaviour effects.

Thus, the commitment profiles of employees could be influenced by many factors, one of them being cooperative culture, and indeed, according to Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), in order to evaluate the various models, we should consider the results of the prior studies in which these models were employed. The two models which have been most extensively researched to date are those of Meyer and Allen (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Meyer and Allen, 1984, 1991) and O'Reilly and colleagues (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986; O'Reilly et al., 1991).

From the loci of the development of traditional organisational commitment, it is clear that, irrespective of whether the numerous definitions, concepts and constructs of organisational commitment are expanded or diminished, they continue to be based purely upon an employee-side perspective (so-called 'employee commitment' or 'organisational commitment'). However, if researchers wish to carry out research into organisational commitment from an organisational perspective, they should not only try to match the focus of their independent variables with that of their work outcome variables, but they should also attach considerable importance to the relationship between the expectations of the organisation, in terms of managing commitment, and the strategies or actions of the organisation in response to the commitment offered by their employees. In such a way, researchers will be better

prepared to identify the demand for commitment by organisations, as well as their management of it.

Although the above sections have demonstrated the ways in which expectations of commitment are invariably focused on the commitment of employees towards specific issues (their career, profession, supervisor, organisation, and so on), in this thesis, the focus is placed more upon research into the relationships that exist between organisations expectations of commitment from their employees, and commitment as viewed by employees. This could serve to contribute to the current knowledge in this field by providing a novel expression, characterised by the commitment provided by the organisation towards its employees.

2.5 Organisational Commitment and the Psychological Contract

In an effort to avoid any confusion of the existing terms, it should be reiterated here that the term ‘psychological contract’ has been defined as the mental models of mutual obligations that exist between organisations and employees. The employment relationship is defined as the intentions of the organisation with regard to the inducements or rewards offered, as well as the contribution which the organisation expects from its individual employees.

The exchange relationship – which tends to be used synonymously with the relationship between organisations and their employees – describes the exchange of

rewards and contributions between employees and organisations from a neutral perspective. The primary aim of this section is to identify the central concepts and categories in order to develop an integrated organisational perspective on the ‘psychological contract’ and commitment to the organisation.

There are currently no integrated models available on the implementation of the employment relationship (as intended by the organisation once the content of the relationship has been determined); thus, the concept of both an organisational perspective on the psychological contract and commitment to the organisation is to be defined in this section as the organisation expectations of the desired contribution by individual employees as well as the inducements which are offered by the organisation (Tsui and Wang, 2002; 105; Lambert, Edwards and Cable, 2003). This differs from the overall concept of the psychological contract by highlighting the fact that the employment relationship describes the organisational perspective of the exchange relationship between employees and organisations.

2.5.1 The Psychological Contract and Commitment between Employees and Organisations

The workplace plays a vital role in ensuring the well-being of an individual, and indeed, individuals play their own part in the making of their organisation. It is this interface between the organisation as a whole, and the individuals within it (as the basic unit) which creates the structure of an organisation. In order for an

organisation to function well, it is necessary to address both individual and organisational units. Therefore, in any analysis of organisational commitment, there is a crucial element which cannot be overlooked; that is, the organisation expectations of, and responses to, the commitment shown by its employees.

Numerous studies have emerged, over the past two decades in particular, in which the suggestion is that the psychological contract effectively mediates the relationship between organisational factors and subsequent work outcomes, such as commitment and job satisfaction (Guest and Conway, 1997, 2002; Guest, 2004; Marks and Scholarios, 2001; and Silverthorne, 2004). Guest and Conway (2002), for example, note that the psychological contract comprises of the perceptions of both parties within the employment relationship, as well as the implied reciprocal obligations of the organisation and the individuals involved. It should, however, be clear that the variety of organisational changes which employees regularly experience at work, as well as the perceived violation of organisational obligations, can result in significant changes in their perception of aspects relating to the psychological contract (Cavanaugh and Noe, 1999; Robinson and Morrison, 2000). Once again, however, these definitions of the psychological contract are invariably based upon an employee-side perspective.

The psychological contract is essentially about the different kinds of promises

made between employers and employees (Rousseau, 1989; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2002). Although they are usually implicit, these promises may well be explicit, involving issues such as oral promises (for example, an employer may promise certain employees a promotion as long as they work hard). The psychological contract is concerned with the less tangible expectations between the organisation and its employees, with its implicit nature making it particularly delicate. It can incorporate diverse areas, such as opportunities for training and development, as well as expected modes of communication.

The psychological contract is unique to each employee, since it describes the expectations and obligations involved between the two parties concerned (employer and employee); there are, however, patterns to these expectations. For example, on the one hand, some employees have very few expectations, asking only that the organisation should fulfill its contractual obligations, and in return, they may feel obligated to complete only the explicit requirements of their role. Such a pattern of expectations and obligations is referred to as a 'transactional psychological contract' (McDonald and Makin, 2000; De Cuyper and De Witte, 2006).

On the other hand, some employees will have significant expectations of their organisation, since they may expect ongoing training and development, promotion opportunities, involvement in decision-making, and even more. However, in return,

there is a strong likelihood that such employees will feel obligated to go well beyond the explicit requirements of their role. This is manifested in behaviour such as working additional hours, sharing innovative or creative ideas with their organisation, or the demonstration of their long-term loyalty to the organisation. This pattern has been described as a ‘relational psychological contract’ (McDonald and Makin, 2000; De Cuyper and De Witte, 2006).

These ‘transactional’ and ‘relational’ psychological contracts represent different ends of a continuum (employer – employee), with individual psychological contracts typically falling somewhere between these two extremes. Nevertheless, performance in any of these contracts is still subject to organisational assessment.

2.5.2 The Impact of Perceived Organisational Support

Having discussed the study loci of organisational commitment in this chapter, it is clear that even though most of the studies on traditional organisational commitment have been explored and confirmed from an employee-side perspective, several studies have noted that the commitment offered by employees is affected by their perception of the organisational support that they receive.

This raises several key points, including questions relating to why the organisation would want its employees to gain the perception that support is being provided by the organisation, the extent to which the organisation requires supply-side

commitment from its respective employees, and the differences, if any, in the commitment provided by such employees.

In this thesis, it is argued that all of the aforementioned issues are worthy of in-depth research. The hypotheses and correlated research designs, which are to be fully explained and explored in Chapter 3, suggest that the impacts of perceived organisational support would tend to be: (i) effort-reward expectations; (ii) social and emotional needs; (iii) the factors affecting perceived organisational support; and (iv) the outcomes of such perceived organisational support.

Recent studies have been largely based on the two different types of social exchange relationships within an organisation (Wayne, Shore and Liden, 1997; Wayne et al., 2002). The first of these, the exchange relationship between employees and their superiors, is referred to as 'leader-member exchange' (LMX) (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Wayne et al., 2002; Ilies, Nahrgang and Morgeson, 2007), whilst the second, the exchange relationship between employees and the organisation to which they are affiliated is referred to as 'perceived organisational support' (POS) (Aselage and Eisenberger, 2003; Tekleab, Takeuchi and Taylor, 2005).

Logically, LMX can be regarded as a bridge for examining whether the commitment provided by employees meets the expectations of the organisation, and this also goes some way towards explaining why the organisation would wish to

encourage the recognition of POS amongst its individual employees. It is argued in both Herriot et al. (1997) and Marks (2001) that it is the representatives of the organisation, such as line managers or HR managers of the employees, who are responsible for sending out the implicit signals regarding expectations and obligations, or indeed, explicit messages, and thus, they tend to serve as the agents of the organisation. It was pointed out by Marks (2001) that since the organisation is a collective, it cannot become involved in the processes of negotiation or communication, since these are matters which only representatives of the organisation can deal with on its behalf; this is essentially why the subjects of the questionnaire used in this thesis are specifically referred to as different kinds of 'employees with managerial power'; that is, someone who has remained with the organisation for a considerable period of time.

POS is the accumulation of the prizes/rewards or punishments/penalties that employees receive, all of which are imposed upon them by a more empowered person who, as noted above, is referred to in this study as an 'employee with managerial power'. The work performance-related discretionary actions taken by organisations, the aims of which are to bestow rewards on their employees, are the factors which have the most direct impact on an employee's level of POS, and generally, it is the leader or the agent of the organisation who implements the reward

system; therefore, LMX has a direct impact on POS. On the other hand, however, given the cost and resource limitations, highly-committed employees with strong POS will not always be provided with the same level of rewards by the leader or agent of the organisation, particularly in a Taiwanese context.

2.5.3 Establishment, Adjustment and Realisation of the Psychological Contract

Once a process which involves the 'establishment, adjustment and realisation' (EAR) of a psychological contract comes to an end, employees will then form new expectations of the organisation based upon the realisation of their former expectations. Consequently, a new psychological contract is established, and thereafter, during the process of its realisation, the employees may make adjustments to it according to various environmental changes. This EAR process, which continues until the new psychological contract has been realised and a new process begins, is closely aligned to the process of adjustment between Yin and Yang, which is ultimately aimed at achieving 'harmony'.

Sometimes, however, there may be rapid and significant changes within an organisation, such as profound positional changes, possibly leading to an overall change in leadership style or a fundamental shift in organisational strategy. Such situations may of course affect, or even threaten, the previously established psychological contract between an employee and an organisation. Such being the case,

the question arises as to whether, from an organisational management perspective, the strategic mapping-out and managerial operations capable of either enhancing or lowering an individual employee's power and dependence, might also be used to adjust and regulate the interactive relationships that exist between employees and their organisation, with specific reference to the psychological contract

Sections 2.1 to 2.5 provided an overview of the general concept of employee commitment to the organisation, where 'commitment' refers to a promise, pledge or mutual entrustment. From the examination of various types of commitment, we have also determined that 'employee commitment' and 'organisational commitment' differ quite markedly, since they are characterised by quite different perspectives. It has, however, also been demonstrated that the 'psychological contract', 'perceived organisational support' (POS), 'leader-member exchange' (LMX) and 'establishment, adjustment and realisation' (EAR) are very much organisation-oriented. We therefore go on to explore these issues further in the next section.

2.6 Dependence and Power Perspectives on Commitment

From the review of the literature presented in Sections 2.1 to 2.5, we have established that virtually all of the prior commitment-related explorations and discussions have been based upon traditional organisational commitment (supply-side commitment provided by employees to their organisation). Hence, the prior

studies have not actually provided any complete or direct reflection on, or testing of, organisational expectations of commitment from their employees.

In other words, if the aim of researchers is to explore and discuss organisational commitment from an organisational demand-side perspective, it is essential to conduct research into, and acquire a thorough understanding of, the underlying meanings of 'commitment', 'psychological contract' and 'mutual exchanges' that are continuously going on between organisations and their employees, in terms of the exchange of power and dependence.

Such mutual exchanges of commitment can arguably account for the enhancements, or even reductions, in the power that an organisation possesses, with the ultimate aim at gaining the supply-side commitment or contributions of its employees on which it may be totally dependent; thus, it is, proposed here that this is linked to 'relational cohesion theory' (RCT), the core idea of which is that social exchanges have emotional as well as instrumental effects on the actors involved, and that if these are attributed to social units, then such social units take on expressive value or intrinsic worth.

The dependent variables in the theoretical model are illustrated in Figure 2-3, which reveals the similarities with the implications of Eastern Tai Chi philosophy, with regard to the internal (external) nature of 'Yin' ('Yang'); this is dealt with

further in Section 2.8.4.

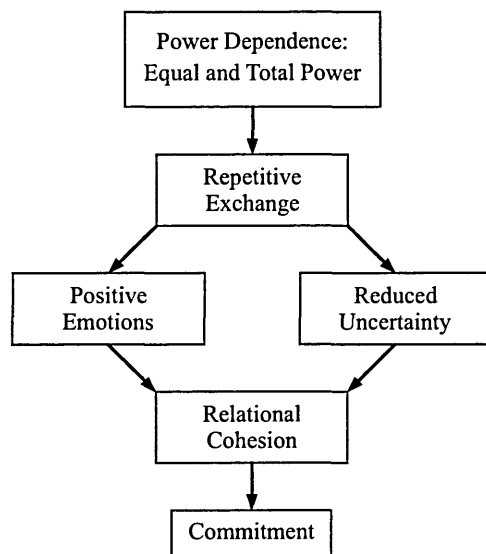


Figure 2-3 Relational Cohesion Theory (RCT)

Source: Adapted from Lawler et al. (2000).

The external conditions illustrated in the figure are the structural relationships of power-dependence or power-interdependence amongst the various actors (see Emerson, 1981; Molm, 1994; Lawler and Yoon, 1996; and Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003). Power is defined in terms of both dependence and structural capability, distinct from both its use – in terms of the strategies pursued by the organisation – and the actual (or realised) power which results in the division of the resultant pay-offs (Emerson, 1972; Bacharach and Lawler, 1981; Molm, 1990; Lawler, 1992b; and Casciaro and Piskorski, 2005).

RCT posits the existence of an indirect sequence of events within which group formation is promoted by the structural power-dependence conditions. This

sequence begins with the exchange frequencies produced by the dependence structure. The first internal path operates through the effects of exchange frequency, in terms of reducing uncertainty, with the second operating through emotional (affective) effects. The reduction in uncertainty is a boundary-defining process within which employees come to regard the group to which they belong as a means of distinguishing themselves from other relationships or groups; that is, in terms of social identity, it provides 'distinctiveness' (Brewer, 1993; Stets and Burke, 2000; Hogg, 2006).

The concept of RCT, which has been developed over a considerable period of time in numerous academic studies, predicts that the perceived relational cohesion amongst the various actors is the proximal cause of different forms of commitment behaviour (see Emerson, 1962; Hickson et al., 1971; Etzioni, 1975; Ulrich and Barney, 1984; Blau, 1986; Lawler et al., 2000; Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003; and Tepper et al., 2009). In the present study, a more detailed examination is provided of the theoretical bases and core concepts of these prior works, as well as the results arising from their adoption of RCT within their various research processes.

2.6.1 Organisational Commitment Viewed from Dependence and Power Perspectives

Based upon a 'social exchange' perspective, a specific conclusion which may be drawn is that when any individual employee has a perception that the organisation

thinks highly of their contribution to that organisation, and subsequently offers them an increase in welfare, it is likely that they will feel obligated to help the organisation to achieve its desired goals. Driven by this sense of obligation, individual employees will not only tend to perform well in their specific role, but they will also be more likely to display effort well above and beyond that required of their role (Organ, 1988; Settoon, Bennett and Liden, 1996; Turnley et al., 2003; Restubog, Bordia and Tang, 2006).

Cook and Rice (2006) proposed that cooperation within any organisation is essentially a kind of exchange of 'side-bets', a perspective which is derived from social exchange theory. According to Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) and Shore et al. (2006), an exchange of side bets can be used to explore the relationships that exist between individual employees and organisations from transactional and social exchange perspectives, essentially because organisational commitment is a 'structure phenomenon' arising from transactions (or the exchange of side-bets) or investments existing between an individual employee and the organisation. Thus, during the process of exchange, corresponding power structures will undoubtedly be created.

It therefore follows that the ways in which strategies are used to manage and control these interactive relationships – in order to ensure that individuals possess greater power and higher status – is an essential element in ensuring that these

resources are actually obtained in the first place. The organisation itself is no exception, since it employs strategies based upon the demand-side commitment of the organisation to achieve a state of commitment equilibrium between the commitment supplied by employees to their organisation and the commitment expected by the organisation from its individual employees.

At the very heart of this relationship between organisations and their employees lies the relationship between these players and issues of power; however, as we have already noted, the concept of power adopted in this thesis relies upon the definitions provided by political and social scientists. Nevertheless, regardless of the power definition, or its content, it undoubtedly involves the basic principle that both parties have a need to condition each other's behaviour.

The prior studies have provided numerous definitions of power (see Mintzberg, 1983; Kuokkanen and Leino-Kilpi, 2000; and Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003) and indeed, the definitions of power and dependence in the present study are derived from these prior works; that is, A's power over B is equal to B's dependence on A, with the display of power essentially lying in the ability of an individual to change a situation in order to provide the other party with the opportunity to act – of their own free will – to bring about the original desired outcome.

Emerson (1962) and Cook, Cheshire and Gerbasi (2006) directly defined

'power' by means of 'dependence', where Pab represents the 'power of A over B', and $Db a$ represents the 'dependence of B on A for some reward'. $Pab = Db a$ would clearly indicate equality between the two parties involved in the relationship. This formula, which can be used if equality between dependence and power is found to exist between the organisation and its employees, is equivalent to the Eastern philosophical concept of 'the harmony between Yin and Yang'. If mutual dependency exists, but this relationship is characterised by inequality, then a state of unequal power will naturally arise.

According to Conay and Briner (2005), the relationship between employees and their organisation is heavily dependent upon the exchange relationships that exist between employers and employees, and indeed, there are two indispensable factors involved in achieving a state of balance; these are (i) the inducements offered by the organisation to its employees; and (ii) the contributions made by employees to the organisation (Barnard, 1968; Blau, 1986; and Simon, 1997).

Given that a state of equivalence between power and dependence emerges within the exchange process, it is therefore a matter of course that in terms of managing its employees, it is not only the objectives of the organisation that are an important element in the overall concept of organisational commitment, but also the means that it adopts, with all of this essentially arising from the organisation's

demand-side expectations of its employees.

Advocates of psychological contract theory (including Rousseau, 1995; Morrison and Robinson, 1997) have also proposed that a high-quality social exchange relationship between employees and their organisation may well diminish the likelihood of any perceptions amongst employees of violations of the psychological contract, although explanations for this prediction are found to vary to some considerable degree. Rousseau (1995), for example, posited that a strong employee-organisational exchange will tend to counteract the tendency amongst employees to view small discrepancies between what was promised by the organisation, and what was received, as 'violations', whereas a weak relationship may result in the closer monitoring of the behavior of the organisation, thereby strengthening the likelihood of perceived contract violations.

Conversely, however, Morrison and Robinson (1997) posited that where an employee-organisation exchange relationship is characterised as being of lower quality, a direct association may be found to exist between such a relationship and the level of trust that is evident between the employers and employees concerned. Consequently, a low level of trust will promote the monitoring of the organisational contributions made by employees, and as a result, this will tend to promote a much higher probability of perceived discrepancies between organisational obligations and

experienced outcomes, which Morrison and Robinson referred to as ‘breaches’ (Tekleab et al., 2005).

Shore and Coyle-Shapiro (2003) noted that a greater understanding of the relationship existing between employees and their employing organisation has been the goal of organisational behaviour scholars for decades; however, they also noted that many salient questions remained unanswered. With this specific issue in mind, several studies have since gone on to examine the ‘employee-organisation relationship’ (EOR) from multiple perspectives, providing considerable support for the notion of social exchanges as the basis for a better understanding of EORs in diverse cultures, for different work arrangements and at individual, dyadic and organisational levels of analysis.

As a result, empirical evidence has been provided on the boundary conditions of social exchanges as a framework for a better understanding of EORs (Shore and Coyle-Shapiro, 2003); indeed, according to Shore et al. (2004: 292), the term EOR is “an overarching term to describe the relationship between the employee and the organisation”; this naturally includes micro concepts, such as both the psychological contract and perceived organisational support (POS), and macro concepts, such as the employment relationship. From both theoretical and empirical standpoints, each approach to understanding EORs has its own strengths and weaknesses.

The role of middle managers provides an example of situational influences on the predominance of personal or organisational interests as the basis for the establishment of an EOR. Hallier and James (1997) pointed out that given their position within the organisation, middle managers may experience considerable difficulty in simultaneously representing both their own interests and those of their employer, essentially because middle managers are party to two different employment relationships; as employees, they have their own employment relationship with the organisation, whilst at the same time, they represent their employer in managing the organisation's employment relationship with other employees.

As noted by Eisenberger et al. (2001), there is an implicit assumption underlying 'social exchange' theory, which is that the resources exchanged will be valued by the recipient. From the perspective of employees, they are likely to be motivated to compensate beneficial treatment from their employer by acting in ways that will be valued by the organisation, whilst from an organisational perspective, there is an assumption that employers will value the dedication and loyalty of their employees (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

Gouldner (1960) distinguished between two types of reciprocity, namely heteromorphic and homeomorphic reciprocity. The former occurs when there are clear differences between two parties in terms of the content of the exchange

relationship, and yet each party perceives the value to be equal, whilst the latter occurs in exchanges where the content or the circumstances under which things are exchanged are identical. It is the former case – where there is a perception of the exchange of resources being of equal value – that is implicitly captured in employment relationship research. Researchers assume that the inducements (tangible and/or socio-emotional) offered by employers are valued by employees, and that the contributions made by employees (organisational commitment and behaviour) are valued by employers (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore, 2007).

Over the past 20 years, the study of EORs has become an integral part of the literature, with the approach essentially aiming to provide a theoretical foundation for a better understanding of the perspectives of both employees and employers on the exchange relationship. Fuelled by an interest in the interactions and obligations that generate such social exchanges, many of the prior studies have focused on analyses at the individual level (Eisenberg et al., 1986; Morrison and Robinson, 1997).

Thus, scholars have examined the parties to the relationship, the value of the resources exchanged, and the expectations of reciprocity, with such expected reciprocity providing the basis for an explanation and understanding of the affective commitment of employees in response to employer-defined EORs, as well as the link between the employment relationships, as defined by employer and organisational performance

(Coyle-Shapiro and Shore, 2007). Nevertheless, as noted by Ribeiro-Soriano and Urbano (2010), only very few studies (such as Coyle-Shapiro and Shore, 2007) consider the organisational and environmental contexts in which such relationships occur.

The last 15 years have seen the emergence of a wealth of literature focusing on exchange relationships between employees and their organisations, with many of the related studies examining POS and the psychological contract (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rouseseau, 1995), although some focus has been placed on EORs from the perspective of employers (Tsui et al., 1997; Lewis-McClear and Taylor, 1998; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2002).

Despite the tendency in the majority of these studies to focus on employee perspectives of the EOR, Tekleab and Taylor (2003) found that the perceptions of the EOR held by managers tended to influence their evaluation of the performance and organisational citizenship behaviour of employees. Wang et al. (2003) also found that high levels of inducements and contributions – strong social exchanges which they refer to as ‘organisation-focused or mutual investment’ – were associated with high levels of firm performance.

Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) provided a further systematic definition of ‘dependence’ based upon perspectives of environmental resources and a rise in uncertainty during the process of bilateral transactions. From their viewpoint, the

factors determining mutual dependence simultaneously determine the relative power and dependence levels through intra-organisational resource exchanges, the four main determinants of which are as follows:

1. *The Importance of the Resources*

The importance of the resources refers to their indispensable nature in the running of an organisation, the key factors of which are: (i) the scale of the resource exchange; and (ii) the stability of the resource supply. An example of this is where one party involved in an exchange of resources possesses total control over all of the resources, particularly where these resources are regarded as being both indispensable and irreplaceable in the running of an enterprise or business; such a person is regarded as possessing 'power' (Jones, Felps and Bigley, 2007).

Furthermore, the proportion of the resources involved in the exchange process also determines whether or not this kind of resource is of importance. For example, if supplier A provides most of firm B's necessary materials, then the latter will undoubtedly become extremely dependent on the former. When such 'dependence relationships' are created, the party which owns the resources gains power over the other party, such that he is able to influence, or indeed change, the decision-making behaviour of the dependent party; this will, in turn, lead to the dependent party attaching much greater importance to the benefits of

the party with 'power' (Frooman, 1999; Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003).

Casciaro and Piskorski (2005) further posited that in order to obtain more favorable exchange conditions, whilst also reducing the level of uncertainty during the procurement of the necessary resources, the more dependent actor in a power-imbalanced dyad will attempt to restructure its dependency by engaging in constraint absorption operations with the power-advantaged organisation (Gargiulo, 1993). The organisation wielding the higher level of power is therefore likely to resist the attempts at constraint absorption by the organisation with the lower level of power. The less powerful organisation is unlikely to be able to overcome the resistance of the dominant organisation, and thus, by definition, the latter will be in a better position to impose its will on the former.

2. *The Dominance of the Organisation*

This factor refers to a situation whereby an organisation (or individual) has the power to dominate and exercise the resources belonging to another organisation (or individual). Under a situation of scarce resources, possession of such power represents a favourable counter to any attempts by the less powerful organisation to enhance its negotiating ability.

3. *The Concentration of the Resources*

The greater the concentration of an organisation's resources, the fewer choices the

party depending on these resources has, thereby providing the organisation with greater power. The principle of power between organisations is also applicable to that between an organisation and its employees. The interrelationships involved are illustrated in Figure 2-4, which essentially serves as a summary diagram, the key points of which are based on the contents of Section 2.6.1.

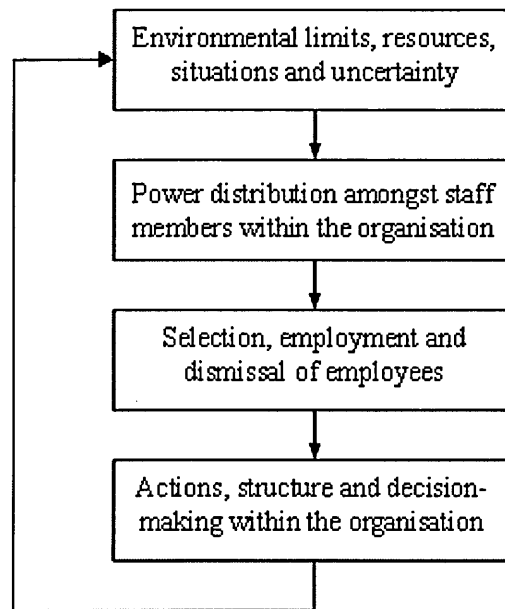


Figure 2-4 The Relationship between Power and the Organisation

Source: Pfeffer (1981: 203).

The interactions involved during the overall exchange process, as illustrated in Figure 2-4, reveal that factors such as environmental limits, the limited resources shared by the members in an organisation, and occurrences of difficult or unexpected situations, are all bound to lead to uncertainty in the exchanges between the organisation and its individual employees. To dispel

such uncertainty, organisations will generally utilise their ‘power’ to tackle the power distribution amongst members within the organisation, and also to select, employ or dismiss employees. Finally, in the process of utilising this ‘power’, these organisations may take action to structure organisational commitment corresponding to its needs, and make decisions on how to alleviate the limits and the uncertainty arising from the elements illustrated in Figure 2-4.

4. *The Uncertainty of an Organisation’s Decision-making*

The conceptual framework of uncertainty arises from the fact that the decision-making ability of an organisation is affected by its environment, and that this may create conflict or interdependence between various organisations, which can, in turn, lead to ‘uncertainty’. This ultimately has the potential to affect the overall process of decision-making within an organisation (Figure 2-5).

As in the case of the previous figure, Figure 2-5 also serves as a summary diagram, the key points of which are based on the contents of Section 2.6.1; that is, the structural characteristics of an organisation may well create conflicts or interdependence between the organisation and its individual employees, which can once again give rise to ‘uncertainty.’

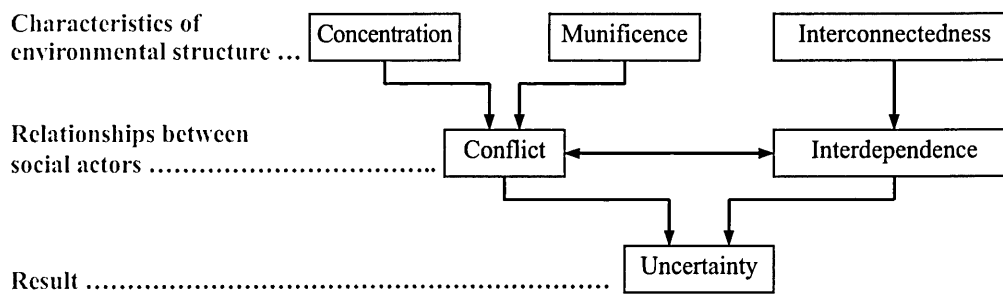


Figure 2-5 The Relationships between Organisations and their Environment

Source: Pfeffer and Salancik (2003: 120).

As shown in Figure 2-5, characteristics of environmental structure refer to concentration, munificence and interconnectedness, all of which can bring about conflicts or interdependence between the social actors involved (the organisation itself and its individual employees). The result is the emergence of uncertainty.

The sources of intra-organisational power can best be explained by the perspectives held by the positions or sub-units of organisations (such as departments) on the relationships between power and interdependence, as presented in Hickson et al. (1971), Saunders (1990), Harpaz and Meshoulam (1997) and Shore et al. (2009). The ‘strategic contingency’ theory presented in Hickson et al. (1971) comprises of five hypotheses, as follows:

Hypothesis 1: *The more adaptable to uncertainty a unit of an organisation is, the greater the power it possesses.*

Hypothesis 2: *The more irreplaceable the work of a unit is, the greater the power it possesses.*

Hypothesis 3: *The more aspects the work of a unit within an organisation can affect, the greater the power it possesses.*

Hypothesis 4: *The more urgent the work of a unit within an organisation is, in terms of the management and operations of the organisation, the greater the power it possesses.*

Hypothesis 5: *The more capable a unit within an organisation is in dealing with situations of strategic contingency, the greater the power it possesses.*

According to strategic contingency theory, it can be argued that intra-organisational power structures are not always fixed and unchangeable, and that the working abilities and resources of a unit are similarly dynamic; however, of significant importance is the fact that the extra-organisational environment is continuously changing. Thus, the changes in both the internal conditions of a unit and in the external environment will of course make it necessary for the unit concerned to change its original strategic contingency plans, which can in turn lead to the reshuffling of the power structure within the organisation (Tsai, 1985). All of this is closely connected with the position characteristics of an organisation; thus, one of the aims of the present study is to carry out an analysis of the relationships that exist between the two assigned units of 'position characteristics' and the 'demand-side commitment' of the organisation.

In order to ensure that this analysis is both thorough and well-considered, and

that any inferences made have high levels of validity, the clarification and analysis of the meanings of the variables and their correlated ranges must be a major priority, with particular focus being placed on the demand-side commitment of the organisation. This will be the primary aim of the next section.

According to Vroom (1994), Blau (1986) and Shore et al. (2006), the exchange relationships that exist between management and workers involve behaviour relating to both economic exchanges and the exchange of 'side-bets', with these exchanges representing not only extrinsic, but also intrinsic, rewards. Furthermore, the employer-employee relationships which naturally exist between management and workers are of course based on both economic contracts and the psychological contract (Aggarwal and Bhargava, 2009).

Based upon the material sources and the discussion presented in Section 2.6.1, Figure 2-6 provides a comprehensive, conclusive explanation of the relationships that come about between employers and employees, and between management and workers, from which we can conclude that employees make a contribution to the organisation by bringing their skills and proficiencies into full play, with such contributions by employees resulting in the organisation gaining profits. In return for their contributions, the organisation offers an appropriate proportion of these profits as a reward. However, if this proportion of the profits is regarded as an unsatisfactory or

unfair exchange, conflicts may arise between the two parties.

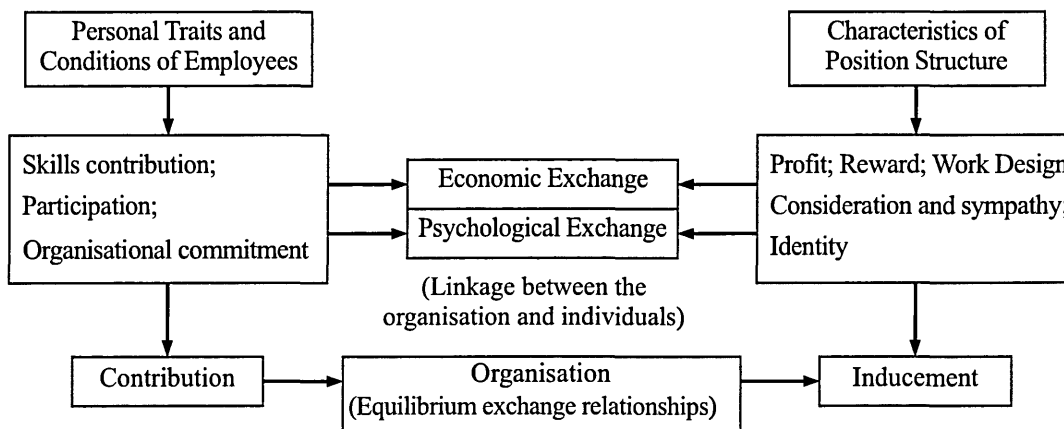


Figure 2-6 Exchange of Equilibrium between an Organisation and its Employees

Source: Compiled by the author.

The types of exchange behaviour are referred to as ‘psychological exchanges’, on the basis of which, when engaging in psychological exchanges with employees, ‘position’ may be a primary exchange objective which the organisation requires from such employees; that is, the organisation’s management goals and means are all derived from its demand-side expectations.

Taking Taiwan as an example, an organisation may offer a position with more power to a certain employee in exchange for a rise in that employee’s level of commitment to the organisation in order to meet its expectations. It follows from this that the organisation is likely to require varying degrees of supply-side commitment from different employees with different positions or job characteristics. Indeed, the organisation may, for some reason, even continue to hire employees with

low supply-side commitment. Thus, from an organisational demand-side perspective, it seems that this may be an acceptable approach within Chinese society; and in fact, it was an observation of this nature during the initial research stage which provided one of the main bases on which the hypotheses of this thesis were established. Further details are provided in the hypothesis section of Chapter 3.

Since numerous limits are placed on organisations and individual employees in the exchange environment, the organisation may encounter countless hardships, whilst at the same time, uncertainty may arise during the exchange process; indeed, one of the main causes of uncertainty arises from a situation in which an organisation becomes increasingly dependent on individual employees (see Ulrich and Barney, 1984; Bourantas, 1989; and Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003).

The most basic method of minimising ‘uncertainty’ lies in ‘power maximisation’, which refers to the minimisation of dependence on others (Emerson, 1962; Ulrich and Barney, 1984). For example, in cases where, for whatever reason, a power disequilibrium arises between the organisation and an employee, the organisation may require higher organisational commitment from that particular employee. In such a way, the organisation can minimise its dependence on, and its uncertainty with regard to, that particular person, thereby re-establishing the power equilibrium.

Opinions on the sources and factors determining the power and dependence

relationships between A and B are offered in several studies. One such opinion is that the level of an organisation's dependence on a certain position holder within the organisation is determined by: (i) the greater the importance of the resources owned by the position holder; (ii) the greater the capacity of the position holder to dominate and utilise the resources owned by other positions or departments; and (iii) the greater the concentration of the resources owned by the position holder (see Emerson, 1962; Blau, 1986; Hickson et al., 1971; Jacobs, 1974; MacMillan, 1978; Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003; and Thompson, 2003).

Accordingly, this position holder will have relatively high power over the organisation, and from the perspective of the organisation itself, the increasing dependence on this position holder will be driven by: (i) the greater its uncertainty and inability to adapt to this position holder; (ii) the greater the perception of the 'irreplaceability' of the person holding this position; (iii) the organisation's perception of the aspects and ranges over which the position holder has significant influence; (iv) the greater the organisation's dependence on, and the urgent need for, the work of this position holder relative to the overall operations of the organisation; and (v) the greater the contingent capabilities which the organisation attributes to this position holder.

It is a matter of course that such position holders will possess relatively high

levels of power over their organisations, since such organisations will undoubtedly become increasingly dependent upon them when: (i) they have more key power resources at their disposal; (ii) they are able to pursue more feasible, alternative projects; and (iii) they hold greater authority of office.

2.7 Relationships between Organisational Commitment and the Roles and Positions of Employees

When engaging in any discussion on commitment within an organisation, in the same way that we cannot separate power from a particular position, we certainly cannot separate the roles of employees from such positions. Thus, numerous related studies on commitment have been conducted over the past three decades, both in Western societies and in Taiwan, aimed at gaining a better understanding of these links.

Lai (2004) noted that organisational staff members in high positions, over the age of 35, and with service tenure in excess of five years, demonstrated better performance than other member groups, in specific terms of cognition of the ethical issues, organisational commitment, job satisfaction and organisational citizenship behaviour. Chang (2001) also demonstrated that amongst elementary school teachers, the organisational commitment of a teacher concurrently holding the position of the head of a department or a section chief was much higher than that of a classroom teacher.

The findings of Chang (2001) very much reflected those of Huang (1986),

Chen (1989), Lin (1990), Liu (1993), Tsai C-H (1993) and Chiou (1995), with all of these studies revealing that the role/position and job duties of individual employees within an organisation were highly and positively correlated with their commitment to the organisation and their desire to put in additional effort for the sake of the organisation. Each of these studies has demonstrated that relationships involving 'overall organisational commitment', 'the desire to provide effort', 'the desire to remain' and 'organisational identity' are found to be highly correlated with the commitment of employees to the organisation. Further details on these key factors are provided in Chapter 3.

The empirical results of some of the above studies have provided confirmation that hierarchical positions have both direct and significant relationships with the level of commitment to the organisation provided by employees. Despite this, it is clear that the mutual relationships between the 'role' and 'position' characteristics of employees and the demand-side commitment of their organisation have yet to be fully analysed and discussed.

Over the past three decades – specifically, since 1981 – virtually all of the related studies on organisational commitment carried out by both Eastern and Western researchers have tended to explore issues relating to the supply-side commitment provided by employees, as opposed to the demand-side commitment of

the organisation. Indeed, there have been numerous studies conducted within a Taiwanese context focusing specifically on such supply-side commitment.

As regards 'overall organisational commitment', several studies have found that the organisational commitment of a full-time teacher concurrently holding an administrative post was clearly higher than that of a full-time teacher with no such administrative duties (see Huang, 1986; Chen, 1989; Lin, 1990; Zhong, 1992; Liu, 1993; Tsai K-S, 1993; Tsai C-H, 1993; Liu Z-P, 1995; Chiou, 1995; Chang, 1998; Huang, 2005; and Chang, 2008). Several of these studies have subsequently gone on to demonstrate that the higher the post and rank, the higher the level of organisational commitment (examples include Lee, 1971; Marsh and Mannari, 1977; Yang, 1982; Huang, 1987; Hsieh, 2002; Chung, 2003; and Jan, 2006).

Based upon these empirical research outcomes drawn from within a Taiwanese context, it seems obvious that 'position' and 'position characteristics' are closely connected to the extent of the supply-side commitment to the organisation provided by position holders (employees). Therefore, a key research focus in this thesis is whether it can also be inferred that these positions and position characteristics are connected to organisational demand-side commitment. Further details on this point are presented in the subsequent sections and in Chapter 3.

As regards the aspect of organisational commitment relating to the 'desire to

provide effort', a number of Taiwanese studies have further revealed that the desire of a teacher carrying out concurrent administrative work was found to be higher than that of a full-time teacher (Chen, 1989; Lin, 1990; Zhong, 1992; Lee, 1993; Liu, 1993; Liu Z-P, 1995; Chiou, 1995; Chang, 1998; Hsieh, 2002; Fun, 2004; and Huang, 2008). Furthermore, the findings of other similar studies reveal that the higher the post and rank, the higher the desire to put in additional effort (Lu, 1981; Hsieh, 2002; and Huang, 2008).

Turning to the aspect of organisational commitment referring to the 'desire to remain', some research outcomes have revealed that this desire reaches a higher level of significance for a teacher carrying out concurrent administrative work than that it does for a full-time teacher (Chen, 1989; Liu, 1993; Tsai K-S, 1993; Chang, 1998; Liu Z-P, 1995; and Chiou, 1995). Thus, the question again arises as to whether it can be inferred that the 'desire to remain' also has something to do with organisational demand-side commitment; that is, whether there is the possibility of different degrees of organisational demand-side commitment arising with regard to the 'desire to remain' according to the positions and position characteristics of various individuals.

As regards the aspect of 'organisational identity' (defined as members' shared beliefs about the organization's central, enduring and distinctive characteristics;

Albert and Whetten, 1985; Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Dutton and Dukerich, 1991), some studies have revealed that for a teacher engaging in concurrent administrative work, such identity reaches a higher level of significance than that of a full-time teacher (Wu, 1981; Chen, 1989; Lin, 1990; Zhong, 1992; Liu, 1993; Tsai K-S, 1993; Chang, 1998; Liu Z-P, 1995; and Chiou, 1995). Thus, it may be worth examining whether, in terms of organisational identity amongst employees, organisations may exhibit different degrees of demand-side commitment; that is, there may again be some possibility of the organisation expecting different levels of organisational identity from its individual employees based essentially on their positions and position characteristics.

It is argued in this thesis that, on the one hand, position structure characteristics can reflect both the limits and demands of the organisation's coordinative and controlling abilities, whilst on the other hand, these characteristics also reflect the level of dependence which the organisation has on this position, as well as the power wielded by this position relative to that possessed by the organisation. Both of these situations will clearly create uncertainty; thus, under such circumstances, a prerequisite for the organisation is to secure the commitment it requires from its employees if it is going to succeed in disposing of such uncertainty.

'Position' is a crucial factor, essentially since it is a basic component unit of the

structure of an organisation; that is, although an organisation comprises of numerous positions, the assigned analysis unit for any given organisation can comprise of the entire organisation, a sub-unit of the organisation, a coalition, or an individual employee (Pfeffer, 1982). Thus, when carrying out any analysis of an organisation, there is no real reason why researchers should not use 'position' as an assigned unit of analysis. The implications of this are discussed in Chapter 3.

Furthermore, it should be quite obvious that different types of positions will have their own specific ranges, goals and tasks, as well as many other facets that a particular position possesses through which it can exchange with other positions within the organisation, or with correlated groups outside of the organisation. This therefore provides a further strong indication that the term 'position' should be regarded as an assigned unit for the analysis of an organisation, and hence it is argued here that position can serve as an intersection point in the linkage between organisations and their employees.

On the one hand, the various types of positions can reflect the policies, structures and actions of an organisation, which in turn, creates the structure for these positions. On the other hand, the recruitment of a person to fill a position and the subsequent management of that position represent two separate processes, with the accomplishment of both processes being essential to the running of the

organisation, since they can also act as linkages between the organisation and its employees. Therefore, the solution to reaching a state of equilibrium lies in a thorough exploration and discussion of the relationships that exist between organisations and their employees; hence, the suggestion in this study is that the characteristics of the position structures not only could, but should, be adopted as an assigned unit of analysis when carrying out research into organisational commitment.

The scope and composition of an organisation are defined in this thesis on the basis of Ulrich and Barney (1984). The variables for the classification of position structures comprise of 'authority', 'complexity', 'variation', 'sensitivity', 'formalisation' and 'exclusivity of skills'. As noted by Burton and Obel (2004), three of these components (the degree of authority, degree of formalisation and degree of complexity) were adopted by both Champion (1975) and Seetoo (1984) in their analysis and description of position structures. This issue is explored further in Chapter 3.

The concepts presented by Champion (1975) and Seetoo (1984) are employed in this thesis as the basis for the characteristics of the position structures to be explored and discussed here. Reference is also made to Perrow (1967, 1970), Kogut and Zander (2003) and Burton and Obel (2004). An adaptation of the variable, the 'exceptionality of the duties of a position', a concept presented by Thompson (2003), is also included in this thesis. Finally, in addition to the aforementioned variables, we

include 'hardship', 'dependence' and 'exclusivity', as well as actual case observations and interviews undertaken in Taiwan. All of these, which served as a pilot study for the compilation of this thesis, are presented in the later chapters.

2.7.1 Factors Contributing to Position Characteristics

A comprehensive analysis of six factors contributing to position structure was subsequently undertaken in this study, with one of these factors, 'the degree of sensitivity', being a position structure factor exclusively initiated by other Taiwanese scholars, Wang and Liu (1996). The reasons for the inclusion of this 'sensitivity' factor are: (i) that it has been shown to actually exist in Taiwan; and (ii) practically speaking, this factor has had a crucial impact on the extent of organisational expectations of supply-side commitment from employees. Thus, through the inclusion of this factor, the overall analysis of position structure in this thesis is rendered more thorough and complete. These six factors (characteristics) are described below.

1. Degree of Authority

The 'degree of authority' indicates that this employee (position holder) is endowed not only with the power to take decisions relating to job goals, job sequences and the methods by which the jobs are carried out, but also the range and latitude of the decision-making relating to different events (Kanter, 1977; Mintzberg, 1983; Astley and Sachdeva, 1984; London, 1993).

2. *Degree of Complexity*

The 'degree of complexity' refers to the variety of complex situations which particular position holders may find themselves confronted with, particularly in terms of the relationships between the bounded jobs of the position and those of other positions or units within the organisation; the degree of complexity does, however, also refer to the job skills possessed by the individual position holder (see Lynch, 1974; Glisson, 1978; Macintosh and Daft, 1987; Kim, 2005).

3. *Degree of Variation*

The 'degree of variation' indicates that this position holder is invariably faced with some degree of urgency, and perhaps limited resources, when required to solve the same sort of problems or projects (Withey, Daft and Cooper, 1983).

4. *Degree of Sensitivity*

The 'degree of sensitivity' indicates that the job of this position holder involves considerable confidentiality and sensitivity (Wang and Liu, 1996).

5. *Degree of Formalisation*

The 'degree of formalisation' refers to the limitations relating to this position, including issues such as standardisation, the division of power and duty, and the regulations to be followed (Kim, 2005; Johari and Yahya, 2009).

6. *Exclusivity of Skills*

Finally, 'exclusivity of skills' indicates that the professional work skills of this particular position holder are rather tacit, and indeed, extremely difficult to describe in words; that is, although this position holder's job skills are of significant importance, they are essentially incommunicable (Kogut and Zander, 2003). A comprehensive discussion on each of these six position factors is provided in Chapter 4.

2.8 Alternative View of the Commitment Construct

The focus in most of the previous sections of this chapter has been on a review of the literature on traditional supply-side commitment to the organisation provided by employees; however, a further key point has been added in this thesis, which is the greater emphasis on research into organisational demand-side commitment.

The primary aim of this section is to engage in a comprehensive discussion on the different constructs of organisational commitment, with particular emphasis on the author's view of the alternative commitment construct, involving an examination of 'employee supply-side commitment' (ESC), 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC) and the Eastern view of the harmony between Yin and Yang (as shown in Figure 2-7), a perspective which has much to do with the 'equilibrium' perspective relating to Western organisations.



Figure 2-7 The Tai Chi Concept of the Harmony between Yin and Yang

Source: Lee-Er (470 BC)

2.8.1 Employee Supply-side Commitment (ESC)

The definition of ‘employee supply-side commitment’ (ESC) in this thesis is exactly the same as the traditional definition of ‘organisational commitment’; that is, it proposes that employees will spontaneously commit themselves to the organisation as a result of their identification with the goals of the organisation, which in turn, will encourage such employees to actively provide positive additional effort for the sake of the organisation, thereby demonstrating their positive attitude towards the organisation and their desire to remain within it. The overall principles of the organisation, with regard to recruitment and job design, as well as the practical state of organisational leadership and management, and the employees’ perceived organisational support, all contribute to their commitment to the organisation (Steers, 1977; Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1979).

2.8.2 Organisational Demand-side Commitment (ODC)

The notion of ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC), which is an original construct proposed in this thesis, refers to the effects of the structural characteristics of a position, as a result of which an organisation may require a

certain degree – perhaps even a minimal level – of commitment from individual position holders. The content and components of organisational demand-side commitment are exactly the same as those relating to traditional commitment, with the exception that demand-side commitment refers to the demand and plans of an organisation, whilst supply-side commitment refers to the general performance of employees and their contributions to the organisation.

The suggestion throughout this chapter is that there has been a tendency in most of the prior literature on the psychological contract to focus on the commitment provided by employees to the organisation, and that this is dynamic in nature, existing between organisations and their individual employees. However, as will be demonstrated later in this study, if research into ‘organisational commitment’ were to be based on an organisational perspective, then the research aims should be focused on: (i) whether Taiwanese organisations always nurture organisational commitment amongst their individual employees and what the dynamic relationships are that may exist between the commitment expected by the organisation and the commitment freely given by its employees; and (ii) the extent to which organisations tend to require different characteristics from employees in different positions within the organisation, as derived from their organisational design.

According to McAuley (2007), “The term organisation is usually defined in

terms of the coordination of people for the achievement of some explicit purposes and to attain common objectives or goals ... people work in organisations for a variety of reasons – economic reward, individual satisfaction, membership of a social group, ‘belonging’ to an organisation, having a say in the running of the organisation – and for the organisations to be effective, account needs to be given to these different aspects of human motivation” (McAuley, 2007: 49, 120). According to this definition, it follows that any ‘position’ in an organisation is designed, coordinated and directed with the aim of enabling the position holder to achieve commonly shared goals or objectives.

According to Ulrich and Barney (1984), an organisation is a coalition formed by a group of positions (referring mainly to position holders), with the primary aim of these position holders joining the coalition being to acquire all of the necessary resources they require by means of exchange. Therefore, in terms of the environments pertaining to organisations, any of the positions within such organisations can be regarded as linkages between the organisation itself and its individual employees. Any position/role within an organisation can also refer to position-related characteristics, which serve as an interface between the demand of the organisation and the supply provided by individual employees.

This type of demand/supply interface is very similar to the interface between the

Eastern philosophical concept of Tai Chi thought, involving ‘Yin’ and ‘Yang’; that is, the interface can show the waxing and waning of Yin (organisational demand) and Yang (employee supply). Further details are provided in the following sub-section.

General hints are provided by the two concepts of ‘perceived organisational support’ (POS) and ‘leader-member exchange’ (LMX) referred to in the previous section, both of which are derived from the psychological contract. Another concept relating to the exchange of power and dependence between organisations and employees also provides further hints on commitment; that is, most elements of organisational behaviour, such as the willingness of employees to carry out extra roles or put in additional effort, the organisational identity of employees, job satisfaction, job performance, absenteeism, turnover, and so on, have much to do with organisational demand-side commitment.

2.8.3 Dependence-Power Exchange between Organisations and Employee Positions

1. From an Organisational Demand-side (Yin) Perspective

In order to subsist, any organisation of any kind has to strive to secure sufficient resources. One of the most basic ways to subsist is to exchange things with others through trade-offs or bartering; however, numerous limitations are placed on the various exchange environments. Consequently, difficulties and uncertainty may arise in the process of acquiring resources, with one of the primary sources of

such uncertainty being excessive dependence by organisations on others, both externally and internally, as in those cases where organisations become dependent on certain position holders.

As noted earlier, of the various ways of reducing the level of uncertainty, power maximisation is basically the most effective. To reiterate, the maximisation of power essentially equates to the minimisation of dependence on others (see Hickson et al., 1971; Pfeffer, 1982; Ulrich and Barney, 1984; Bourantas, 1989; and Su et al., 2008). Our earlier examination of the six structural position factors clearly indicates that, outside of equilibrium, an organisation either has power over a position, or strong dependence upon it.

2. From an Employee Supply-side (Yang) Perspective

The commitment provided to an organisation by its employees stems largely from their dependence on the organisation; and indeed, it is of the utmost importance to recognise that this kind of dependence is the outcome of a power basis arising from their identification with, intimidation by, rewards from, their fondness for, and their reverence and loyalty towards, their organisation (Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Yukl, 2002 and Robbins and Judge, 2007).

Once employees make a commitment to the organisation, they then actively and positively pursue numerous organisational commitment traits, such

as goal identification, loyalty, a desire to remain, and a desire to put in additional effort. Accordingly, it is argued in this study that organisational commitment can serve as a predictor of the level of dependence which employees have on their organisation, and that this is based upon the extent of the power wielded by an organisation over such employees.

2.8.4 Eastern Philosophical View of Equilibrium: Harmony between Yin and Yang

Tai Chi, which originates in Eastern philosophy, is comparable to the English concepts of the 'Grand Ultimate in the Infinite'. According to Tai Chi, there are 'two polarities': (i) Yang, the positive, external and dominant in nature, which is applied in this study to refer to 'employee supply-side commitment (ESC); and (ii) Yin, the negative, internal and recessive in nature, which is applied here to refer to 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC). Further explanations of Yin and Yang are provided in the following sub-sections.

Birth, extinction and changes in a myriad of things throughout the universe are essentially based upon Yin and Yang, and indeed, when the two elements are in mutual harmony, this is referred to as the 'balance' between Yin and Yang. The functions of the positive and negative forces exerted by these two elements create countless thousands of things that exist in the world. For example, the sun goes down and the moon rises, thus the sun (Yang) and the moon (Yin) take each other's

place, resulting in light or darkness.

In applying this to organisations, let us take, for example, transactions or trade. A purchaser clearly wishes to buy commodities at the lowest possible price whilst a seller wishes to sell such commodities at the highest possible price. Only with a reasonable and well-balanced price can a deal be clinched.

Consider also the observations that without gravitational balance, all planets or galaxies might be destroyed, whereas if electrons and protons are in a state of equilibrium, then we have a stable atom. With the sun and moon running their natural course, our world becomes a safe dwelling place for all living beings, but if the sun and moon did not run their natural course, then the whole world would be turned upside down. All kinds of materials are formed under Yin and Yang, the concept of which can be similarly applied to the commitment expected by an organisation from its employees and the commitment supplied by such employees to their organisation.

From another viewpoint, Harrison and Shirom (1999) suggest that “Organisations are dynamic, (...). Even if the fit between different subsystems is not as good as it might be, limited fit may be no bad thing because a lack of fit can lead to some useful conflicts” (McAuley et al., 2007: 80).

In short, with regard to traditional supply-side commitment (Yang) and the

organisational demand-side commitment (Yin) presented in this thesis, equal importance has to be attached to both; neither can be neglected.

2.8.5 The Meaning of Yin and Yang

Yin and Yang originated from ancient philosophy, with Yin (shade) and Yang (brightness) being the two opposing principles in nature; the former is feminine and negative, whilst the latter is masculine and positive. Yin and Yang can readily explain all of the phenomena in the natural world. For example, Earth is Yin and Heaven is Yang; the moon, Yin, the sun, Yang. The contrast and harmony between Yin and Yang is the root of all things existing in the universe. Anything that is tranquil, chilly, inhibited, internal or desired, belongs to Yin, whilst anything that is exuberant, strong, extrovert or functional, belongs to Yang.

2.8.6 Relationships between Organisational Commitment and Yin and Yang

First there was heaven (Yang) and earth (Yin), then all things were produced; that is, in the natural world, there are the things of Yin and the things of Yang, with distinctions being made between all things Yin and Yang. However, in the Yin, there is Yang, and in the Yang, there is Yin; the successive movements of Yin and Yang then constitute “the course of things”. The mutual production or destruction of Yin and Yang also exists, and indeed, the traditional Chinese way of thinking in terms of organisational management has been deeply affected by this kind of concept; that is,

this specific idea of mutual production or destruction. Illustrative cases of this are presented in Appendix 2.

This is very similar to the mutual impacts between an organisation and its employees, that of 'power and dependence', 'demand and supply'. It is, however, clear that from the very dawn of time, people have consistently harboured improper and unwholesome thoughts relating to the possession of awesome power. It could be said that an organisation and its individual employees are no exception to this; thus, it follows that both organisations and their employees may well harbour such thoughts and attitudes.

Throughout the ages, with particular emphasis on ancient times, many of the most judicious sovereigns and rulers would often apply the Eastern philosophical thought process of the harmony between Yin and Yang to the process of governing and ruling their states, resulting in a flourishing age for their people. Thus, in the present study, it is suggested that in terms of the management of an organisation, the implementation of the principle of the harmony between Yin and Yang represents an extremely important concept.

The application of the harmony between Yin and Yang refers to the division of 'power' and the delimitation of 'duty', both of which are typically characteristic of the positions held by people within an organisation. By following the same

principles, an organisation may find greater efficiency and flexibility with regard to its overall management. If Yin and Yang are in harmonious proportions, then the body is healthy; if Yin and Yang are in disharmony with each other, one may suffer from all sorts of disorder (see Figure 2-8). This can similarly occur within the overall concept of ‘organisational commitment’.

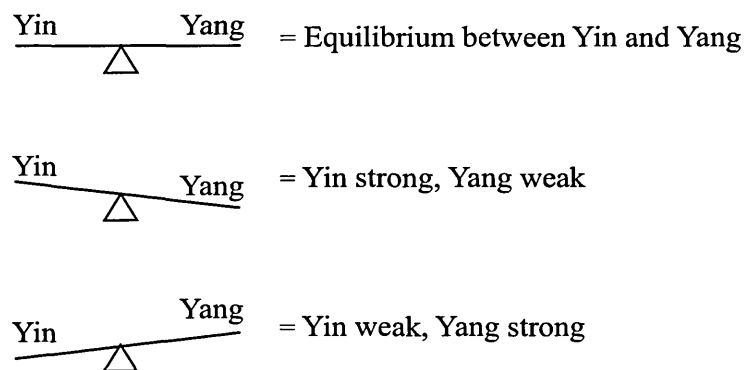


Figure 2-8 The Growth and Decline of Yin and Yang

Source: Compiled by the author.

If the Eastern philosophical principle of the harmony between Yin and Yang is to be achieved (in other words, if an organisation desires to achieve a state of equilibrium), then the two polarities must be studied very carefully. Inspired by this most basic of Eastern philosophical principles, within the overall analysis of the impacts on organisational demand-side commitment, the construct ‘position characteristics’ is employed in this thesis as an independent variable. Further details are presented in Chapter 3.

Furthermore, in addition to this brief elucidation of the two polarities of Yin

and Yang, as a result of two decades of appropriate work experience, as well as the illustrative cases presented in this thesis, the author has gained significant inspiration conducive to the main research aims of this study, which are:

1. Of all of the organisations examined in a Taiwanese context, considerable importance is attached to the loyalty of employees to the organisation; this is commensurate with the organisational demand-side commitment explored and discussed in this thesis.
2. Both the degree and content of the loyalty and organisational commitment which an organisation demands from its employees are found to differ from one position characteristic to another.

2.9 Conclusions

This concluding descriptive section of this chapter serves as an overview of this thesis, underlining the issues discussed here, including the presentation of a literature review on organisational commitment, the various definitions and meanings applied to the terms ‘commitment’ and ‘organisational commitment’, the various constructs of organisational commitment, the related psychological contract, perceived organisational support (POS), leader member exchange (LMX) and the power and dependence exchanges that occur between employees and organisations.

This chapter has also presented an alternative view, represented by a novel

construct of ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC), which could help to make the research into organisational commitment more complete. The relationships existing between the various constructs of commitment outlined in this chapter are shown in Table 2-2.

An important element also included in this chapter is the Eastern Tai Chi philosophical concept of Yin and Yang and its application to organisations and their employees. By employing the concept of Yin and Yang, we can clarify the relationships that exist between organisations and their employees. Organisational commitment is a core concept of organisational behaviour; however, for over five decades, studies on organisational commitment have invariably tended to focus solely on the exploration of the commitment supplied by employees to the organisation.

It is suggested in this thesis that the traditional focus essentially ignores another side of commitment, the expectations of commitment by the organisation from its individual employees. Indeed, between 1991 and 2010, most of the related research into organisational commitment conducted by Taiwanese academics was once again based on the commitment supplied by employees to their organisation.

Table 2-2 Relationships between Commitment Constructs

Attributes	Commitment Type*		Harmony between Yin and Yang
	Traditional View (ESC, Yang)	Proposed Alternative View (ODC, Yin)	
Meaning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An employee's identification with, and adherence to, the aims of the organisation. 2. Active and positive effort placed into the organisation by employees. 3. A desire to remain. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The commitment expected by the organisation from individual position holders. 2. The organisation expectations of its individual employees. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When supply- and demand-side commitment correspond with each other, this is referred to as equilibrium. 2. When supply- and demand-side commitment do not correspond with each other, this is referred to as disequilibrium.
Origin	Traditional organisational commitment models	Proposed by the author of this thesis	A construct for future study
Research Mode	Supply mode	Demand mode	Equilibrium mode
Assigned Unit of Analysis	Individual employee	Position characteristics	Individual employees and the positions offered by the organisation
Management Implications	Performance	Planning	Controlling
Degree of Commitment	The more, the better	Necessary degree	Ideal level
Management Scope	Management of employees	Management of positions	Management of organisations
Inference/Intention	Employee-side contributions	Organisation-side expectations	Management of mutual satisfaction
Dependence and Power Perspectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The dependence of employees on their organisations 2. The power which organisations have over their employees. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organisational dependence on position holders. 2. The power of position holders over the organisation. 	Equilibrium relationship between interdependence and power

Note: * ESC refers to 'employee supply-side commitment', and ODC refers to 'organisational demand-side commitment'.

Source: Compiled by the author.

Put simply, the focus in the past has invariably been placed on the expectations of commitment from individual employees as opposed to the extent of the demand-side commitment on the part of the organisation. Thus, the fact that there may be differences between one employee and another is neither explored nor discussed within the extant literature. Although a limited number of employee commitment studies have presented perspectives on organisational commitment resulting in research outcomes which differed markedly from those of the traditional organisational commitment research models, it is suggested here that the differences highlighted in those studies were in fact, only skin-deep.

It is clear that over the past two decades, precious few academic studies have devoted any real effort into researching organisational commitment from the same perspectives as those presented by Randall (1987), in which the focus was placed on research into organisational commitment from an organisational perspective (as shown in Appendix 3). It is argued in this thesis that there are two basic reasons for this phenomenon, as follows.

Firstly, the traditional organisational commitment research model itself limits the research direction and the selection of research fields essentially because it involves only supply-side commitment provided to the organisation by employees. As a result, the research direction over the past five decades has focused solely on

applying the traditional research model of organisational commitment to the exploration and analysis of all matters relating to the subject. Thus, the studies have continued to adopt the use of 'employee' as the assigned unit of analysis, using this to explore the definitions, antecedents and outcomes of traditional organisational commitment – that is, 'employee supply-side commitment' (ESC) – as opposed to carrying out in-depth research into the commitment expected by the organisation from individual employees, which could clearly serve as a linkage between organisations and their employees.

Secondly, this traditional research model of organisational commitment appears to be stuck within a paradigm of employee commitment; therefore, any observations of anomalous phenomena would not have fallen under the remit of normal scientific exploration (Kuhn, 1962). This clearly suggests that alternative avenues for research may well have been ignored.

The workplace plays a vital role in ensuring the well-being of individuals, whilst each individual also plays an important role in the making of their organisation. The interface between the organisation as a whole, and the individual as the basic unit, are what make up the overall structure of an organisation. For an organisation to function well, both individuals and organisations need to be addressed as distinctive units. Thus, when setting out to undertake research into organisational commitment, there is a

crucial element which must not be overlooked; that is, the organisation expectations of, and its responses to, the commitment provided by its employees.

An organisation is an equilibrium system (Barnard, 1968; Simon, 1997; and McAuley et al., 2007), and indeed, a state of equilibrium within an organisation can only be achieved when the commitment supplied by employees to the organisation is congruent with the commitment expected by the organisation from its employees. This kind of organisational equilibrium perspective is very similar to the Eastern philosophical principle of Tai Chi, involving mutual waxing and waning, checks and balances, and harmony between ‘Yin and Yang’. This concept has been presented throughout the various sections in this chapter, and we shall continue to refer to it throughout the remainder of this thesis in our subsequent exploration of the key factors influencing organisational demand-side commitment.

Finally, the construct of ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC) remains an area which is both under-researched and under-discussed. The overall aim of this chapter has been to clarify our understanding of the concept of organisational commitment and to identify factors contributing to, or detracting from, such demand-side commitment. This chapter refers to six position characteristics, on which the hypotheses proposed in this thesis are established. Chapter 3 goes on to present more detailed discussions and inferences relating to these factors.

Chapter 3 Developing the Research Hypotheses

3.1 Introduction

The hypotheses to be tested in this thesis were developed in two distinct stages. Firstly, the literature review presented in Chapter 2 and the alternative views on ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC), based upon the prior work experience of the author, provided the theoretical background for the development of a number of hypotheses on the issues and problems relating to commitment in a Taiwanese context. Secondly, an exploratory study was carried out involving preliminary interviews with senior HR managers, line managers and workers; this was once again combined with the prior work experience of the author. The informal observations recalled by the author from an organisation in which he had previously worked provided the practical sources for the refinement of the hypotheses formed in the first stage.

The establishment in this chapter of the conceptual framework of this thesis is based upon perspectives of ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC) and traditional ‘employee supply-side commitment’ (ESC), along with the equilibrium or disequilibrium existing between the two. The development and refinement of the hypotheses, based upon a combination of the theoretical issues and the interviews and practical observations in the pilot study, is presented in the following section.

3.1.1 Theoretical Issues Relating to Organisational Commitment

According to both ‘power and dependence exchange theory’ and ‘relational cohesion theory’ (RCT), discussed in Chapter 2 and illustrated in Figure 2-3, we know that to a certain extent, exchanges exist between organisations and their individual employees, such as the offer of inducements by organisations to individual employees in exchange for their support to successfully meet the expectations of the organisation.

A particularly valid example of this process is readily provided in Taiwan, where an organisation may offer an increased level of power to a certain position holder (employee) in exchange for a rise in their overall level of commitment to the organization as a result of the organisation’s own needs. Thus, the Eastern philosophical (Tai Chi) concept of ‘Yin’ and ‘Yang’ is examined in this thesis to elucidate these growth or decline relationships in order to determine whether such exchanges between employees and organisations can succeed in re-establishing a balanced state.

The basic research into these relationships was conducted in an effort to examine the extent of any increase or reduction in power and dependence between employees and their organisation, along with their overall impact on organisational commitment. Applied within a business context, Yin refers to internal organisational demand-side commitment (ODC), whilst Yang refers to external employee supply-

side commitment (ESC).

An overview on the general concept of the commitment supplied by employees to their organisation has already been provided in Chapter 2, with the identification and discussion of this issue being based upon a perspective of the traditional organisational approach to commitment. Specific research directions were also identified in an effort to clarify the role of commitment in practical relationships between employees and their organisations by employing the abovementioned Eastern philosophical Tai Chi thought on Yin and Yang.

In a similar vein, the concept of the ‘psychological contract’ – the primary impetus for the willingness of an individual employee to contribute to the organisation – comes about essentially because such employees wish to earn the approval, recognition and trust of the organisation. Furthermore, there is clear evidence that a perception amongst employees that the organisation values their contribution and cares about their well-being can effectively meet their needs for esteem, affiliation, emotional support and approval (Armeli et al., 1998). Such emotionally satisfying experiences can result in employees making an association between their own well-being and that of the organisation, thereby creating an emotional bond with the organisation (Rhoades et al., 2001). It would therefore seem that the higher the position held by an employee, the greater the responsibility that is

entrusted in that employee by the organisation.

Similarly, with the strengthening of organisational commitment, individual employees begin to realise that they have a much greater obligation to the organisation; thus, their desire to put in additional effort to add to the success of the organisation may also become increasingly stronger. In other words, just as a 'position' cannot be separated from 'power', an employee's role in an organisation cannot be separated from their position; that is, position and power are closely interrelated.

In the review of the literature undertaken in Chapter 2, examinations were undertaken of the psychological contract between employees and their organisation, the impacts on employee supply-side commitment arising from 'perceived organisational support' (POS) and 'leader/member exchange' (LMX), the importance of the 'establishment, adjustment and realisation' (EAR) of the psychological contract, and the practical application of the exchange of power and dependence between employees and their organisation. All of these play vital roles in organisational decision-making relating to demand-side commitment.

Equally important is the impact on commitment arising from the concept of 'relational cohesion theory' (RCT), particularly as it is perceived by the organisation, since it confirms the existence of numerous limits regarding the changing working environments which might also lead to changes in the existing commitment

relationship between an organisation and its employees. It is, therefore, possible for uncertainty to arise in the mutual exchange process, which could result in the organisation encountering hardship.

As a result, there is some likelihood of organisations expecting different levels of commitment from individual employees, which might ultimately enable them to dispel such uncertainty. This is one of the reasons why the suggestion is made in this thesis that the alternative view, the new construct, ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC), is an essential element to be incorporated when carrying out research into organisational commitment.

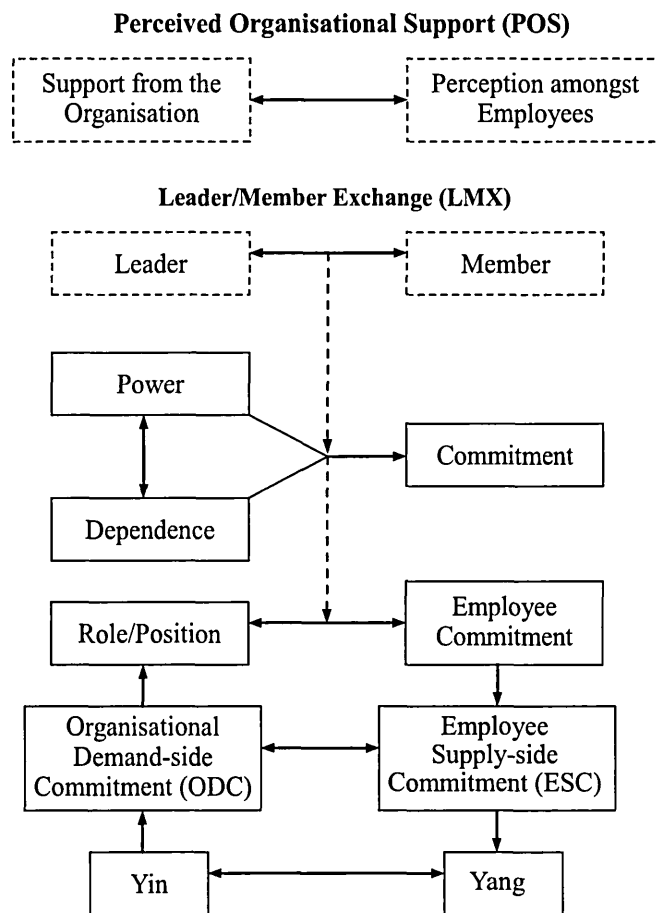


Figure 3-1 Theoretical Issues Identified in Chapter 2 (Literature Review)

As previously identified in the literature review undertaken in Chapter 2, research into traditional organisational commitment invariably focuses on an 'employee' as an assigned unit of analysis; however, this functions only as a linkage between an employee and an organisation, whilst failing to provide a reciprocal link between an organisation (demand-side) and an employee (supply-side); hence, in this thesis, the new concept of ODC was proposed.

Positions within a firm have already been identified as an assigned unit of analysis enabling clarification of the demand by organisations from the different positions and from the individual employees holding such positions. The definitions provided on the six position characteristics were subsequently used as the key factors in the exploration, analysis and discussion of their respective impacts on, and relationships with, ODC. The position which an employee holds within an organisation has something to do with 'power', and indeed, the level of power which an organisation gives to its position holders hinges on these six position characteristics.

As discussed in Chapter 2, these six position characteristics are 'authority', 'complexity', 'variation', 'sensitivity', 'formalisation' and 'exclusivity of skills'. The proposal is that position structure characteristics not only reflect the limits and demands of the organisation's coordination and controlling abilities, but also the extent of the organisation's dependence upon the position of the employee, as well as

the relative power between the organisation and this particular position. Chapter 2 suggested a future study focus on the equilibrium view on commitment; that is, the proposition that “only when the commitment supplied by the employee to the organisation meets the commitment expected by the organisation from its individual employees can a state of organisational equilibrium be achieved”.

3.1.2 Limitations of the Prior Studies

Two issues were identified from the brief correlated notes on the important concepts extracted from the review of the literature undertaken in Chapter 2. Firstly, very few studies on organisational commitment have placed any focus on demand-side commitment on the part of the organisation, or indeed, on the structures of organisational commitment. Secondly, from a perspective of the balance between organisations and employees, there is very little understanding of the ways in which the coordination between organisational demand-side commitment and employee supply-side commitment can affect organisations.

We can, nevertheless, draw several conclusions from the literature review on the following definitive and unambiguous points.

1. Any kind of commitment, including the commitment expected by the organisation from its individual employees, is of vital importance to any organisation.

2. Organisational commitment is created by the actions and deeds of the organisation itself.
3. Most of the prior organisational commitment studies have focused only on the commitment provided by employees to the organisation; thus, they invariably examine only supply-side commitment from employees whilst ignoring demand-side commitment on the part of the organisation.
4. Traditional organisational commitment refers only to personal, individual commitment, and not to organisational demand-side commitment.
5. The four points noted above run contrary to the actual real-life situation, essentially as a result of three common phenomena.
 - a. With limited resources and different goals, an organisation is neither able, nor likely, to enhance the supply-side commitment of each individual employee.
 - b. As long as the minimal level of demand-side commitment is achieved, based upon pre-set operating targets, organisations will not generally tend to maximise such demand-side commitment.
 - c. In a Taiwanese context, organisations will, if necessary, take reverse measures aimed at adjusting and regulating excessive supply-side commitment on the part of certain employees.

6. Based upon the issues explored in Chapter 2, it is evident that ‘traditional’ organisational commitment can only convey the well-known concept and dictum of ‘employee supply-side commitment’ to the organisation; that is, it serves only as a link between employees and the organisation. Despite this, however, organisational commitment, as a whole, should involve the organisation’s link with its employees; that is, the commitment required by an organisation from its employees.
7. The two-way link based upon the concept of organisational demand-side commitment proposed here can serve as a foundation for further study.

3.2 Exploratory Research – Illustrative Cases

Prior to accepting the dimensions of the position structure characteristics and commitment that are apparent from the literature, it would seem prudent to conduct some exploratory research in our chosen setting (amongst Taiwanese firms) in order to confirm or reject the possible determinants of organisational demand-side commitment identified in this study and to ensure that other elements are not overlooked.

3.2.1 Interview Process

The primary aim of the preparatory research study undertaken for this thesis was to identify and develop the key issues through in-depth interviews and some of the informal observations at the organisations where the author had previously worked.

In order to identify the determinants of 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC) within a Taiwanese context, a series of 40 interviews were carried out in four Taiwan-based firms, focusing on a selected sample of senior HR managers, line managers and workers in service industries with branches located in Hong Kong and China. These practical cases would serve to reflect some of the established practices which prevailed within these firms. A brief description of the selection process involving these four firms is provided below.

First of all, the author wrote letters (shown in Appendix 5) to the 500 leading Taiwan-based firms, asking for their agreement to take part in the survey. Four of these firms indicated their desire to complete the survey under the expressed condition that the author would ensure full respect for their commercial confidentiality. The interviewees selected for the study represented each of the three hierarchical levels, senior HR managers, line managers and workers (eight of the interviewees were senior HR managers, sixteen were line managers and sixteen were workers).

The analytical method employed for the study closely resembled the 'critical incident' (Flanagan, 1954) methodology used in Clark (1993), with the interviews being semi-structured; that is, each interviewee was asked the same set of open-ended questions in an attempt to identify the underlying elements and assumptions

that they held on the notion of commitment at work.

Three main issues were pursued in all cases, with the interviewees being asked to: (i) define what they understood by the term 'organisational commitment' within a work context, (ii) describe what leads to an increase in 'demand-side commitment' (ODC) and (iii) describe what leads to the withdrawal of ODC. In addition to these three specific issues, the interviewees were encouraged to talk generally about commitment, such as the importance attached to it and how it influenced them. Each interview was recorded and lasted up to 30 minutes, during which time the interviewees were prompted by reference to a preconceived list of open-ended and leading questions. Every interview was transcribed so as to provide a summary of its content. Thus, possible determinants of ODC and their impacts could be identified.

Since the data obtained from the exploratory study yielded a substantial and rich source of information on the practical concept of commitment at work within a Taiwanese context, it was decided that in order to avoid potential confusion, the analysis should involve two stages, concentrating first of all on identifying comments directly relating to the characteristics of situations that apparently lead to the formation or destruction of commitment; this would be achieved by scrutinising the responses to the three central issues referred to above.

The second stage would involve the evaluation of a number of additional

comments and observations from the remainder of the interviews in order to identify any further information that might conceivably add to the list of determinants, or enrich those dimensions that had already been identified. In all cases, the remarks concerning the perceptions of individuals on the development or withdrawal of commitment were recorded under headings pertaining to the three hierarchical levels examined in this thesis; this was carried out in order to establish any differences between the concepts of ODC and ESC.

The analysis of the content of the data was then undertaken with responses from each interview being appropriately recorded under each hierarchical heading. These remarks were used to identify categories representing possible determinants of commitment; in such a way, despite being familiar with the concepts recognised within the literature, an attempt would be made to avoid any preconceived notions on the determinants of commitment. Nevertheless, as will become evident, once collated, the comments did reflect many of the themes already identified.

According to Krippendorff (2004), the use of content analysis should, in principle, be based on the ability to provide validation of the content, which in turn helps to prevent analysts from pursuing research questions which allow no empirical validation, or which yield results with no backing (apart from the authority of the researcher). The analysis of the content of the data in this study identified many

different statements concerning the definition of commitment, all of which seemed to reflect the concepts discussed in Chapter 2; that is, interviewees referred to such concepts as mutual trust, pledges and promises with regard to certain criteria of commitment. Commitment was also identified as expectations and beliefs with regard to certain attributes.

A summary of the statements regarding the definitions of organisational commitment is provided in Table 3-1, from which we can see that although there were many similarities between senior HR managers, line managers and workers with regard to the interpretations of the definitions of organisational commitment, there were also some dissimilarities. These dissimilarities may have arisen from the fact that the perspectives and positions held by employees in the three hierarchical levels within an organisation can differ quite markedly.

This echoes the basic tenet of the initial hypothesis established in this thesis, that the perspectives and factors for consideration in the analysis of ODC will not necessarily be the same as those for the analysis of ESC; that is, based upon the definitions provided in Table 3-1, we can infer that both ODC and ESC can coexist within an organisation, or to put it another way, ODC is one thing and ESC is another. Nevertheless, we know from the literature review that ODC has scarcely been explored, whilst traditional supply-side commitment (ESC) has multi-

dimensional implications (as shown in Appendix 1).

Table 3-1 Definitions of Organisational Commitment

Commitment Factors	Definitions
Panel A: Senior HR Managers	
Identity	<p>A belief that the organisation is the best amongst all similar organisations; a mindset of belonging to the organisation; regarding the organisation as one's own home; a belief that it was absolutely the right decision to work in this organisation; and a willingness to put in extra effort to help the organisation achieve success.</p> <p>Furthering overall identity with the goals and values of the organisation; performing one's role well; continuing to work for the organisation until retirement; a readiness to embrace whatever arrangements the organisation puts in place; and belief in all of the decisions made by the organisation.</p> <p>Showing obedience to, and compliance with, the organisation's policy-making, position transfers and office locale; acting in accordance with the stipulations of the organisation and instructions from superiors; showing loyalty to the organisation even during periods of emergency; and never doing anything to betray the organisation.</p> <p>Enhancing employee confidence in the organisation; striving for as many benefits as possible for the organisation.</p> <p>Sparing no effort to ensure that customers continue to favor this organisation.</p>
Turnover	<p>A willingness to stay with the organisation.</p> <p>Encouraging talented employees to remain with the organisation.</p> <p>Being the least likely to leave the organisation to work for an alternative organisation, even though there may be better work opportunities.</p>
Panel B: Line Managers	
Identity	<p>Identifying with the leadership of one's superiors; showing loyalty to the organisation; a willingness to do whatever tasked with by the organisation; a willingness to bring one's own abilities into full play; a willingness to put in extra effort to help the organisation achieve success; and showing great concern for the future of the organisation.</p> <p>A feeling of being fortunate to work with this organisation; taking pride in working for the organisation; and a willingness to continue working for the organisation even through periods of worsening working conditions.</p> <p>Acting in accordance with the stipulations of the organisation and instructions from superiors; enhancing confidence in the organisation amongst employees; and guiding subordinates to accomplish goals.</p> <p>Quietly adhering to one's personal role, neither acting without authorisation nor transgressing the bounds of correctness.</p>
Turnover	<p>A willingness to stay with the organisation.</p>
Panel C: Workers	
Identity	<p>Acting in accordance with the stipulations of the organisation and instructions from superiors; carrying out one's job to the best of one's ability, but commensurate with the salary rate; reluctance to comply with whatever arrangements the organisation makes.</p>

Table 3-1 (Contd.)

Commitment Factors	Definitions
Panel C: Workers (Contd.)	
Turnover	A willingness to stay with the organisation as opposed to actively looking for an alternative job.

The research focus in this thesis is placed upon ODC, with the primary aim of taking an initial step in the direction of defining the relationships that exist between ODC and traditional ESC. The reason for using senior HR managers, line managers and workers as the subjects of the exploratory study undertaken in this thesis is further explained below in order to illustrate not only that ODC really does exist within an organisation, but that it is also an essential element in the overall management of employees.

1. *The Perspective of Senior HR Managers*

Given that the positions held by senior HR managers are very close to the core of power within an organisation, they essentially need to have the organisation's perspective and demands within their own core; that is, in principle, they must show a high level of commitment to the organisation, although exceptions may sometimes occur.

2. *The Perspective of Line Managers*

Line managers play an intermediary role between senior managers and

subordinates, shouldering the responsibility of being a mediator with regard to communication and coordination between the organisation and employees at the lower echelons. They therefore have a greater understanding of, and identity with, the enactment of the organisation's policies and practices, as well as the demands placed upon individual employees by the organisation. They are also under some obligation to set a good example to their subordinates, and as such, may ostensibly show higher commitment to the organisation.

3. *The Perspective of Workers*

Salaries or wages are the main source of the family livelihood or family economy for workers, and as such, the behaviour at work exhibited by certain workers can often reflect the remuneration that they receive; that is, they will do what they are supposed to do, carrying out their job according to the rules or 'standard operating procedures' (SOPs) stipulated by the organisation, and may not always be willing to put in extra effort. In other words, their primary consideration may be their personal interests. They are invariably obedient, behaving themselves and abiding by company regulations, although they may not hesitate to change jobs on those occasions when a good opportunity knocks on their door.

In short, it follows from Table 3-1 that, irrespective of whether there are similarities or dissimilarities between the definitions of organisational commitment

perceived by senior HR managers, line managers and workers, the similarities or dissimilarities have much to do with ‘identity’, ‘turnover’ and ‘position characteristics’. These factors therefore serve as key factors in the operational definition of ODC carried out in this thesis, based upon which, the relationships between ODC and each of the position characteristics, along with the impacts of the position characteristics on ODC, are further examined and analyzed.

According to the interviews presented in “Exploratory Research”, the author regarded ‘the organization (employer) expectations of employees’ intent to stay’ as ‘turnover’ in this thesis.

Questions referring to the reasons behind the creation of ODC, or an increase in it, as well as the reasons for the withdrawal of ODC, provide a much richer source of information on the similarities or dissimilarities between ODC and ESC at different hierarchical levels. Summaries of the interviewee statements are provided in Tables 3-2 and 3-3, with Table 3-2 revealing that an increase in ODC within an organisation has much to do with the position characteristics of individual employees.

Table 3-2 Factors Leading to an Increase in ODC

Factors	Definitions
Panel A: Senior HR Managers	
Authority	<p>Having considerable autonomy, such that it is difficult for the organisation to regain control; and having so much authority that if he/she were to betray the organisation, it could suffer significant losses (AA1).</p> <p>Being extremely influential in terms of the goals and the future development of the organisation (AA2).</p> <p>Having the ability to affect decision making within the organisation (AA3); having the power to make decisions on personnel and recruitment, and to determine how the funds of the organisation are allocated or managed (AA4).</p>
Complexity	<p>A requirement to coordinate with many other departments within the organisation; and being able to communicate with, or maintain coordination with, both superiors and subordinates (AC1).</p> <p>Being good at communicating with other departments of horizontal grade (AC2).</p> <p>The ability of this position holder to accomplish tasks has tremendous impacts on other departments in the organisation or on other organisations (AC3).</p> <p>Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are passed on to various other units or position holders who then take over and continue handling the jobs already completed by this position holder (AC4).</p> <p>Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are of considerable importance to other units or positions (AC5).</p> <p>Being equipped with extremely complex and sophisticated skills and expertise enable this position holder to successfully complete their allotted tasks (AC6).</p> <p>This position holder often encounters problems that are quite diverse in nature (AC7).</p>
Variation	<p>This position holder often has to deal with unexpected situations and satisfactorily solve them in a very short period of time (AV1).</p> <p>This position holder has the ability to provide solutions requiring professional training, none of which is provided by the organisation (AV2).</p> <p>This position holder has to find the appropriate answers to the same problems with numerous alternative solutions (AV3).</p>
Sensitivity	<p>If this position holder were to betray the organisation for personal interests, the organisation would be likely to suffer considerable loss (AS1).</p> <p>This position holder is always the first to become aware of major organisational decision-making, such as major engineering programs and contracts, the reshuffling of personnel, layoffs or salary reductions (AS2).</p>
Formalisation	<p>This position holder is not subjected to authorised systems or rules (AF1).</p> <p>The characteristics or job contents of this position holder can be adjusted; even the title of the position can be randomly adjusted (AF2).</p>
Exclusivity of Skills	<p>This position holder, who possesses such exclusive work skills (AE1), would not be easily replaced from within the HR market (AE2).</p>

Table 3-2 (Contd.)

Factors	Definitions
Panel B: Line Managers	
Authority	This position holder has considerable decision-making power, and the power to directly report to high-ranking superiors (BA1).
Complexity	This position requires the fulfillment of very difficult and complicated tasks (BC1).
Variation	This position holder is capable of nimbly and flexibly dealing with the demands of customers whilst simultaneously ensuring customer satisfaction (BV1).
Sensitivity	This position holder has access to first-hand information or inside stories on the organisation. What this position says and does always arouses deep interest (BS1).
Formalisation	This position holder does not necessarily need to carry out his/her role according to their job description or the rules stipulated by the organisation (BF1).
Exclusivity of Skills	It takes a considerable period of time and abundant work experience to obtain the work skills already possessed by this position holder (BE1).
Panel C: Workers	
Authority	This position holder receives greater empowerment from his/her supervisor (CA1). This position holder is authorised to make expedient decisions in urgent matters (CA2). This position holder partakes in organisational decision making (CA3).
Complexity	This position holder is able to communicate and coordinate with many other departments in the organisation, including both superiors and subordinates (CC1). This position holder is good at communicating with other departments of horizontal grade (CC2). Whether this position holder can accomplish his/her tasks has enormous impacts on other departments in the organisation or on other organisations (CC3). Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are of considerable importance to other units or positions (CC4).
Variation	This position holder possesses the ability to deal with all unexpected situations (CV1).
Sensitivity	This position holder is entrusted with many of the organisation's confidential documents or information; if he/she were to betray the organisation, it would be likely to suffer considerable losses (CS1). This position holder is well aware of who the key men are within the organisation, within a specific department or amongst the organisation's customers, and hence, is always on good terms with such key men (CS2).
Formalisation	This position holder does not necessarily need to carry out his/her job in accordance with the organisation's regulations or SOPs (CF1). This position holder is able to voice his/her opinion to senior managers without the need to pursue matters through formal channels (CF2).
Exclusivity of Skills	This position holder possesses work skills which are extremely difficult to describe, either in spoken language or written form (CE1).

Table 3-3 also reveals that the withdrawal of ODC has much to do with some of

the position characteristics of individual employees.

Table 3-3 Factors Leading to the Withdrawal of ODC

Factors	Definitions
Panel A: Senior HR Managers	
Authority	As a result of over-commitment, the workplace performance of this position holder may result in infringements which cannot be tolerated by the organisation.
Formalisation	This position holder performs his/her duties at work only in accordance with the existing rules and SOPs stipulated by the organisation and fails to deal with unexpected situations. This position holder is unwilling to be flexible for the benefit of the organisation.
Others	The organisation may lay off some of its employees. The organisation may wind up its business. The organisation may become involved in a merger.
Panel B: Line Managers	
Authority	As a result of over-commitment, the workplace performance of this position holder may result in infringements which cannot be tolerated by the organisation.
Formalisation	This position holder performs his/her duties at work only in accordance with the existing rules and SOPs stipulated by the organisation and fails to deal with unexpected situations.
Others	The organisation may lay off some of its employees. The organisation may wind up its business. The organisation may become involved in a merger.
Panel C: Workers	
Authority	The workplace performance of this position holder may result in infringements which cannot be tolerated by the organisation.
Formalisation	This position holder always sticks to conventions, and never shows any intention of making positive changes.
Others	The organisation may become involved in downsizing; the organisation may lay off some of its employees.

From the characteristics presented in Tables 3-2 and 3-3, it may be inferred that the increase or withdrawal of ODC not only has much to do with the characteristics of specific positions, but also indicates a good fit between ODC and ESC. Taking the characteristic of ‘authority’ as an example, a higher or lower level of authority may influence an increase in ODC, or the withdrawal of ODC, which in turn

highlights the fact that the establishment of the hypotheses in this thesis is based upon the relationships between ODC and the position characteristics.

3.2.2 Issues

This sub-section describes Issues 1 to 6, each of which is based on an illustrative case (as shown in Appendix 2) referring to the four Taiwan-based firms which provided their consent to the interviews carried out in this study. Based on the contents of these interviews, the impacts on ODC arising from the power-dependence exchange and the position structure characteristics are duly highlighted. Each of the six position structure characteristics, authority, complexity, variation, sensitivity, formalisation and exclusivity of skills are illustrated in the following practical cases, with the first of these cases, Issue 1, highlighting the relationship between a high level of ESC and a high level of ODC.

Issue 1 – Assistant Manager in Company A

The Assistant Manager in Company A is in a position of very strong authority and power; indeed, his power can at times actually exceed that of the two designated senior positions, Assistant Managing Director and General Manager. Not only is he able to dominate most of the company's resources (authority) but he can exert significant influence on the decision making within the company, and also has more contingent authority (variation). As a result of his direct access to the core of power,

he acts as a conduit between superiors and subordinates, as a result of which the company is obliged to recognise and honour whatever he promises. He is responsible for handling such sensitive matters as land purchase, major project planning and lobbying with people outside the company (sensitivity).

To summarise, the Assistant Manager in Company A is entrusted with considerable responsibility, with his higher office in the company providing him with an extremely wide range of jurisdiction. He is inevitably involved in a variety of roles, many of which are characterised by considerable complexity. He often has to deal with problems that are not only confusing, but also very difficult to solve. His official duties are far too complex, changeable and immeasurable for the company to be able to monitor and control him. He is the key resource in the company, and as a result, the company holds him in high esteem. Put simply, his continuing good fortune and popularity within the company are of paramount importance because his contribution to the company is essentially irreplaceable.

From the standpoint of the company, he simply has to meet its basic demands, and indeed, the company feels assured that he does so. He can neither usurp power by holding the boss to ransom or acting in his name, nor rely on the devotion and indulgence of his boss to become a total 'insider'. Clearly, he must not engage in insider trading, embezzlement or collusion with colleagues to betray the organisation;

that is to say, he has to ensure that no such situation ever comes about, otherwise, he may become unmanageable and a major threat to the company head who would be in fear of him emerging even stronger than before.

It seems clear that the Assistant Manager has so far done his utmost to fulfill the duties falling upon him through his dual roles, and as a result, Company A is totally satisfied with him and feels assured that he has the success of the company in mind. Thus, both the Assistant Manager and Company A would wish to see the status quo being maintained. More details on this case are provided in Appendix 2, Illustrative Case 1: Company A.

Based upon what has been presented here, it is evident that Issue 1 provides support for organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) within the company, with the following aspects serving as concrete and logical explanations. As shown in Issue 1, the position held by the Assistant Manager in Company A suggests that there is the presence of position structure characteristics including ‘authority’, ‘variation’, ‘sensitivity’ and ‘complexity’, with one additional factor, his irreplaceable position in the company.

The organisation is clearly taking good care of him by offering him every possible inducement that may be of benefit to him in exchange for his valuable contribution to the company, as this is clearly evident from the interdependence and

mutual satisfaction existing between the Assistant Manager (the position holder) and Company A. This is made possible by the mutual balance between ESC and ODC. In short, loyalty to the company, placing significant effort into it and the desire to remain are the primary factors demanded by Company A from its Assistant Manager.

An additional research direction for the pilot study in this thesis was to explore and discuss any possible adjustable and regulatory strategies that the organisation might employ in order to deal with, and respond to, the points raised by Issue 1. As regards the level of commitment in Issue 1 (high-level ESC versus high-level ODC), an obvious adjustable and regulatory strategy to be employed by the organisation would be one aimed at maintaining the status quo, essentially because the relationships existing between the organisation and the position holder that are attributable to ODC, in specific terms of coordination, control and dependence, have reached an optimal balanced state (Yin = Yang). Furthermore, in such a situation, any problems of uncertainty are likely to disappear naturally. In conclusion, Issue 1 points toward the functioning of ODC.

The following sub-section presents the practical case of the relationship between a low level of ESC and a high level of ODC, referred to as Issue 2.

Issue 2 – Chef in Company A

The position of Chef in Company A is one of the key positions, and as such, Company A cannot really afford to offend the position holder for a number of

reasons, including: (i) an excellent chef is invariably highly sought after and difficult to find (exclusivity of skills); (ii) only by luring a chef away from another restaurant can a restaurant boast that it has a pre-eminent chef; (iii) a chef cannot possibly achieve the necessary professional and culinary skills in a short period of time; thus, a position holder will invariably have been training in their particular field for more than ten years (complexity); (iv) a chef's role involves a combination of cooking skills, experience and intuition; therefore, the role is very difficult to measure or to define in written words (exclusivity of skills); (v) it is clearly quite difficult for a restaurant to have any control over the skills of its chef or to determine the staying or leaving intentions of the position holder (uncertainty); (vi) in order to attract considerable numbers of gourmet diners to frequent a restaurant or hotel, a chef is required to prepare a variety of delicacies capable of attracting such customers; thus, any lack of imagination in the cuisine served by the restaurant would inevitably lead to boredom and dissatisfaction (variation); and (vii) in order to cater to customers of different cultures, and indeed religions, the chef is also required to cope with the likes and dislikes, or food taboos, of different ethnic groups; thus, a chef must be able to satisfy all kinds of customers (variation).

For the abovementioned reasons, a restaurant has to utilise tangible objects in exchange for the skills of its chef, and indeed, such is the dependence of Company A

on its chef that it avoids offending the chef at all costs so as to ensure that he remains in the job. Thus, as far as possible, Company A consistently demonstrates the intention of appeasing the chef, and by so doing, ensures that the chef embraces psychological and lifelong dependence on Company A. The company may therefore feel assured that its chef has no reason to display any turnover intentions. More details on this case are presented in Appendix 2, Illustrative Case 1.

The above case, presented here as Issue 2, points toward the functioning of ODC, with the following serving as concrete and logical explanations. The role of a chef is very difficult to measure or to define in written words (complexity, variation, exclusivity of skills). It is also rather difficult for a restaurant to maintain any control over the skills of its chef or to determine whether the position holder will leave or remain with the organisation (uncertainty). Given the company's level of dependence on its chef, in terms of the overall daily operation of the restaurant and the maintenance of its customer base, Company A has to strike a balance between the supply and demand of commitment simply by avoiding offending its chef and realising that it cannot expect too much effort from the chef to enhance his original low ESC. Surprisingly, the company can tolerate the low commitment of its chef, and indeed, has offered some inducements of benefit to him, such as a salary raise and additional bonuses. Issue 2 therefore points toward the functioning of ODC.

A further additional research direction for the pilot study in this thesis was to explore and discuss what possible adjustable and regulatory strategy the organisation may employ in order to deal with, and respond to, the points raised by Issue 2. As regards the level of commitment in Issue 2, where ESC fails to meet ODC (an imbalance between the two, i.e., low-level ESC versus high-level ODC), the possible adjustable and regulatory strategies which the organisation may choose to employ are as follows:

1. *Demotion Strategy*

The organisation could choose to demote the position holder concerned to a lower post, thereby reducing the imbalance in commitment, and restoring the state of equilibrium. In other words, to the relief of the organisation, there would be no more worry about this position holder.

2. *Boost Strategy*

The organisation may adjust and regulate an employee in order to ensure that he carries out his commitment in a more positive way; thus, by imposing ODC to increase his supply-side commitment, the organisation can ensure that ESC and ODC are aligned, thereby restoring the balance. Indeed, this is a commonplace phenomenon in any organisation; however, the reasons behind such a phenomenon, as well as the possible adjustable and regulatory

mechanisms, have rarely been studied.

Issue 2 indicates that the organisation still cannot be assured of the commitment of this particular employee essentially because uncertainty still exists within the organisation with regard to this position holder, in terms of its coordination with, control of and dependence on him. Once it is clear that the gap between ESC and ODC is becoming increasingly greater, the organisation has to consider taking one or the other of the abovementioned adjustable and regulatory strategies.

The current situation regarding the Chef of Company A, presented here as Issue 2, was identified based upon interviews with the Senior HR Manager of the position holder. Company A has so far been unable to find a suitable person to replace its chef, so it has no real option but to employ a 'boost' strategy to placate and ingratiate the chef in order to induce him to inject a higher level of ESC, thereby reducing the gap between supply and demand commitment.

The following sub-section presents a practical case on the relationship between a low level of ESC and a high level of ODC, referred to as Issue 3.

Issue 3 – Finance Manager in Company B

Company B is a private members' club in which there has been very little progression; unfortunately, however, in addition to this undesirable situation are the problems of complexity and variation arising from most of the positions in this company.

Company B lacks the capacity to produce specific procedures and regulations for its employees to follow and obey (lack of formalisation); indeed, it has demonstrated that it is not even capable of imposing restraints or restrictions upon its employees. Under such circumstances, its sole and final resort is reliance upon the cohesion and loyalty of its employees to the company. Fortunately, the ability of its employees to self-manage their roles has so far demonstrated to be quite fruitful.

Company B has stood firm in running its business; however, other companies in the same business have been able to emulate the business, and as a result, have succeeded not only in luring away its employees on a large scale by making handsome offers, but also in gathering correlated information. Indeed, the company's competitors have gone to the extent of spending large sums of money to acquire appropriate knowledge on business management. The practice of luring employees away is commonplace amongst companies in the same business, and indeed, in the case of Company B, such luring away of its employees by other companies has demonstrated to be well beyond its control.

The company's lack of any solution to this problem has also increased its level of uncertainty; however, Company B eventually came up with an appropriate solution to the problem, which was to offer its employees more material exchanges in addition to trying every possible means to make its employees embrace the desire

to remain. By so doing, its employees should become easier to control and they would therefore have no desire to leave the company or to betray it.

The Finance Manager in a private members' club, such as Company B, plays a vital role, and is obviously authorised to wield considerable power (authority). He is at the top of the business value chain, with every department of the company having to cooperate with him, and he also has control over a wide range of affairs, such as membership fees, the buying and selling of land, tax-related affairs, and so on (complexity).

As a result of all of these factors, this company has no option but to place considerable dependence on its Finance Manager, so much so that it is in constant fear that he may one day cease to respect his work or even defect (sensitivity). However, once it became clear that the finance manager had colluded with the sales manager to launch a new bonus system and marketing promotion to feather his own nest, Company B was left with no choice but to reduce his authorised power, impose stricter surveillance on him and demand a greater level of commitment from him. More details on this case are provided in Appendix 2: Illustrative Case 2.

Our examination of Issue 3 once again highlights the functioning of ODC, with the following serving as concrete and logical explanations. Being a new company within an emerging industry, Company B clearly has high expectations of its

individual employees, and hopes that by exercising ODC, all of these employees will choose to inject considerable levels of ESC into the organisation.

The finance manager in any members' club, such as Company B, plays a vital role, and is equipped with substantial authority, complexity and sensitivity; however, the management of commitment by Company B is not fixed or unchangeable. Thus, when it became clear that the finance manager had colluded with the sales manager, Company B had no choice but to reduce his authorised power, impose stricter surveillance upon him and reduce their expectations of him. Indeed, in any other organisational culture, there would have been a considerable likelihood of him losing his job. In conclusion, Issue 3 points toward the functioning of ODC.

A further additional research direction for the pilot study in this thesis was to explore and discuss what possible adjustable and regulatory strategies the organisation might employ in order to deal with, and respond to, the points raised by Issue 3. As regards the level of commitment, with ESC failing to meet ODC, there is a clear imbalance between ESC and ODC (low-level ESC versus high-level ODC); thus, the organisation could choose to adopt the following adjustable and regulatory strategies.

1. *Demotion Strategy*

The organisation may choose to demote the position holder to a lower post;

thus, the imbalance in commitment would be reduced and a balanced state restored. In other words, to the relief of the organisation, there would be no further worry about this particular position holder.

2. Boost Strategy

An organisation may choose to adjust and regulate any of their employees in order to encourage them to inject commitment in a more positive way; for example, by exercising ODC in order to increase the finance manager's ESC, the organisation could ensure that the state of balance was restored.

The following sub-section presents a practical case on the relationship between a high level of ESC and a high level of ODC, referred to as Issue 4.

Issue 4 – The General Manager of Company C

As a result of the sensitive content of his official duties, the General Manager of Company C deals with the subjects of newspapers and magazines, and needs to think about and consider the needs of people of all walks of life. The main reason for this is that most of the customers and clients of Company C are people renowned for their fame and prestige. As required by his working environment, he has to attend to, or deal with, celebrities or dignitaries in business and political circles, and may even have to cater to the needs of some of the real heavyweights in officialdom (complexity).

Therefore, first and foremost in his mind is maintaining the confidentiality of

the personal data of these clients; this also serves as an essential element in ensuring the honorable satisfaction of customers, given that there are always people who are willing to spend considerable sums of money to acquire such information (sensitivity). Furthermore, he has to deal with sudden and unexpected situations or occurrences which may arise, issues on which he is unable to gain assistance from anyone in the headquarters (variation). For example, if there happened to be a protest from a non-government organisation (NGO), he may receive a telephone call from an assistant of a certain legislator inquiring about the consumer data on certain VIP customers, or even further, notification of action to be taken by government security institutions to have some sections of the club inspected.

The daily management and decision-making within the club also fall upon him (authority), and with the passage of time, his goals and ideals have already come into line with those of the company; that is, both parties are heavily reliant upon mutual trust and encouragement. Based upon the daily circumstances that he encounters, as opposed to worrying about whether or not he is dependable or ways in which the company might impose limits or restraints upon him, the company needs to be fully assured that he can be entrusted with this vital position. More details on this case are provided in Appendix 2: Illustrative Case 3.

The case of Issue 4 again highlights the functioning of ODC, with the following

serving as concrete and logical explanations. The official duties of the General Manager of Company C involve characteristics of sensitivity, complexity, variation and authority, with the constant existence of a tacit understanding between him and the company. Consequently, there is no requirement for the company to exercise its demand-side commitment by imposing excessive rules or restraints upon him.

The General Manager has never been found to have transgressed or exceeded the bounds of correctness; and indeed, the more respect he receives, the more care he takes about his words and deeds, such that mutual trust and dependence is what both he and the company rely upon. The obvious conclusion is that the company cannot operate without him, and that he also cannot do without the company. His ESC satisfactorily meets ODC, such that a particular saying comes to mind, “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” (that is, if something is working perfectly well, then there is no need to try to change anything).

A further additional research direction for the pilot study in this thesis was to explore and discuss what possible adjustable and regulatory strategies the organisation might employ in order to deal with, and respond to, the points raised by Issue 4. It is clear that this issue provides another example of the commitment examined in Issue 1 (high-level ESC versus high-level ODC); that is, the commitment supplied by the employee satisfactorily meets the commitment

demanded by the organisation. Thus, the most obvious adjustable and regulatory strategy to be employed by the organisation is to maintain the status quo (maintenance strategy).

The relationship between the organisation and the position holder, in terms of coordination, control and dependence, all of which are attributable to ODC, has reached a state of balance. Furthermore, any problem of uncertainty that may have initially existed is likely to have disappeared naturally. In short, the commitment referred to in Issues 1 and 4 (high-level balance between ESC and ODC) is shown to factually exist; thus, Issue 4 points toward the functioning of ODC.

The following sub-section presents a practical case on the relationship between an over-committed level of ESC and a low level of ODC, referred to as Issue 5.

Issue 5 – Customer Service Attendant in Company D

One of the customer service attendants in Company D is clearly full of enthusiasm and always very keen to make a contribution to the company. He rarely acts in accordance with SOPs (formalisation), but instead, has his own way of improving situations, which often leads to customers having excessive expectations. In cases where he is ‘at the scene’ and a complaint arises from a customer, he invariably elects to handle the complaint, but in a rather hasty way. By so doing, he is actually disregarding SOPs, one of which states that: “In the case of a customer complaint, a

customer service attendant can do nothing but stay at the scene where the complaint case occurs, wait for the executive at the scene, and then hand the case over for the executive to deal with.”

Although it is clear that this customer service attendant can sometimes handle such complaint cases quite successfully, he can also cause discord in the standard of services provided, thereby leading to disturbance to other customer service attendants working on the scene. During the time when he was still a newcomer in the company, his indiscipline, essentially attributable to over-eagerness, was tolerable; however, with the passage of time, and having become familiar with the working environment, this customer service attendant began voicing his opinions on various affairs (authority). His attitude and behavior were already beyond the proper functioning of the position, and this was now causing annoyance to those in his service unit.

When questioned, he would defend himself by saying that everything that he did was for the good of the company, and that he had no regrets for his actions. Eventually, his service unit had no choice but to have him transferred to the training center where he was engaged in the design and development of official duties. As surprising as it may have been, the supply-side commitment exhibited by this customer service attendant corresponded exactly to that required of this position, and his work performance soon stabilised. For two years, he has been zealously working

at the training center, and his supervisor is now very satisfied with him. More details on this case are provided in Appendix 2: Illustrative Case 4.

Based upon our examination of Issue 5, it is clear that the customer service attendant in Company D now conforms with the company's ODC, with the following serving as a concrete and logical explanation. It is quite obvious that this customer service attendant was extremely over-committed, such that his over-committed ESC was already far beyond the ODC expected of him, which actually created something of a headache for Company D and led to disturbances in certain sections of the company; thus, Issue 5 again points toward the functioning of ODC.

A further additional research direction for the pilot study in this thesis was to explore and discuss what possible adjustable and regulatory strategies the organisation might employ in order to deal with, and respond to, the points raised in Issue 5. As regards the level of commitment involving an imbalance between ESC and ODC (over-committed ESC far beyond ODC), possible adjustable and regulatory strategies to be employed by the organisation are as follows:

1. *A Seemingly Position-promoting yet Practically Power-curtailing Strategy*

An organisation can either choose to enhance and expand the work content required of a specific position holder or transfer the person to another position requiring a higher degree of ODC. By so doing, the organisation can ensure that

ESC is brought into line with ODC, such that the state of balance is restored.

This kind of strategy works best when there is an alternative job vacancy or job transfer available.

2. *Suppression Strategy*

An organisation can adjust and regulate the ESC of an employee in a reverse way, for example, by exercising higher ODC. In such a way, the organisation can ensure that ESC is in line with ODC, thereby restoring the state of balance.

Some concrete methods which an organisation can adopt to reduce the ESC of certain employees are: (i) lowering their levels of job autonomy, job feedback, job importance and job completeness; (ii) cutting off the information sources contributing to their presumptuous behavior; (iii) limiting their opportunities for disobeying or defying the organisation, and reducing their potential influence on other employees; (iv) avoiding the impression of being considerate of or sympathising with such position holders during the process of directing them; (v) maintaining stricter surveillance of the position holder.

The abovementioned methods can feasibly provide such position holders with ‘food for thought’ when considering shifting their organisational commitment to the work for which they are responsible. Clearly, when an employee goes too far, or even becomes incompetent, the organisation is sure to be on the alert and can then

take precautionary measures against this employee's abnormal deeds, imposing greater limits and restrictions on the position holder as a compensating adjustment measure (a measure to reduce this over-committed employee's ESC). This can effectively prevent the employee from causing further disturbance within certain sections of the organisation.

There is currently no evidence of this type of adjustment measure having been studied, and indeed, if an organisation does choose to adopt this type of strategy adjustment measure, it may achieve nothing more than serving a blow to the employee's high level of commitment. However, after weighing up the good and harm, or advantages and disadvantages, which such employees can create for a company, in a Taiwanese context, organisations still consider this to be a necessary measure. It is, therefore, regarded as being worthy of further study.

The following sub-section presents a practical case on the relationship between a low level of ESC and a low level of ODC, referred to as Issue 6.

Issue 6 – Customer Service Attendant in Company D

Another customer service attendant in Company D has been working in the company for over ten years, carrying out his routine work on weekdays (from Monday to Friday). He starts work at 9:00 a.m. and finishes at 5:00 p.m. He demonstrates no real concern with regard to the way that he performs his duties, but instead, upon his

arrival at work, he invariably wears earphones whilst cosily eating his breakfast. He would often then turn on his computer in order to view some exciting or sensational news reports about celebrities in the entertainment circle.

His e-mail server is never turned off, which means that he can continually share gossip with his co-workers or online friends, and now and then, he would engage in online group shopping, or discussions on where to eat lunch. He would often speak ill of both his supervisor and his boss behind their backs. Coffee and snacks that were ordered from the coffee shop or the bakery beforehand would appear at the desk at three o'clock sharp for his afternoon 'break'.

It has become general practice for him to clear away his personal belongings at 4:50 p.m., readying himself for his off duty time. Furthermore, since he has very high job seniority (in excess of ten years), he is allowed to take holidays on a fixed basis, and as an employee of Company D, can even enjoy preferential treatment whenever he stays at the company-owned hotel villa. On other occasions he would join a cheap package tour, thereby enjoying the privilege of taking annual pleasure trips abroad.

In the eyes of his supervisor, he is an employee who constantly abides by SOPs, and indeed, he would never actively engage in anything which was not stipulated in his work manual; thus, he does exactly the job that he is obliged to do. When encountering any customer who he finds hard to deal with, he will immediately

transfer the customer's call directly to his line manager. Since he never demonstrated any concern for the rights and interests of his customers, they would sometimes file complaint cases against him, yet despite all of this, he continued to survive within the company.

Possible reasons for his survival within the company may be: (i) the company does not consider him to be a trouble maker or a threat; (ii) it has low expectations of him; and (iii) he seldom makes any major errors or unforgivable blunders. Thus, there is actually no gap between the expectations of either the company or the position holder. As a result, the company has never considered letting him go.

From the perspective of the position holder himself, he is personally aware that he is not a competent employee and despite being rather overburdened with a family and a house loan, he has rarely considered leaving the job in his ten years of working within the company, and indeed, the company have not felt the need to offer any promotion or significant pay raise. Issue 6 reveals that Company D's expectations of ODC from this customer service attendant are very low, and that the position holder's ESC is similarly very low; neither the company nor the employee is eager to change the situation, such that they both appear content to maintain the status quo. Issue 6 therefore points toward the functioning of ODC.

A further additional research direction for the pilot study in this thesis was to

explore and discuss what possible adjustable and regulatory strategies the organisation might employ in order to deal with, and respond to, the points raised by Issue 6. As regards the level of commitment, which in this case involves a low level of ESC versus a low level of ODC, there is a balanced state between the two; therefore, a possible adjustable and regulatory strategy which the organisation might wish to employ would be to maintain the status quo (a maintenance strategy).

As a result, the relationships existing between the organisation and the position holder with regard to coordination, control and dependence have achieved a state of balance which is largely attributable to ODC. Furthermore, any problem of uncertainty is likely to have disappeared naturally over the years. This case therefore demonstrates a factual example of the existence of ‘low-level balance between ESC and ODC’; however, despite the relationship being far from perfect, there are no possible adjustable and regulatory strategies available since ESC and ODC are already in a balanced state, with the outcome being that Issue 6 again points toward the functioning of ODC.

A brief summary of Issues 1 to 6 is provided in Table 3-4 (below); this is followed by a discussion on the importance of finding the right balance between an organisation and its employees. As noted in the subsequent discussion, the need for such balance is clearly illustrated by the issues examined in this study.

Table 3-4 The Six Issues Examined in this Study

Issue	Company	Position	Key Position Characteristic Factors	Situation
1	A	Assistant Manager (line manager with dual roles)	Authority; Complexity; Variation; Sensitivity	High ODC vs. High ESC Equilibrium
2	A	Chef	Complexity; Variation; Exclusivity of Skills	High ODC vs. Low ESC Disequilibrium (Possible adjustable and regulatory strategy employed to balance between ODC and ESC)
3	B	Finance Manager	Authority; Complexity; Sensitivity	High ODC vs. Low ESC Disequilibrium (Possible adjustable and regulatory strategy employed to curtail the manager's power)
4	C	General Manager	Authority; Complexity; Variation; Sensitivity	High ODC vs. High ESC Equilibrium
5	D	Customer Service Attendant (staff member with dual roles)	Authority; Formalisation	Low ODC vs. High ESC Disequilibrium (Possible adjustable and regulatory strategy employed to reduce the attendant's excessive ESC)
6	D	Customer Service Attendant	Formalisation	Low ODC vs. Low ESC Equilibrium (Each takes what they need)

3.2.3 Discussion

Firstly, although both Issue 2 (the Chef in Company A) and Issue 3 (the Finance Manager in Company B) are characterised by $ODC > ESC$ (Yin>Yang), these two organisations employed different types of adjustable and regulatory strategies. The main reason for such difference may be that the position holder (the chef) in Company A was equipped with position characteristics of ‘complexity’, ‘variation’ and ‘exclusivity of skills’ of which Company A was in desperate need; that is, the

position of a chef is a position which has no readily available replacement, which confirms that a person with this kind of special talent is difficult to find in the HR market. Consequently, Company A was clearly willing to tolerate the low level of ESC exhibited by the chef, and were also prepared to offer many inducements and rewards in a clear attempt to encourage the chef to assume a 'desire to remain', such that he might ultimately exhibit a higher level of ESC.

As compared with the issue discussed above, despite the fact that $ODC > ESC$ is also exhibited in Issue 3, the actual situation is completely the reverse. The Finance Manager in Company B was similarly equipped with position characteristics of 'authority', 'sensitivity' and 'complexity'; however, an organisation is likely to have far less difficulty finding a person in the HR market to take on the position of a finance manager; that is, the position holder in a finance management role is nowhere near as irreplaceable as a chef. Thus, the strategy that was adopted by Company B to deal with the unacceptable antics of the Finance Manager (Issue 3) was to remain tolerant of the manager, albeit on a temporary basis; it seems clear that if an opportunity were to arise which would enable the company to replace the original finance manager with another desirable person, there can be little doubt that, sooner or later, the company would be prepared to do so.

The relationship that exists between Company A and its Assistant Manager is

best described as one in which ODC is successfully being met. Both Company A and the Assistant Manager are mutually satisfied with each other in terms of both attitude and behavior. From the perspective of the company, it can be assured that he carries out his duties well and is always trustworthy, whilst from the standpoint of the Assistant Manager, he is wholly dependent on the company and clearly loyal to it.

As a result, neither party has any intention of making any changes, but instead, both are happy to maintain the status quo; that is, both parties continue to bear in mind that they can continually share the joys and sorrows of the company, and even cast in their lot with each other. This situation exhibits one of harmony between Yin and Yang, which essentially arises from the organisational demand-side commitment (Yin) being successfully aligned with employee supply-side commitment (Yang) in a state of optimal equilibrium.

A similar situation is apparent from Issue 4 (the General Manager in Company C). The supply-side commitment of the General Manger is perfectly capable of meeting all of the demands of the organisation; therefore, neither has any intention of making any change. From the perspective of the company, having worked together and got along with the manager for a considerable period of time, it demonstrates perfect faith in him. Indeed, the company has never had any worries about entrusting its General Manager with such a sensitive and unmanageable

position, since he clearly and wholeheartedly entrusts his life career to the company.

The General Manager's stated work motto and criterion is: "to protect and to make contributions to the company as much as I can". He knows better than any other member of the company what constitutes appropriate ways of carrying out his role; that is, he does things appropriately with neither too little nor too much authority, never going beyond his recognised boundaries to take liberties in terms of reaching a decision he is not authorised to take.

The supply-side commitment of the General Manager and the company's demand-side commitment are, therefore, in a constant state of equilibrium, which leaves both parties very much at ease with each other. The result is that harmony between Yin and Yang is found to exist within this company; that is, a state of equilibrium between ODC and ESC has been achieved.

3.2.4 Summary of the Six Issues

Based upon the six practical cases presented at the start of this section, four model types of commitment are evolved from Figure 2-8 "The Growth and Decline of Yin and Yang" presented in Chapter Two and observed between organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) and employee supply-side commitment (ESC). These are as follows:

Commitment Type 1: High ODC = High ESC (Yin = Yang, a state of optimal equilibrium);

Commitment Type 2: Low ODC = Low ESC (Yin = Yang, a state of minimal equilibrium);

Commitment Type 3: ODC < ESC (Yin < Yang, a state of disequilibrium with low ODC versus over-committed ESC);

Commitment Type 4: ODC > ESC (Yin > Yang, a state of disequilibrium with high ODC versus low ESC).

An illustration of these four commitment types is provided in Figure 3-2. The X axis in the figure refers to organisational demand-side commitment (ODC), and the further this is towards the right, the higher the level of ODC. The Y axis in the figure refers to employee supply-side commitment (ESC), and the further this moves towards the upper area of the figure, the higher the level of ESC.

The four illustrative cases refer to the six issues examined earlier in this section, from which different levels of ODC and ESC were found to exist within the different position characteristics. Their interrelations are divided into the four boxes shown in Figure 3-2.

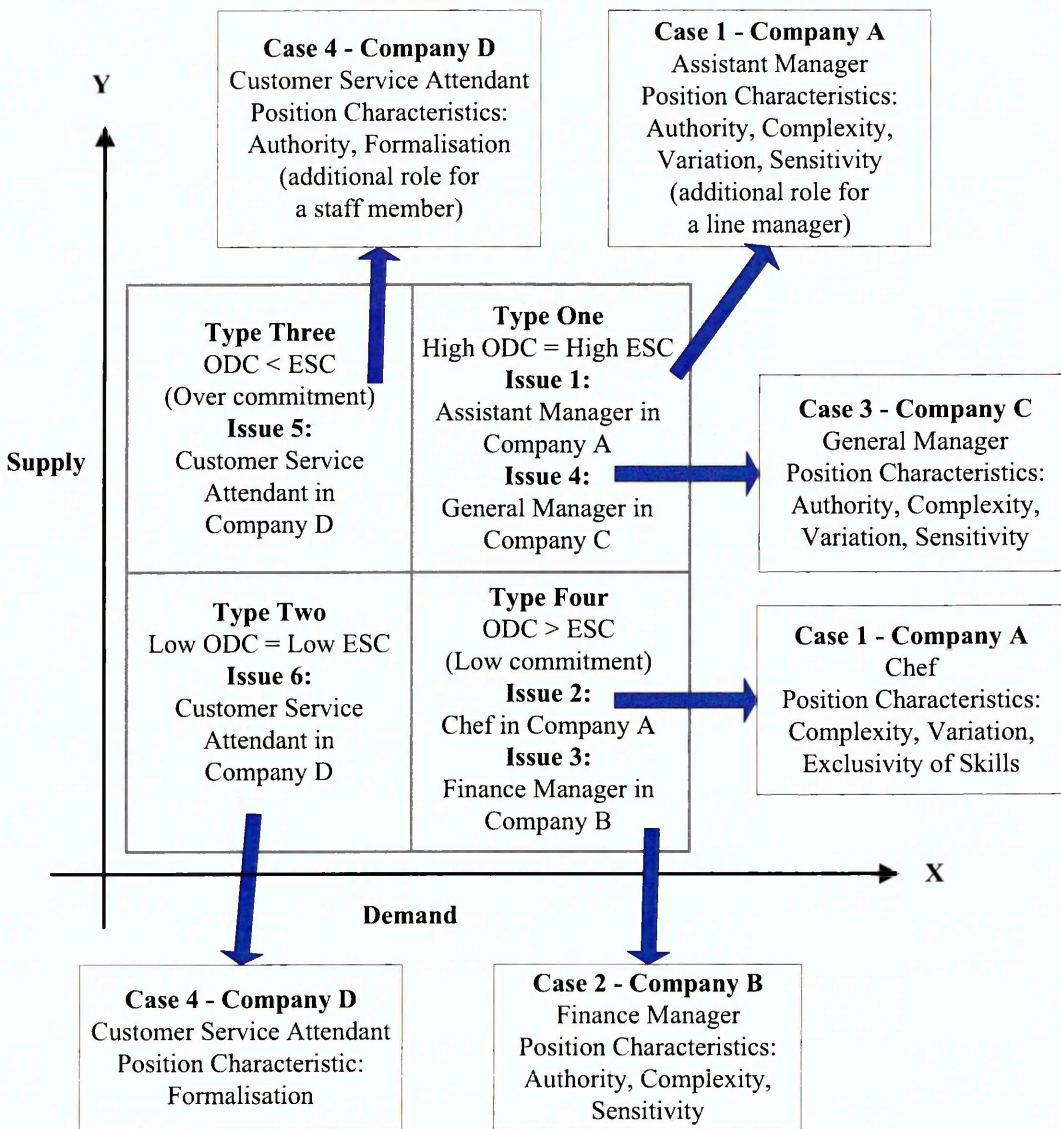


Figure 3-2 Different Model Types Arising from the Relationship between ODC and ESC

Source: Compiled by the author.

Illustrative Case 1

Issues 1 and 2 are both found to arise in Illustrative Case 1. As has been demonstrated in Issue 1, the position characteristics of the Assistant Manager of Company A involved 'authority', 'complexity', 'variation' and 'sensitivity'; thus, Company A would need to impose higher ODC on him. As regards the Assistant

Manager himself, he exhibited strong identity with the values and goals of Company A, and also demonstrated a strong desire to remain with the company, never sparing any effort for the continuing success of his company. Thus, Issue 1 comes under the classification of Commitment Type 1: 'High ODC = High ESC'.

In contrast, as shown in Issue 2, the position characteristics of the Chef of Company A involved 'complexity', 'variation' and 'exclusivity of skills'; as a result, despite the fact that Company A had a real desire to impose a high level of ODC on him, the chef himself showed a low desire to remain with the organisation, since he harbored an obvious desire to job-hop. Thus, Issue 2 comes under the classification of Commitment Type 4: 'ODC > ESC', with Company A continually showing its readiness to ingratiate the chef, trying every possible means to raise his level of ESC, or reduce its own level of ODC.

Illustrative Case 2

Issue 3 is presented in Illustrative Case 2, where the position characteristics of the Finance Manager of Company B involved 'authority', 'complexity' and 'sensitivity'; as a result, Company B would clearly have a desire to impose a higher level of ODC on him. However, the Finance Manager himself exhibited a low level of identity with the values and goals of Company B, and indeed, demonstrated a desire to take advantage of his position in order to 'feather his own nest'. Thus, Issue 3 comes

under the classification of Commitment Type 4: 'ODC > ESC'.

Given that the position characteristics of a finance manger involve 'authority', 'complexity' and 'sensitivity', Company B has a requirement for the person holding this position to conform to Commitment Type 1, where 'High ODC = High ESC'; therefore, an option which was open to Company B was to temporarily tolerate the attitude and behavior of its Finance Manager, but as soon as the company was able to identify a person capable of replacing him, there can be little doubt that Company B would be prepared to let him go.

Illustrative Case 3

As shown in Issue 4, the position characteristics of the General Manager of Company C involved 'authority', 'complexity', 'variation' and 'sensitivity'; as a result, Company C would need to impose a higher level of ODC on him. As regards the General Manager himself, he has a very strong identity with the values and goals of Company C, and also exhibits a strong desire to remain with the company, never sparing any effort for the continuing success of the company.

Issue 4 therefore comes under the classification of Commitment Type 1: 'High ODC = High ESC'. There is, however, a key point worth noting here; although Issues 1 and 4 are of the same type (Commitment Type 1: High ODC = High ESC), they differ somewhat from each another. As we have seen, despite being a line

manager, the Assistant Manager in Company A performs dual roles, and it is obvious that a single position holder playing more than one role clearly goes well beyond the ‘formal’ role that the position holder should be playing.

In the case of the Assistant Manager of Company A, as a result of his direct access to the core of power, in addition to being an Assistant Manager, he simultaneously plays the roles of Assistant Managing Director and General Manager; thus, based on his position characteristics, the Assistant Manager’s high level of ODC in Company A is closely linked to the high level of ESC which he provides to the organisation. It would clearly be a very pleasing situation for any organisation to find an employee who can perform multiple roles.

Illustrative Case 4

Both Issues 5 and 6 are involved in Illustrative Case 4. As revealed by Issue 5 (involving an over-committed employee) and Issue 6 (involving a low level of ESC), a high level of ESC provided by an employee may not always help them to secure their employment position, whilst employees with a low level of ESC may not necessarily lose their job; instead, what really matters is the organisation expectations from such employees. One example of such expectations relates to the position characteristic of ‘formalisation’. It is clear that one of the customer service attendants in Company D could be replaced at any time; thus, Company D would impose only low ODC on him;

thus, Issue 6 can be classified as Commitment Type 2: 'Low ODC = Low ESC'.

However, in the case of the other customer service attendant, he also had dual roles. In this case as a staff member, he had too much identity with the values and goals of Company D and also exhibited an extremely high desire to remain with the company, which in turn, led to him becoming 'over-committed'. In addition to carrying out his duties, this position holder continually advised other employees to be loyal to the company, to put in extra effort, to show their earnest desire to remain with the company, and so on.

The over-commitment to the organisation demonstrated by this customer service attendant became rather counterproductive; given that he was in a very low position, his superior attitude caused serious problems. Such being the case, Company D had no choice but to employ an appropriate adjustable and regulatory strategy in order to reduce his over-commitment to the company, in the hope that his ESC could eventually become aligned with the company's ODC. Thus, Issue 5 can be regarded as coming under the classification of Commitment Type 3: 'ODC < ESC.'

As shown in Issue 6, the customer service attendant position involved only one of the six position characteristics, 'formalisation', which indicates that the position holder could be replaced at any time; however, despite him being eminently replaceable, Company D demonstrated no intention of finding another person to

replace him because it could impose a low level of ODC on him. From the perspective of the customer service attendant himself, his strong identity with the values and goals of the company and his desire to remain with the company were perfectly acceptable. Thus, Issue 6 can be regarded as falling under Commitment Type 2, 'Low ODC = Low ESC'.

From the examination of Issues 1 to 6, as presented in Illustrative Cases 1 to 4, we can see that an organisation demands different levels of ODC from various position holders according to their different position characteristics. For certain employees with high levels of ODC, yet low levels of ESC, such as the chef in Company A and the finance manager in Company B, the organisation showed a willingness to offer several inducements to enhance their level of ESC. In contrast, however, for certain other employees with lower levels of ODC, yet over-committed ESC, such as the first customer service attendant in Company D, the organisation adopted a reverse adjustable and regulatory strategy involving 'suppression' in order to reduce this employee's excessive level of ESC. For an employee with both low ODC and low ESC, such as the other customer service attendant in Company D, the organisation chose not to dismiss him, essentially because he demonstrated a balanced level of commitment. The examples in the cases presented above represent just a few of the typical positions within an organisation. Similar conditions may

inevitably occur in many other positions.

3.2.5 Description of the Four Commitment Model Types

Type 1: High ESC versus High ODC

Issue 1, involving the relationship between Company A and its Assistant Manager, falls into Type 1, indicating the existence of an optimal state of equilibrium, with both parties complementing each other and being assured of each other's commitment. Issue 4, involving the relationship between Company C and its General Manager, also falls into this type, indicating the existence of an optimal state of equilibrium, with both parties again complementing each other and being assured of each other's commitment.

Type 2: Low ESC versus Low ODC

Issue 6, involving the relationship between Company D and one of its customer service attendants falls into Type 2, where a low level of ESC is aligned with a low level of ODC. These types of relationships, which are often seen in practical daily affairs, can be described as the organisation and the employee being at peace with each other and each taking what they need. Although this kind of relationship is not a perfectly satisfactory situation, both consider it acceptable since they are able to coexist whilst meeting their obligations.

Type 3: Excessive ESC failing to meet ODC

Issue 5, involving the relationship between Company D and the other customer

service attendant falls into this type, where an employee demonstrates considerable over-commitment. Although this type of person may be a staunch employee of the company and may consistently defend their company, they often fail to fit in with their organisation expectations of them, and if they cannot adapt themselves to their circumstances, they are bound to cause disturbance within the organisation.

Such a situation may become increasingly serious in cases where there are ever-changing environments, duties, tasks and goals; and indeed, such employees can often end up parting on bad terms, being forced to transfer to another position, or being deprived of any important assignments. In such cases, they may eventually end up quitting the job of their own accord as a result of the odds being stacked against them or their refusal to yield to the disadvantageous conditions.

Type 4: Low ESC Failing to meet High ODC

Issues 2 and 3, involving the relationship between Company A and its Chef and Company B and its Finance Manager both fall into Type 4, where an employee demonstrates low commitment to the organisation. They will rarely defend their company and often fail to meet their organisation expectations of them; thus, the organisation often needs to adopt certain adjustable and regulatory strategies in order to prevent the current situation from getting out of control, or in an attempt to bring about a situation where the employee's supply-side commitment is capable of

meeting the organisation's demand-side commitment.

3.3 Conclusions of the Exploratory Research

The discussion on the exploratory research study presented in Section 3.2 has highlighted six issues derived from four illustrative cases, with each of them based on the author's personal working experiences and interviews with senior HR managers, line managers and workers. The aim of the exploratory study was to analyze and explain whether organisations tend to require different levels of ODC from their position holders according to the different characteristics of their position, with the analytical results highlighting the formation of four commitment types.

Furthermore, given the limited resources owned by an organisation and the existence of relationships of power and dependence between an organisation and its employees, it turns out that a higher level of ODC may not always be better (see Appendix 3). Indeed, it is likely that Commitment Type 1, involving a high level of ODC versus a high level of ESC, in an optimal state of balance (as demonstrated by the Assistant Manager in Company A, and the General Manager in Company C) may simultaneously exist alongside Commitment Type 2, involving a low level of ODC versus a low level of ESC, in a minimal state of balance (as demonstrated by the second customer service attendant in Company D).

Commitment Types 1 and 2 therefore reveal that both ODC and ESC achieve a

state of equilibrium. However, a state of equilibrium is not achieved for either Commitment Type 3, involving a low level of ODC versus over-committed ESC (as demonstrated by the first customer service attendant in Company D) or Commitment Type 4, involving a high level of ODC versus a low level of ESC (as demonstrated by the chef in Company A, and the Finance Manager in Company B); that is, disequilibrium is likely to exist between ODC and ESC. Such being the case, these organisations may need to adopt adjustable and regulatory strategies, according to the six position characteristics, if they are to effectively ensure that the relationships between ODC and ESC achieve 'equilibrium'.

Such relationships are similar to the Eastern philosophical (Tai Chi) thought of harmony between Yin and Yang expounded in the review of the literature undertaken in Chapter 2. Taking, as an example, the voluntary performance of 'dual roles' by the customer service attendant in Company D, his behavior at work went far beyond the position characteristics that a customer service attendant should have. In other words, he crossed the boundaries of his position and his behavior at work was more than that required or expected by the organisation.

The organisation did not impose any high level of ODC upon him nor did it have any intention of dismissing him; instead, it made moderate adjustments with the aim of reducing his level of over-commitment, such that his ESC could become

aligned with the company's ODC. This act of moderate adjustment taken by the organisation corresponds with the concept of 'establishment, adjustment and realisation' (EAR) in the psychological contract presented in the literature review undertaken in Chapter 2.

If we take the examples of the Chef in Company A and the Finance Manager in Company B, both companies had specific adjustable and regulatory strategies available to them to deal with, and respond to, the low levels of ESC demonstrated by the Chef and the Finance Manager. Company A tried every possible means to keep its chef, or to lower the level of ODC imposed upon him, in order to achieve a state of equilibrium between ODC and ESC, whilst the possible adjustable and regulatory strategies for the Finance Manager in Company B would be to (i) lower the level of ODC imposed upon him; or (ii) replace him with another desirable person. Such actions would similarly align his ESC with the company's ODC. Thus, it seems clear that in order to reach a state of equilibrium between ODC and ESC, both employers and employees need to make moderate adjustments.

Traditional organisational commitment, referred to in this thesis as 'employee supply-side commitment' (ESC) can only act as a link between employees and their organisation from the sole perspective of employees, and it is quite obvious that gaps really do exist between theory and practice in this area. This is essentially why

the focus in this thesis is placed on research into organisational commitment from an organisational demand-side perspective, in order to examine the preliminary hypothesis that an organisation is likely to require different levels of ODC from its individual position holders according to their different position characteristics. This has also ensured that the development of the conceptual framework for this thesis is based upon a solid foundation.

3.4 The Conceptual Framework of this Thesis

3.4.1 From a Perspective of Organisational Demand-side Commitment

Based on the discussion presented in Section 2.8 of Chapter 2, we know that management requirements (such as the interdependence between the organisation and each of the positions), as well as the administration of the organisation, arise as a result of position structure characteristics, including: (i) the degree of authority; (ii) the degree of complexity; (iii) the degree of variation; (iv) the degree of sensitivity; (v) the degree of formalisation; and (vi) exclusivity of skills. These characteristics, which determine the extent of a position holder's commitment to the organisation, can also be referred to, as a whole, as 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC).

3.4.2 From a Perspective of Employee Supply-side Commitment

From the very early days of research into organisational commitment, certain

antecedent variables, such as work design and leadership style, have served to influence employee supply-side commitment; this helps to explain why it has come to be regarded as ‘traditional organisational commitment’.

3.4.3 From a Perspective of Equilibrium

Commitment at a state of Equilibrium is created through the integration of the two types of commitment examined in this study; that is, organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) and employee supply-side commitment (ESC).

1. The consistency between demand-side and supply-side commitment is a key factor determining whether or not a state of equilibrium is achieved. The greater (lesser) the inconsistencies between the two, then the more (less) possible adjustable and regulatory strategies that may be required to try to achieve such equilibrium.
2. Specific adjustable and regulatory measures are taken to change the structure of either the position or the organisation; that is, if ODC exceeds ESC, then a ‘demotion’ strategy can be adopted (thereby lowering the position status, or demoting the position holder). However, a ‘boost’ strategy can also be adopted (thereby enhancing an employee’s ESC through an increase in job characteristics or greater consideration for the position holder). If ODC is less than ESC, then a state of equilibrium may only be

achieved by adopting a ‘boost’ or ‘suppression’ strategy.

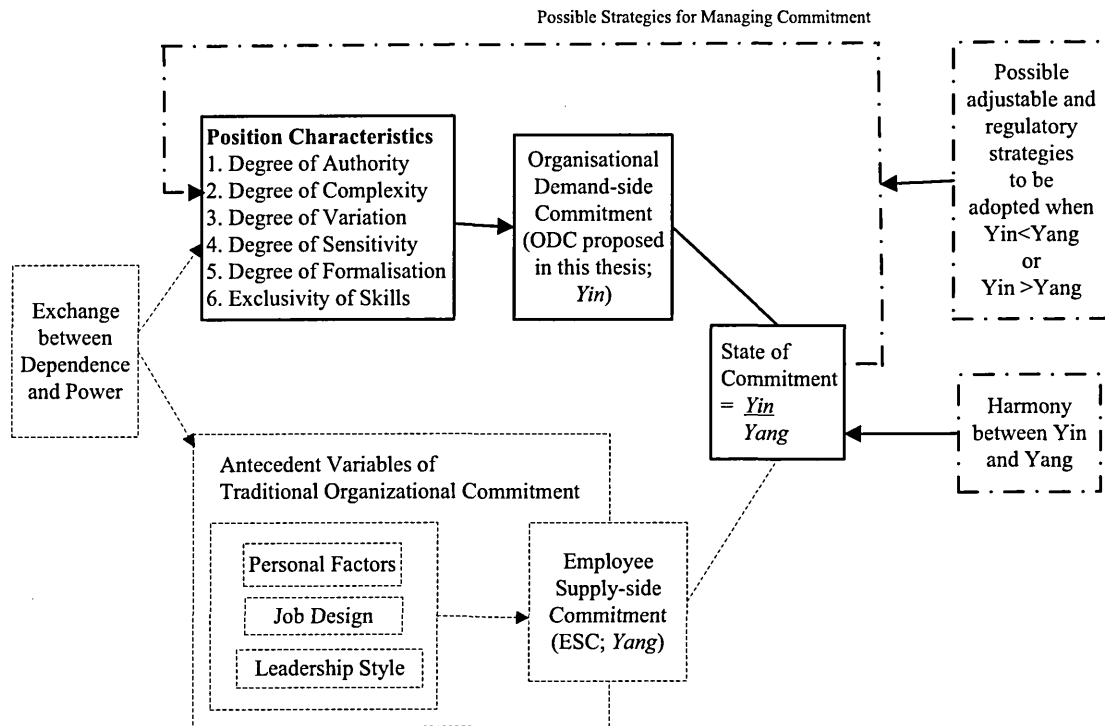


Figure 3-3 The Conceptual Framework of this Thesis

Note: The continuous line refers to the research focus in this thesis; the dotted line refers to the traditional theoretical basis of employee or organisational commitment; and the dotted/dashed line refers to possible focus for future research.

3.5 Conceptual Framework and Chinese Philosophy: Yin and Yang

The theory of Yin and Yang, which is postulated in Chinese philosophy, illustrates a perspective of integration; similarly, from a Western philosophical perspective, commitment is postulated as the successful integration of ontology, epistemology and methodology. Chinese philosophical thought is highlighted by the ‘coexistence of the invisible (the intangible) and the visible (the tangible)’ as well as the ‘harmony between Yin and Yang’.

According to Chinese philosophy, Tai Chi produced two elementary forms, one

of which was referred to as the Yin, and the other referred to as the Yang. A distinction was made between the Yin and the Yang, such that spiritual aspects (the invisible, the intangible) were seen as falling under Yin, and material things (the visible, the tangible) were regarded as falling under Yang. To be more specific, 'spiritual' and 'material' refer to two elementary forms of existence, with the former being invisible in nature, existing on a higher dimensional plane, and indeed, we could say that organisational commitment represents a similar example of such an invisible, spiritual aspect.

The successive movements of the Yin and Yang constitute what is referred to as "the course of all things" (from the Text of Yi), with the things of Yang (the visible) and the things of Yin (the invisible) successfully coexisting in the universe in two different forms. This philosophical principle, the theories of "coexistence of the invisible and the visible" and "harmony between Yin and Yang" derived from this philosophical principle are applied in this thesis to the overall research theme of organisational commitment.

Within an organisation, employee supply-side commitment (ESC) is seen as being Yang in nature (the visible) whilst organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) is regarded as being Yin in nature (the invisible), essentially because only through indirect observation of the organisational behavior of employees at work

can ODC be visualised. Based upon devotion to research into organisational commitment, the author recognised that many problems arose essentially as a result of the uni-dimensional focus on only organisational commitment, ESC; that is, Yang (the visible). This stood in stark contrast to the philosophical principle of the coexistence within the universe of the ‘things of Yang’ (the visible) and the ‘things of Yin’ (the invisible) in two different forms.

This is essentially why the focus of this research is placed on ODC, since this can compensate for the lack of recognition of Yin within an organisation; that is, this study argues that ESC and ODC simultaneously coexist within an organisation, and indeed, the latter is seen as being more important than the former, essentially because employee supply-side commitment hinges upon organisational demand-side commitment. Only by adopting such a perspective can we hope to be able to solve all of the confusing issues.

In short, this thesis is based on the notion that the existence of forms of ODC and ESC refer to Yin and Yang, which run their natural course, and which have mutually responsive impacts. Furthermore, according to the concept of ‘relational cohesion theory’ (RCT), presented earlier in Chapter 2, commitment actually arises from a Chinese philosophical principle, which states that ‘commitment itself has the dual characteristics of the visible and the invisible, of Yin and Yang’, whilst ‘power-

dependence' theory also plays an important role in terms of the mutual 'checks and balances' between employers and employees and their mutual effects on each other (i.e., ODC and ESC). As a result, if researchers continue to study organisational commitment solely on the basis of traditional employee supply-side commitment (Yang, the visible), they may fail to truly recognise, understand or grasp the whole concept. Under such circumstances, the research findings produced by such studies would be somewhat partial, or indeed, unilateral. This is a further reason for the focus in this thesis on research into ODC.

3.6 Hypothesis Formulation

The characteristics of different position structures will determine the overall level of organisational demand-side commitment required of different employees. By the same token, any type of position structure is created according to the summation of all of the position structure characteristics. Position structure characteristics are manifested through varying degrees of: (i) authority; (ii) complexity; (iii) variation; (iv) sensitivity; (v) formalisation; and (vi) exclusivity of skills. As compared to other types, a 'core' position type indicates the existence of considerable management and dependence uncertainty.

The key contents of these position types have been respectively elucidated in the light of dependence and power, with many practical and illustrative cases also

having been presented and used as evidence; thus, a preliminary hypothesis was gradually formed, essentially stating that an organisation may expect different levels of commitment from its individual employees with various attributes. A 'deductive approach' is employed in order to test the hypotheses presented in this chapter and to generalise the outcome to a large population.

Furthermore, in order to determine whether scope remained for this preliminary hypothesis to be further modified prior to the formal survey being undertaken, a pilot study (involving the illustrative cases shown in Appendix 2) was also carried out to confirm whether the issues identified by the author in various workplaces in Taiwan may similarly exist in other workplaces. Thereafter, an empirical methodology was employed to test and verify all of the hypothesis subsequently formed from the preliminary hypothesis, all of which were to appear in the formal survey. The above discussion leads to the main hypothesis of this study.

Hypothesis: *Different position characteristics create different kinds of organisational demand-side commitment.*

The hypotheses presented in the later sections of this thesis have been refined and further expounded based upon the aforementioned interviews and analysis of the illustrative cases. In order to make them much clearer, they are integrated and presented in Tables 3-5 and 3-6.

Table 3-5 Relationships between Dependence and Power and Position Structure Characteristics^a

Related Studies	Items Influencing the Exercise of Power	Power Structure Characteristics					
		Degree of Authority	Degree of Complexity	Degree of Variation	Degree of Sensitivity	Degree of Non-formalisation ^b	Exclusivity of Skills
Panel A: Sources of a position holder's power in, and dependence on, the organisation							
Jacobs (1974); Pfeffer	Importance of Resources	+			+		+
Salancik (2003) and Casciaro (2005)	Dominance over Resources Centralisation of Resources	+	+	+			+
Hickson et. al., (1971); Ocasio (2002) and Schwark (2009)	Uncertainty of Adaptability Irreplaceable Influence Contingent Abilities Urgency of the Organisation's Operations	+	+	+		+	+
MacMillan (1978); Blau (1986) and Woll(2007)	Key Resource Project-controlling Duty-exercising Power	+	+	+	+		+
Raven and French (1958); Etzioni (1975); Heresy and Cohen (1980); Fisher (1983); Lewicki and Litterer(1985) and Rigolosi (2005)	Intimidation Expertise Reference Message Connection	+	+	+	+		+
Panel B: Organisational dependence on the position and ESC provided by the position holder							
Uncertainty of Dependence		High	High	High	High	High	High
ODC		High	High	High	High	High	High

Notes:

^a '+' indicates positive relationships between dependence and power and the position structure characteristics.

^b The original construct presented in this thesis refers to the degree of formalisation; here we refer to this construct in a 'negative' way, i.e., 'non-formalisation'.

Source: Generalised induction from this thesis

Table 3-6 Relationships between Demand-side Commitment and Position Structure Characteristics

Related Studies	Items Influencing Official Duties	Position Structure Characteristics					Exclusivity of Skills
		Degree of Authority	Degree of Complexity	Degree of Variation	Degree of Sensitivity	Degree of Non-formalisation ^b	
Panel A: Characteristics of Official Duties							
Galbraith (1973, 1977, 1982); Aldrich and Baker (1977); Leifer and Delbecq (1978); Tushman and Nedler (1978); Tushman (1979, 1988); Egelhoff (1982, 1991); Hseu (1992); Thomas and Trevino (1994); Liu P-W (1995); Palmer (2001); Kates (2007) and Gilmore (2008)	Diversification of Goals	+	+	+			
	Diversification of Official Duties	+	+	+			+
	Performance Standard of Goals	+				+	+
	Degree of Ambiguity of Official Duties		+	+	+		
	Urgency of Official Duties			+	+		+
Panel B: Organisational uncertainty of the management of official duties and the demand-side commitment expected by the organisation							
	Demand for Management Information	High	High	High	High	High	High
	Management Uncertainty	High	High	High	High	High	High
	ODC	High	High	High	High	High	High

Source: Generalised induction from this thesis

The main Hypothesis presented in this thesis posits that different position characteristics create different kinds of organisational demand-side commitment. Several subsidiary hypotheses were subsequently developed from this main hypothesis, which is restated here as the comprehensive reasoning for, and illustration of, Hypotheses 1 to 6. The development of the position characteristics and their relationships with each of the subsidiary hypotheses are explained in the following sub-sections.

3.6.1 Degree of Authority

As discussed in the exploratory study, position holders generally prefer to have quite considerable levels of authority; therefore, they are likely to continue to provide a high level of commitment to their organisation as long as the organisation continues to provide them with enhanced levels of power and autonomy.

Aldag and Stearns (1991) and Yukl (2002) indicated that within any organisation, the amount of power held by individual employees can be analyzed from the following six aspects: (i) the level of resource distribution for which they are responsible; (ii) the ability to deal with uncertainty or unexpected situations; (iii) their irreplaceable nature; (iv) their ability to control various problem-solving and decision-making processes; (v) information grasping; and (vi) their ability to exercise political skills or means.

It was further indicated in both Hickson et al. (1971) and Miller, Hickson and Wilson (1996), that a position holder with greater authority will generally hold a higher office in the organisation, and will invariably possess more far-reaching goals, along with much smoother and more advantageous job sequences. Such position holders will also have greater decision-making latitude.

Galbraith (1973,1977), Tushman and Nadler (1978) and Smith, Dijksterhuis and Wigboldus (2009) each suggested that position holders within an organisation holding higher office, wider ranging decision-making power and more complex goals and job sequences, would generally have greater potential for variance in the goals, tasks and higher standards of goal performance expected of them; that is, the greater the authority that the position offers, the wider the range of affairs and issues on which the position holder has to make decisions.

Similarly, it is a matter of course that the higher the office of a position holder and the greater the latitude enjoyed by the position holder to set goals or job sequences, the greater the diversity of the goals, tasks and performance standards required of the position holder. Thus, it also stands to reason that within the overall process of adjustment and control, the demand for information setting, gathering, conveying, transmitting, feedback and correction will become more difficult and complex as a result of increases in both quantity and quality.

All of these factors can increase the level of power, influence and contingent abilities, and indeed, it has been noted that:

“Departmental power had a positive effect on the number of a department’s new positions and position upgrades that were authorised at requested pay grade levels. Additionally, we considered power at the individual level of analysis and found that the effects of departmental power on new positions and position upgrades were greater when the position power of resource recipients was high” (Welbourne and Trevor, 2000: 761).

Hence, support is provided for this perspective in the present study by offering the opinion that a position with a greater level of authority invariably suggests that the holder of this position will have more dominant control over the resources available to the organisation, as well as being readily able to control the organisation’s alternative plans.

Based upon the sources of power of the position, it is likely that: (i) the position holder would be capable of assisting the organisation to adapt to the uncertainty existing within the environment: (ii) the position holder would have numerous links to the many relationships existing within the environment; or (iii) there is some urgency with regard to the operations of the organisation. Furthermore, based upon the power of the position, there would be some likelihood of a high-office and

highly-empowered position holder posing a threat to the organisation, or put it under some pressure. The organisation would also have every reason to worry in cases where the position holder had developed excellent connections or relationships with those working both inside and outside of the organisation (Raven and French, 1958; Etzioni, 1975; Lewicki and Litterer, 1985; Tsao, 1997).

Under such circumstances as those noted above, if all other conditions remain unchanged, then the organisation may have no option but to increase its dependence on this position holder; conversely, however, there may also be a simultaneous increase in the organisation's uncertainty with regard to this position holder. Such being the case, the organisation has no choice but to seek a measure of equilibrium between supply and demand commitment.

According to Busch and Wilson (1976), Yukl (2002) and Robbins and Judge (2007), the organisational commitment provided by individual employees arises as a result of their identity with the organisation and its goals, essentially in the hope that they can continue to be members of the organisation. Such cognition will invariably become an internalised normative force, which can encourage employees to perform and behave in ways that will align them with the goals and benefits of the organisation.

Organisational commitment also refers to employees' identity and coexistence

with the organisation, along with their loyalty to it. If individual employees hope to win recognition from the organisation, they need to totally commit themselves to it. In other words, the commitment provided by employees can serve as the right of the organisation to recognise such employees; that is to say, the higher the supply-side organisational commitment provided by an employee, the higher the level of dependence the organisation may have on this employee.

Similarly, when an organisation is heavily dependent upon a position holder, in order to eliminate the sense of uncertainty caused by this position, the organisation may place strong demands on the position holder to provide corresponding supply-side organisational commitment so that a balance may be effectively struck between power and dependence. We can therefore conclude that the greater an organisation's dependence on a position, the higher the level of organisational demand-side commitment the organisation may expect from the position holder. The above discussion leads to the first subsidiary hypothesis of this study:

Hypothesis 1: *The greater the authority provided by a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

3.6.2 Degree of Complexity

Hickson et al. (1971) indicated that the more complex a position is, for example, if the position holder (i) controls more related departments than any other position

holder in the organisation; (ii) has to exercise more complicated technical skills when carrying out their role; and (iii) frequently encounters problems, each of a distinctly different nature, then the more influence and contingent abilities the position holder is likely to have.

MacMillan (1978) was of the opinion that the greater the complexity of a position, then the greater the number of plans or projects that the position holder is likely to control, and the more resources the organisation is likely to be able to offer the position holder, in terms of services to other units within an organisation or the characteristics to deal with a diverse range of problems. Within any organisation, if the position holder is at the head of all of the key logistical positions such as finance, purchasing and personnel, then in addition to controlling the powers referred to above, the position holder will naturally be endowed with a high level of professional and reference-offering power bases.

Daft and Macintosh (1981) and Thomas and Trevino (1993) noted that the greater the complexity of a position, then the more interactions that the position holder is likely to have with other departments, position holders and institutions within the organisation. Consequently, such position holders will invariably have a much greater difficulty of problems to deal with, and there will be a far greater likelihood of the position holder exercising a more extensive range of technical skills. It is, of

course, generally taken for granted that in terms of job adjustment and control, such position holders will tend to have more goals to achieve, and therefore, a much greater difficulty of tasks to carry out.

If the abovementioned characteristics are in any way intensified, then there will also be a corresponding increase in the ambiguity of this position. Given the numerous tasks that such position holders are expected to undertake, there is also a considerable likelihood of them having to deal with many urgent matters, which in turn, may lead to increased demand for information setting, gathering, conveying, transmitting, feedback and correction in the process of adjustment; thus, as a result of increases in both quantity and quality, control will become far more difficult and complex.

The main potential sources of complexity are 'horizontal differentiation', 'vertical differentiation' and 'spatial dispersion'; therefore, any organisation which has to simultaneously deal with numerous hierarchical levels, broad spans of control and multiple geographical locations, would naturally be regarded as being highly complex. Although such structures are often considered to be appropriate for firms competing in highly differentiated environments, it is important to recognise that a high degree of complexity makes it difficult to coordinate and control decision making activities (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967; Fredrickson, 1986).

Such being the case, if all other conditions remain unchanged, then the

abovementioned factors may result in the organisation becoming increasingly dependent on this position and facing increased uncertainty with regard to the position holder. In order to strike a balance, the organisation may take the initiative to demand that the position holder provides higher supply-side commitment. The above discussion leads to the second subsidiary hypothesis of this study.

Hypothesis 2: *The greater the complexity of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

3.6.3 Degree of Variation

The perspective presented by Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) is that where the degree of variation of a particular position is higher than that of any other position in the organisation, the more dominant power the position holder possesses over the organisation's resources. Some of the conditions which can contribute to this outcome are as follows: (i) it is very seldom that this position holder encounters such problems, or that such problems occur unexpectedly; (ii) there may be a diverse range of solutions to a particular problem; (iii) there may be differences in the length of time available to the position holder to deal with the problem; (iv) as compared to the problems faced by other employees, most of those faced by this position holder are of considerable urgency, and some level of undesirability; that is, the organisation fails to provide the position holder with the necessary problem-solving

assistance.

Hickson et al. (1971) argued that given the higher degree of variation, then the position holder: (i) is more adaptable to environmental uncertainty; (ii) is generally regarded as irreplaceable; (iii) possesses more contingent abilities; and (iv) is capable of tackling urgent matters far more easily than any other position holder. MacMillan (1978) and Blau (1986) were of the same opinion that in order to satisfactorily handle the higher degree of variation attached to this position, if all other conditions remain unchanged, the position holder may be capable of manipulating more of the organisation's plans or projects than any other position holder.

Variation also refers to the degree to which a job will allow employees to follow a wide range of options in their everyday work. The abovementioned factors result in two specific phenomena; firstly, the organisation may become increasingly dependent on this position holder; and secondly, the organisation may become increasingly uncertain of this position holder. In order to strike a balance, the organisation has to take the initiative to demand more supply-side commitment from the position holder. The preceding discussion leads to the third subsidiary hypothesis of this study.

Hypothesis 3: *The greater the variation of a particular position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

3.6.4 Degree of Sensitivity

Jacobs (1974), Blau (1986), Wang and Liu (1996) and Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) indicated that where a position was endowed with a higher degree of sensitivity, the position holder will have numerous opportunities to deal with certain elements of the organisation's confidential documents or events. A possible situation arising here is where the position holder's goals run contrary to those of the organisation, since there is a greater likelihood of the employee betraying the organisation, which in turn, could result in considerable harm to the organisation, even resulting in its demise. Thus, under such circumstances, the position holder will clearly become a very significant and key resource to the organisation.

Hickson et al. (1971) suggested that as a result of the high degree of position sensitivity, in many respects, such position holders may be essentially irreplaceable, whilst simultaneously having deeper and more extensive effects on the organisation. If all other conditions remain unchanged, these factors may lead to the organisation become increasingly dependent on such position holders, and also increasingly uncertain of them. To strike a balance, the organisation has to take the initiative to demand that the position holder provides greater supply-side commitment. This discussion leads to the fourth of the subsidiary hypotheses of this study.

Hypothesis 4: *The greater the sensitivity that a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

3.6.5 Degree of Formalisation

The degree of 'formalisation' refers to the limits that are encountered by employees; these limits arise from the rules or regulations which are officially stipulated by the organisation relating to the job-related behavior of employees when carrying out their job-related activities. The degree of formalisation specifies the extent to which an organisation uses rules and procedures to prescribe behavior (Hage and Aiken, 1969; Hall, 1977; Mukherji et al, 2004). Thus, 'formalisation' clearly has significant consequences for organisational members because it specifies where, how, and by whom each of the tasks is to be performed (Fredrickson, 1986).

The lower the level of formalisation of any position, the greater the contingent authority this position holder may possess, and the lower the level of regulation or control that the position holder has to face. This indicates that there are far fewer effects and restrictions on this position holder from rules, regulations, SOPs or the division of rights and duties. In other words, this position holder will enjoy greater latitude than any other position holder in the organisation.

Hickson et al. (1971) and Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) proposed a perspective whereby, as a result of the greater latitude applied to this position, it would be a

matter of course that the position holder would be endowed with (i) greater dominance over the organisation's resources; (ii) greater adaptability to uncertainty; and (iii) greater contingent abilities. Such being the case, if all other conditions remain unchanged, these factors may lead to the organisation becoming increasingly dependent on, and increasingly uncertain of, this position holder. To strike a balance, the organisation may require greater supply-side commitment from the position holder. This discussion leads to the next subsidiary hypothesis of this study, as follows:

Hypothesis 5: *The less formalisation a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

3.6.6 Exclusivity of Skills

When one of the position characteristics is a requirement for a high degree of exclusivity of skills, there may be a simultaneous increase in the ambiguity of the role of a position; furthermore, if the performance standard of this position means so much to the organisation, it may find it difficult to coordinate with, or control, this position. This is essentially because, the information-gathering, conveying, transmitting, feedback and correction required in the process of coordination and control of this position holder may be influenced by the following situations:

1. It may be very difficult to set targets since nothing can be expressed in

words given the indescribable nature of the person's skills, which can take many years of accumulated experience in order to achieve proficiency.

2. The organisation itself may not be able to easily tackle the situation by means of a formal coordination and control mechanism, whilst other position holders in the organisation may be unable to play any sort of 'check and balance' role to assist the organisation to cope with the situation. Most importantly, given the crucial importance of the performance standard for this position holder, the situation cannot be settled simply by controlling the outcome, nor can the organisation admit any failure.

Although some totally transferrable skills can be readily procured within the market, a competent employee with such exclusivity of skills is still a rare resource for any organisation. The combination of the abovementioned advantages, in terms of resources, dominance and centralisation, means that this position is of vital importance to the organisation. On the one hand, the position holder plays a key role in the organisation, has considerable effects on many associated aspects, and is of course regarded as being highly irreplaceable; on the other hand, however, such position holders can have a strong influence on, or pose a considerable threat to, the organisation by virtue of their expertise. Thus, if all other conditions remain unchanged, the abovementioned situations may lead to the organisation becoming

increasingly dependent on such position holders, and increasingly uncertain about them. To strike a balance, the organisation may require such position holders to provide a greater level of supply-side commitment (Hickson et al., 1971; Jacobs, 1974; MacMillan, 1978; Blau, 1986; Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003). The above discussion leads to the final subsidiary hypothesis of this study.

Hypothesis 6: *The greater the exclusivity of skills required of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

3.7 Variable Definitions

The previous sections have provided descriptions of all of the independent variables, dependent variables and control variables that are included in the conceptual framework of this thesis. We go on in the following sub-sections to provide concise descriptions of these variables.

3.7.1 Independent Variables

To recap on the conceptualisation discussed in the previous chapter, Champion (1975) and Sathe (1978) suggested that for those variables relating to types of position and position structure, researchers could include issues such as: (i) degree of complexity; (ii) degree of formalisation; (iii) degree of bureaucratisation; (iv) degree of centralisation; and (v) hierarchical authority. According to Seetoo (1984), Fredrickson

(1986), Xu (1996) and Holtzhausen (2002), the structure of an organisation comprises of three components, namely, 'complexity', 'formalisation' and 'centralisation'.

1. *Complexity*

'Complexity' refers to the disunion of an organisation. If there is even a tiny division of labor in any organisation, if there are numerous vertical position strata, or the units of an organisation are located in separate places, it may be difficult for the units concerned to successfully coordinate with each other. This kind of organisation, or a position with similar circumstances, represents an organisation or position with a high degree of complexity.

2. *Formalisation*

'Formalisation' indicates that an organisation directs staff members or position holders by using job descriptions which stipulate rules and formal procedures; that is, there are numerous rules or regulations within the organisation which staff members or position holders with job descriptions are required to follow. Such organisations or positions have a high degree of formalisation.

3. *Centralisation*

'Centralisation' refers to the range of an organisation's decision-making power. In an organisation with a high degree of centralisation, organisational decision-making is dominated by high-ranking superiors, such that whenever problems

arise, staff members or subordinates have to report them to lower-ranking superiors who then report them to higher position holders. Thereafter, the highest-ranking superior will ultimately determine the appropriate measure to be adopted and implemented.

The position structure characteristics in this thesis are also based on the three components of organisational structure presented by Seetoo (1984). In addition to the research contents and pilot study undertaken in this thesis (the practical illustrative cases of which are shown in Appendix 2), perspectives presented by Thompson (2003) are also included on the 'exceptionality' of a duty, the 'degree of difficulty' of a duty and 'dependence'. Furthermore, reference is made in this thesis to the viewpoints offered by Perrow (1967, 1970).

The following six position structure characteristics, which are obtained by a combination of the abovementioned collected materials, represent the six independent variables adopted in this thesis: (i) degree of authority; (ii) degree of complexity; (iii) degree of variation; (iv) degree of sensitivity; (v) degree of formalisation; and (vi) exclusivity of skills. Their respective definitions are provided below.

1. *Degree of Authority*

The 'degree of authority' indicates that this position is endowed not only with power over the decisions relating to job goals, job sequences and the methods

by which the jobs are carried out, but also the range and latitude of the decision-making relating to different events (Kanter, 1977; Mintzberg, 1983; Astley and Sachdeva, 1984; London, 1993).

2. *Degree of Complexity*

The 'degree of complexity' refers to the complex situations which this position holder may be confronted with, in terms of the relationships between the bounded jobs of this position and those of other positions or units within the organisation, as well as the job skills possessed by the position holder (see Lynch, 1974; Glisson, 1978; Macintosh and Daft, 1987; Kim, 2005).

3. *Degree of Variation*

The 'degree of variation' indicates that this position holder may often face some discrepancies and some degree of urgency when required to solve the same sorts of problems or projects (Withey, Daft and Cooper, 1983).

4. *Degree of Sensitivity*

The 'degree of sensitivity' refers to a position holder's job, specifically, whether it involves considerable levels of confidentiality and sensitivity (Wang and Liu, 1996).

5. *Degree of Formalisation*

The 'degree of formalisation' refers to the limitations relating to this position

holder, including issues such as the standardisation, division of power and duty, and regulations to be followed (Kim, 2005; Johari and Yahya, 2009).

6. *Exclusivity of Skills*

Finally, the 'exclusivity of skills' indicates that the work skills of this position holder are rather tacit and extremely difficult to describe in words; that is, despite the job skills possessed by this position holder being of significant importance to the organisation, they are essentially incommunicable (Kogut and Zander, 2003).

The key issue in the development of the research design for this study was to define all of the variables relating to commitment. The main variables to be studied in this thesis are organisational commitment and the various position structure characteristics, with the operational definition and measure of each variable being subsequently expounded.

3.7.2 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this thesis is 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC), an original construct proposed by the author which refers to the effects of the structural characteristics of a position, as a result of which, the organisation may require a certain (even minimal) degree of commitment from individual position holders. The content and components of ODC are exactly the same as those relating

to traditional commitment, with the exception that demand-side commitment refers to the demand and plans of an organisation, whilst supply-side commitment refers to the performance and supply of commitment by employees.

It has been strongly suggested throughout this chapter that in much of the prior literature on the psychological contract, there has been a general tendency to focus on the commitment provided by employees to their organisation, and that this is dynamic in nature, existing between organisations and their individual employees. As will be demonstrated later in this study, if research into 'organisational commitment' were to be based on an organisational perspective, then the research aims should be focused more on: (i) whether Taiwanese organisations always nurture organisational commitment amongst their individual employees and what the dynamic relationships are that may exist between the commitment expected by the organisation and the commitment freely given by its employees; and (ii) the extent to which organisations tend to require different characteristics from employees in different positions within the organisation, as derived from their organisational design.

An organisation is defined by Johnson (2007: 12) as "... collectives of people whose activities are consciously designed, coordinated and directed by their members in order to pursue explicit purposes and attain particular common

objectives or goals”. According to this definition, it follows that any ‘position’ in an organisation is designed, coordinated and directed with the aim of enabling position holders to achieve common objectives or goals, through division of labour or function, and through a hierarchy of authority and responsibility.

According to Ulrich and Barney (1984), all organisations are seen as coalitions formed by groups of positions (referring mainly to position holders), with the primary aim of these position holders joining such coalitions being to acquire all the resources that they need by means of exchange. Therefore, in terms of the environments pertaining to any organisation, any position within such an organisation can be regarded as a linkage between the organisation itself and its individual employees.

When referring to any position or role within an organisation, we should also refer to position-related characteristics, since these serve as an interface between organisational demand and the supply provided by individual employees. This type of interface between demand and supply is similar to the interface that exists between Eastern philosophical Tai Chi thought, involving Yin and Yang; that is, the interface can show the waxing and waning of Yin (organisational demand) and Yang (employee supply).

General hints are provided by the two concepts of ‘perceived organisational

support' (POS) and 'leader-member exchange' (LMX) referred to in the previous section, both of which are derived from discussions on the psychological contract. Another concept, which essentially relates to the exchange of power and dependence between organisations and their employees, also provides further hints on commitment; that is, most elements of organisational behaviour, such as the willingness of employees to carry out dual roles or put in additional effort, the organisational identity of employees, job satisfaction, job performance, absenteeism, turnover, and so on, are all regarded as having much to do with organisational demand-side commitment.

3.7.3 Control Variables

A statistical control basis is generally employed in academic circles in order to rule out the effects arising from confounding variables; and indeed, a control variable arises under this condition in practical, quantitative research. To be more specific, a 'responding measure' is taken to rule out the confounding effects triggered by a certain variable within a research model; this type of responding measure is generally referred to as a 'control variable'.

Based on multiple regression theory, amongst one another, several explanatory variables simultaneously existing within a research model can be referred to as 'control variables', insofar as the pure effects of an explanatory variable arise as a

result of the remainder of the variables in the same research model being controlled.

Consequently, the control effects can be said to be bi-directional (Chiu, 2011). The

control variables adopted for this thesis are:

1 *Gender*

‘Gender’ here refers to the gender (male or female) of the questionnaire respondents.

2 *Tenure of Respondents at Current Position*

Here ‘tenure’ refers to the amount of time (in number of years) that the respondents have remained at their current position.

3.8 Conclusions

The exploration and discussion in the literature review highlighted the fact that the focus in traditional organisational commitment has always tended to be placed on the supply of commitment provided by employees (i.e., employee supply-side commitment, ESC); however, the primary aim of this thesis is to present an alternative view, based upon a new construct, organisational demand-side commitment (ODC). The proposal in this thesis is that the interactive relationships that exist between ESC and ODC are very similar to Eastern philosophical Tai Chi thought, the concept of the mutual impacts between Yin and Yang.

In addition to discussing the limitations arising from the theoretical issues

presented in Chapter 2, four practical, illustrative cases are presented in this chapter, through which the author expounds a general view that as a result of the limited resources owned by an organisation, it is likely to impose different levels of ODC requirements on certain individual employees. Organisational commitment is therefore classified into four specific types in accordance with the six issues examined in the previous section of this chapter. However, it is clear that regardless of the commitment type characterising an individual employee, as a result of the mutual adjustments that take place between an organisation and its employees, ESC and ODC will eventually achieve a state of equilibrium.

Most significantly, each position characteristic has been given a clear-cut and unequivocal definition in this chapter, with the six position characteristics being: (i) authority, a position characteristic that is essentially derived from ‘empowerment’; (ii) complexity; (iii) formalisation; and (iv) exclusivity of skills (position characteristics that are essentially derived from ‘organisational structure’); (v) variation, a position characteristic which is derived from job characteristics, and (vi) sensitivity, a position characteristic which is derived from the confidential nature of documents or job contents within an organisation.

As regards the variables adopted for this thesis, the independent variables refer to these six position characteristics, with these position characteristics also

representing the key focus of the hypotheses presented in this thesis. An explanation is provided of their interactive relationships with 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC), which acts as the dependent variable in this thesis. Finally, the gender of the questionnaire respondents and their tenure (seniority) at the current position provide the control variables.

Having now developed the six hypotheses of this thesis in the current chapter, the discussion in Chapter 4 turns to the methods used to examine whether or not support is provided for these hypotheses.

Chapter 4 Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In whatever manifestation, if a theoretical model is to effectively explain anything, then there has to be an appropriate relationship between the statements made, the methods relied upon in making such statements, and the philosophical perspective deployed in order to form the methods (Abbott, 1998). In each of these respects, there are issues pertaining to ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality; that is, the central question relating to whether we can, or should, consider social entities as being constructed from the perceptions and actions of social actors. Epistemology, on the other hand, is concerned with those things that constitute acceptable knowledge in any area of study. The key epistemological question is, therefore, “can the approach to the study of the social world [...] be the same as the approach to studying the natural sciences?” (Saunders et al., 2007: 108).

Epistemological analysis on the grounds of specific knowledge or the scientific nature of truth involves making ontological assumptions on the nature of the world (Bhaskar, 2008); indeed, we routinely accept that certain epistemological commitment-related conventions are so self evident that we rarely feel the need to consciously

express, discuss or question them. However, the recognition and conscious reflection on such commitment-related conventions through concrete types of behaviour represent the first steps in effectively identifying the relationships that potentially exist between organisational demand-side commitment and employee supply-side commitment. The interrelationships between ontology, epistemology and methodology applied in this thesis are illustrated in Figure 4-1.

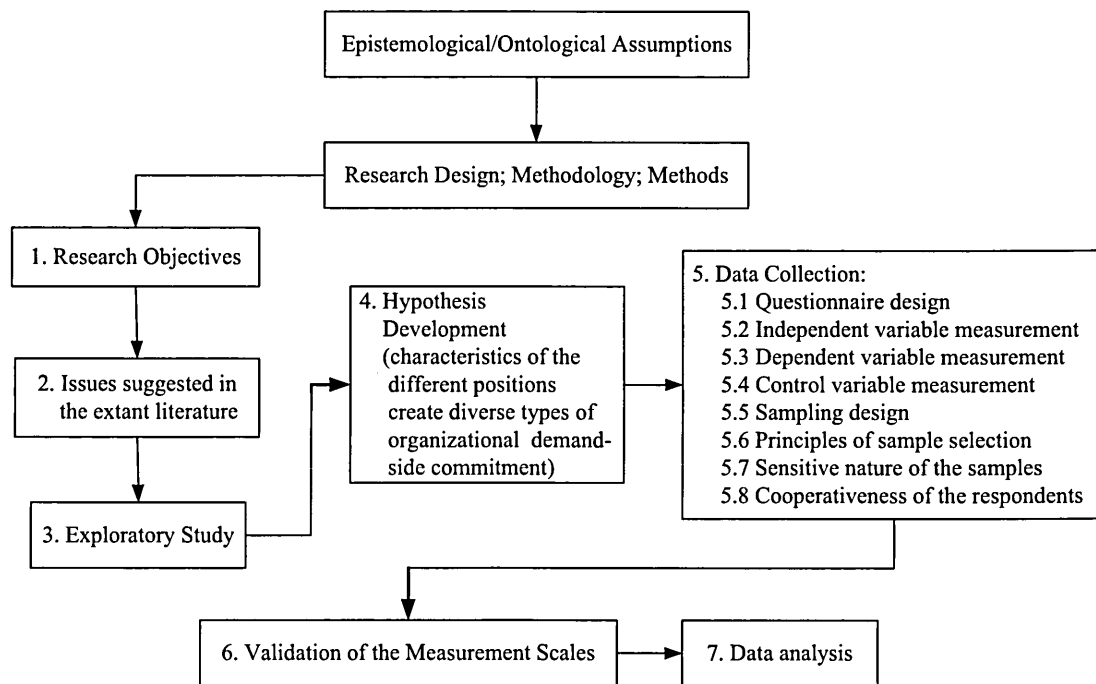


Figure 4-1 Interrelationships between Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology in this Thesis

Source: Compiled by the author.

The pivots of ontology and epistemology have already been applied in the previous chapters of this thesis, and indeed, they provide the philosophical underpinning, the ‘credibility’, which ultimately legitimizes knowledge and the

framework for a process which is produced through a rigorous methodology. To describe them in single words, ontology is 'being', epistemology is 'knowing' and methodology is 'studying'. The belief that science can produce objective knowledge rests on two key issues, ontological and epistemological assumptions; indeed, the relationship between the author and the overall subject of this thesis represents an indicator of the ontological and epistemological assumptions upon which this study on 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC) is based.

4.1.1 Ontology

The stance taken in this thesis is a more realist ontology (Smith, 2003) in contrast to a more subjective ontological standpoint (Manners, 2001).

Realist ontology seeks not explanation but rather a description of reality in terms of classification of entities and serves as answers to such questions as: What classes of entities are needed to give an account of what makes true all truths? Or: What classes of entities are needed to facilitate the making of predictions for effectively managing commitment about the future? (Smith, 2003: 2)

Ontological assumptions embedded in this thesis essentially argue that there is an objective reality 'out there' to be known, like positions in an organisation that are designed based on the organisation's various functional needs. Ontology is 'being'; that is, ontology posits that something has to be 'real', so real that one can see, hear,

touch, smell or taste it. 'Commitment', however, is an abstract concept which may be determined by examining whether ODC actually exists within organisations. This includes the actions taken by the organisation, such as promoting or demoting individual employees, and rewarding or punishing position holders. From an employee standpoint, commitment includes actions such as putting in extra effort, and whether such employees have a propensity for staying with the organisation or leaving.

In order to explore whether a situation may exist whereby organisations require different levels of organisational commitment from their employees according to their different positions and job characteristics, an examination is carried out in this thesis of the issues suggested within the extant literature; this analysis is carried out in conjunction with an exploratory study, the key findings of which are based on interviews carried out between the author and four Taiwan-based companies.

4.1.2 Epistemology

An objectivist epistemology ('which can be measured and analysed', Manners, 2001) has been adopted to measure and analyse the extent of the organisation's need of its different position characteristics which are of its own designing. Epistemological assumptions are based upon the claim that through natural science, it is possible to remove subjective bias from the assessment of reality. For example, questionnaires,

a natural scientific method, have been widely employed in numerous studies as the means of measuring commitment; and indeed, in order to test the hypotheses in this study, large-scale questionnaire surveys are carried out to test and verify whether the relationships that may exist between ODC and the characteristics of specific employee positions can be determined through quantitative methods.

As noted by Bhaskar (2009), epistemology is the branch of philosophy focusing on the study of knowledge, which, according to 'reflection-correspondence' theory, is the result of some form of mapping or reflection of external objects by means of our sensory organs, possibly aided by different observation instruments, as in Plato's conception. However, knowledge has to be developed by observation, and it is still absolute, in the sense that any piece of proposed knowledge is supported as either truly corresponding to a part of external reality, or not.

The methodology undertaken in this research is primarily deductive and quantitative based on realist ontology and objectivist epistemology assumptions which in turn then serves as a differentiation of the knower-researcher from their descriptions about assessed respondents' positions of what other knowers (questionnaire respondents) know so as to enable the author's ability to experience neutrally, and provide an account of the other's organisational experience by utilizing statistical analysis methods to test the relationship between independent

variables and their influence on ODC (shown in Figure 4-1).

Qualitative interviews were used in the preliminary study undertaken for this thesis to explore the meaning of commitment for each of the selected parties in the commitment relationship. Research aimed at gaining a firm understanding of the meaning of commitment amongst individuals is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, if commitment is associated with successful relationships, then it would clearly be helpful to identify the behaviour through which such commitment is manifested; such behaviour can then be expected, encouraged and rewarded.

Secondly, several problems have already been identified in this thesis with regard to the existing measurement instruments, with the conclusion being that there is a clear requirement for new approaches. Such approaches will necessarily include the identification of the underlying constructs (such as ODC) in order to develop more accurate ways of measuring commitment.

Thirdly, the different meanings of commitment, as perceived by organisations and their employees, can clearly have some impact on the outcomes of the relationship; for example, if two different parties in a relationship have different perceptions of the meaning of commitment, and therefore pursue different types of behaviour, then their lack of shared understanding may cause problems within the relationship.

Although qualitative methods are suitable for identifying the underlying

constructs, quantitative studies can clearly be of use as a means of surveying the robustness of the constructs across a wider sample. It is of critical importance that new instruments (such as the ODC construct proposed in this thesis) are developed to provide support in the assessment of commitment, and these should more accurately reflect the meaning of commitment, as used in practice (Roberts, 2002).

4.2 Methodology and Research Design

4.2.1 Methodology

The methodology adopted in any study refers to a body of knowledge that enables researchers to explain and analyze their methods, whilst also indicating their resources and limitations, identifying their presuppositions and consequences, and relating their potential for making advances in particular research fields (Miller and Salkind, 2002).

Furthermore, as noted by Wooldridge, Jennings and Kinny (1999: 1):

“Our methodology is intended to allow an analyst to systematically go from a statement of requirements to a design that is so sufficiently detailed that it can be implemented directly. In applying the methodology, the analyst moves from abstract to increasingly concrete concepts. Each successive move introduces greater implementation bias, and shrinks the space of possible systems that could be implemented to satisfy the original requirements statement.”

The methodology adopted in any study also underpins the types of questions to be addressed and the nature of the evidence to be generated (Clark et al., 1984). It is

also necessary for researchers in the field of organisational commitment, such as the author of this thesis, to consider the extent to which they may be unwittingly clinging to some of the central tenets relating to assumptions on the relationship that may exist between themselves and the subjects being studied. Consequently, the development of the research design for this thesis was based upon such methodological assumptions (as shown in Figure 4-1). More details on this issue are presented in the following sections.

There is general agreement that research is a systematic and methodical process of inquiry and investigation which can lead to an increase in knowledge or a solution to a particular problem (Sekaran, 1992: 4). As opposed to the process of research, the purpose of research can be summarised as: (i) reviewing and synthesising existing knowledge; (ii) investigating existing situations or problems in order to provide solutions to such problems; (iii) exploring and analysing more general issues; (iv) constructing or creating a new procedure or system; and (v) explaining a new phenomenon or generating new knowledge.

According to Sarantakos (1993: 31-35), the purpose of any study comes under one of three main classifications: exploratory, descriptive and causal (or predictive) research. The first of these, exploratory research, is conducted into an issue or problem on which there has been very limited earlier study (or none at all) to which

researchers may subsequently refer. This approach is taken in the present study (Chapter 3) in order to consolidate the development of the initial hypotheses, with the main aim being to gain familiarity and insights into the issues for later quantitative investigation in Chapters 5 and 6.

Secondly, descriptive research describes phenomena as they exist, with data often being quantitative and statistics being applied to the study. This type of approach is used to identify and obtain information on a particular problem or issue.

Thirdly, the primary aim of causal or predictive research is to explain what is actually happening in a particular situation, with the analysis of the situation potentially leading to generalisation based upon the prediction of certain phenomena supported by hypothesised general relationships.

Research can be further classified according to research logic and research outcomes. The research logic in this thesis is 'deductive'; that is, the research proceeds from specific to general observations. Research outcomes are classified as either 'basic' (often referred to as 'pure') in theory, or 'applied' in practice; the research undertaken for the present study may contribute to the knowledge base or resolve the particular problems presented in the previous chapters.

4.2.2 Research Design

An appropriate research design provides overall guidance on the collection and

analysis of the data for a study (Churchill, 1979). The importance of the research design stems from its role as a critical link between the theory and the argument, both of which form the core of the research and the empirical data collected (Nachmias and Nachmias, 2008).

The choice of research design “reflects decisions about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process” (Bryman and Bell, 2007: 40), and this will of course have considerable influence on many of the subsequent methodological processes, such as the sampling and statistical analysis. The research design is, therefore, a blueprint which enables researchers to find the answers to the salient questions being asked in any research project. Along with a clear research plan, it provides appropriate constraints, whilst specific ethical issues which any study will inevitably encounter must also be taken into consideration (Saunders et al., 2007).

At the heart of this thesis is the aim of furthering research into an alternative view of organisational commitment – the demand-side commitment expected by organisations from their individual employees – in order to seek solutions to the issues (or cruxes) which, despite having long existed in the author’s experiences in the workplace, cannot be clearly explained or understood through the analysis of one-sided commitment in isolation (that is, the traditional supply-side commitment which employees provide to their organization). Thus, the primary focus in this

thesis is on organizational demand-side commitment (ODC).

The research design for any objective-based approach, such as the aforementioned research aims adopted in this thesis, must of course use specific benchmarks and objectives to measure its success. The benchmarks detail the objectives that are to be attained quantitatively, whilst the objectives clearly state what is to be measured by the evaluator (Lodico et al., 2010). The objective-based approach adopted in the present study refers to the focus on organisational demand-side commitment; put simply, the approach examines whether differences exist between the level of commitment required by the organisation from its various position holders according to the different characteristics of the positions that these employees hold.

The research design adopted here relies upon an illustrative case study which provides powerful insights into the new concept presented in this thesis, ODC, as an alternative view of organisational commitment. As a result of the distinct lack of literature on the concept of ODC, the research design focuses on an attempt to clarify whether, based upon only one-sided commitment from its employees, the organisation itself fails to resolve the confusing issues or phenomena that are frequently referred to as 'organisational environments at work'. These issues and phenomena have already been presented and discussed in depth in Chapters 1 and 3.

With this aim in mind, a correlational research design was selected for this

thesis, utilizing a questionnaire survey methodology; the specific methodology adopted involves a survey featuring questions and statements to which the participants are asked to respond anonymously. The research design is centered on empirical studies involving ODC, position holders and their position characteristics.

In order to try to objectively confirm that the proposed hypotheses have long existed in the inertial mode of thinking in organisational management, the author of this thesis was determined to ensure that he remained a detached observer, with various attempts being made to eliminate, or at least minimize, any bias that may arise as a result of the use of standardized tools for data collection and analysis, and replication of the survey research. Thus, the research is meticulously designed to ensure that the questions are put to “nature itself” in such a way that they cannot affect the answers, and that the answers provided by each individual cannot be similarly affected by either their colleagues or superiors (Campbell, 1969: 411). This detachment from the outcomes is based not only on the ways in which the research is carried out, but also on a ‘necessary’ balance between ‘outsider’ and ‘insider’ (Horowitz, 1986), between ‘distance’ and ‘inclusion’ (Pollner and Emerson, 1983) and between ‘detachment’ and ‘involvement’ (Shalin, 1986).

4.3 Issues Suggested within the Extant Literature

Tranfield et al. (2003: 207) noted that “Undertaking a review of the literature to

provide the best evidence for informing policy and practice in any discipline, is a key research objective for the respective academic and practitioner communities.” The present study on organisational demand-side commitment is based upon the assumption that the resources upon which the survival of any organisation is heavily dependent are scarce (Ulrich and Barney, 1984), and that such organisations use their relationships to gain access to additional resources. This will of course include the interaction processes which embrace the short-term exchange episodes, such as power/dependence exchange, inducement/contribution exchange and social exchange, as well as the long-term relationship behaviour that exists between an organisation and its employees, such as institutionalisation, coordination and adaptation (Su, Song, Li and Dang, 2008). All of these issues have already been presented in the review of the literature undertaken in Chapter 2.

The commitment discussed in this thesis is taken from an organisational perspective, a focus which differs quite markedly from the traditional view of commitment (that is, the supply-side commitment provided by employees to their organization). Two stages were therefore involved in the preparatory phase of this study. The first stage focused on specifying the domain and delineating the definition of the commitment expected by the organisation from its employees (the organisational demand-side commitment which is described and expanded upon in

Section 2.8 of Chapter 2). The second stage involved the generation of the items which capture the domain, as specified through theoretical bases, all of which were obtained from the literature review undertaken in Chapter 2.

4.3.1 Exploratory Study – Interviews

From the review of the literature undertaken in Chapter 2, it was confirmed that traditional studies on organisational commitment invariably refer solely to employee supply-side commitment. That is, the extant literature lacks any exploration and discussion of commitment from an organisational perspective, such that there is a need for an examination of the commitment required by organisations from their individual employees, as well as some analysis of the extent to which differences may exist between the level of commitment expected by the organisation from the various positions and position characteristics of individual employees.

The alternative view which is put forward and examined in this study, that of organisational demand-side commitment, is based upon research into the extant literature and the author's prior work experience. The hypothesis development process takes the initial hypotheses and subsequently subjects them to objective exploration and examination in order to determine whether the observations noted from the researcher's previous work experience provide support for the existence of this alternative view in other workplaces. An exploratory study was therefore carried

out in this thesis prior to the formation of the conceptual framework and the development of the hypotheses.

The exploratory study phase of this thesis was based upon two primary objectives for the preliminary interviews; these were: (i) to determine whether ODC really does exist within organisations, and if so, whether it determines various types of behaviour in the workplace; and (ii) to test and verify the author's preliminary hypotheses by illustrating some practical cases which had previously been observed in specific organisations. The latter objective includes an examination of whether problems such as high sensitivity exist within the organisations examined in this study, such that there may be the possibility of the organisation adopting different approaches to individual employees in order to specifically manage their commitment, and whether further sensitive information or 'inside stories' regarding the organisation can be obtained.

In order to fully achieve these two primary objectives, a semi-structured questionnaire was designed for use in this study so that the bulk of the necessary information could be obtained in an orderly, systematic fashion, effectively utilising detailed, accurate information on the perspectives on 'organisational commitment' obtained from the interviews carried out with senior HR managers, line managers and workers. More details on the systematic discussion and analysis of the issues arising

from the illustrative cases in the exploratory study were outlined earlier in Chapter 3.

In carrying out the study, whilst being familiar with the concepts recognized within the extant literature, an attempt was made to avoid being influenced by preconceived notions on the determinants of commitment; however, once they had been collated, it became clear that the comments did reflect many of the themes already identified.

4.4 Conceptual Framework, Variables and Hypothesis Development

4.4.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this thesis was developed in Chapters 2 and 3, with the main points being as follows:

1. *Interdependence between the organisation and position structure characteristics*

This includes: (i) the degree of authority; (ii) the degree of complexity; (iii) the degree of variation; (iv) the degree of sensitivity; (v) the degree of formalisation; and (vi) the exclusivity of skills. All of these determine the extent of any position holder's commitment to the organisation, referred to in this study as 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC).

2. *Consistency between demand- and supply-side commitment*

This is a key factor determining whether or not a state of equilibrium is achieved within an organisation. Possible adjustable and regulatory measures are taken in

order to achieve a state of equilibrium by changing the increase or decrease between demand (Yin) and supply (Yang). Thus, employee supply-side commitment (ESC) may be defined as the promise, pledge, undertaking or trust provided by employees to their organisation, whilst organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) may be defined as the promise, pledge, undertaking or trust expected by the organisation from its employees.

ESC and ODC function as the two constituents of an integral whole, similar to Yang and Yin in Tai Chi, which originated in Eastern philosophy, Tao-Te Ching – Lao Tzu quotes by the ancient Chinese philosopher, Lee-Er, 470 BC). According to Tai Chi, there are two polarities, Yin and Yang, which are regarded as coexisting in the universe. If applied to organisation, the Yin (the invisible) refers to the internal demand on the part of the organisation, whilst the Yang (the visible) refers to the external supply on the part of employees. Thus, we similarly posit that Yin (ODC) and Yang (ESC) coexist within an organisation; that is, the mutual production or destruction and the mutual growth or decline between Yin and Yang is very much akin to the interactions and mutual impacts between the demand on the part of the organisation and the supply provided by its employees.

Nevertheless, the review of the literature undertaken in Chapter 2 makes it

clear that traditional organisational commitment refers solely to employee supply-side commitment. Thus, the emergence of this new concept of ODC may be seen as complementing the literature in this area; indeed, it is this concept which motivates the focus in this study on the expansion or enrichment of the current research materials pertaining to ODC, which, in turn, could serve as a basis for future studies on the interactions between ODC and ESC.

4.4.2 Variables

Alongside the development of the conceptual framework of this thesis, there are a number of variables identified from both the literature review and the exploratory study which could have some effect on this research. Since different position structure characteristics may determine the level of organisational demand-side commitment required from employees, the independent variables in this research should be: (i) authority, (ii) complexity, (iii) variation, (iv) sensitivity, (v) formalisation and (vi) exclusivity of skills. The key contents of these types of position are therefore elucidated in terms of dependence and power, with several practical and illustrative cases being presented and used as evidence. These variables are discussed further in the subsequent sections.

4.4.3 Hypothesis Development

A key problem in developing the hypotheses for this study was how to effectively

recognize the commitment expected by the organisation from its individual employees (ODC). The answer, according to Green, Tull and Albaum (1988: 38), is to use the experience, judgment and creative capabilities of each of the individuals involved; thus, the research hypotheses developed here were originally constructed during the literature review and the exploratory study.

The literature review and the exploratory study highlighted two issues of specific concern to this study, which are that: (i) the existence of ODC within an organisation should be seen, heard and recognized as something real; and (ii) it should act as a link between the organisation and its employees. Thus, as shown in the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 3, the formulation of the hypotheses on the relationships existing between ODC and the various position characteristics is based upon the assumption that the needs of the organisation will be met.

A hypothesis is described as an assertion about the 'state of nature', which often refers to a possible course of action, along with a prediction of the outcome if that course of action is followed (Green, Tull and Albaum, 1988: 37-38). In the development of the hypotheses in the present study, the primary focus was placed on the relationship between ODC and the characteristics of certain employee positions, whilst a further issue discussed in the exploratory study was the responses by the organisations with regard to whether or not their expectations from their employees were satisfied. The

main and subsidiary hypotheses of this thesis are outlined below.

Hypothesis 0: *Different position characteristics create different kinds of organisational demand-side commitment.*

Hypothesis 1: *The greater the authority provided by a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

Hypothesis 2: *The greater the complexity of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

Hypothesis 3: *The greater the variation of a particular position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

Hypothesis 4: *The greater the sensitivity that a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

Hypothesis 5: *The less formalisation a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

Hypothesis 6: *The greater the exclusivity of skills required of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

If general support is found for these hypotheses, then we can assert that ODC does exist within the organisations under examination.

The primary aims of this research are: (i) to test and verify the hypotheses relating to whether organisations require different levels of commitment from their employees in various positions; and (ii) to test and verify whether strong correlations exist between the six position characteristics and the commitment expected by these organisations from their individual employees. The establishment and development of all of the hypotheses in this thesis was based upon: (i) the prior work experience of the author; and (ii) the correlated, illustrative cases acquired by means of interviews with various employees. The discussion and testing of these hypotheses should provide a useful contribution to the existing knowledge.

4.5 Methods

The methods used for the main study were quantitative, with the data being collected through a detailed questionnaire and subsequently analyzed using the SPSS package.

The data collection process adopted for this study involved the use of a questionnaire survey, with the primary reason for placing greater emphasis on such a quantitative method as the main data collection instrument essentially being because such surveys enable researchers to examine and explain the relationships that exist between the constructs, particularly the cause-and-effect relationships (Saunders et al., 2007). All

of these issues are discussed in detail in the following sub-sections.

4.5.1 Data Collection

This sub-section provides details on the data collection methods used in this study to gather information from the respondents. Based on the research design discussed in the previous section, this section is organised as follows: (i) the questionnaire design; (ii) the independent variable measurement; (iii) the dependent variable measurement; (iv) the control variable measurement; (v) the sampling design; (vi) the principles of sample selection; (vii) the sensitive nature of the samples; and (viii) the cooperativeness of the respondents.

The overall data generation process for this thesis is divided into two major stages, involving the generation and pre-testing of the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire, which was designed to elicit information relating specifically to their individual perspectives on the relationships or mutual impacts between ODC, position characteristics and position holders. The questionnaire design and development, which involves a total of nine steps, was based upon the approach of Churchill and Iacobucci (2009). The step-by-step procedure used to guide the generation of the questionnaire employed in this thesis is illustrated in Figure 4-2.

When carrying out the questionnaire survey, it was necessary to differentiate

between those respondents who answered the questions on ODC position characteristics on behalf of their organisations (managerial-level respondents) and those who were being assessed (the observed position holders). However, it was also necessary for the author to remain a detached observer; that is, to similarly distance himself from either group. This represents the differentiation of the researcher from the descriptions of the knowledge possessed by other parties so as to reinforce the neutral experience of the researcher, and to provide an objective account of the organisational experience of the other parties involved. By so doing, subjective contamination can be kept to an absolute minimum.

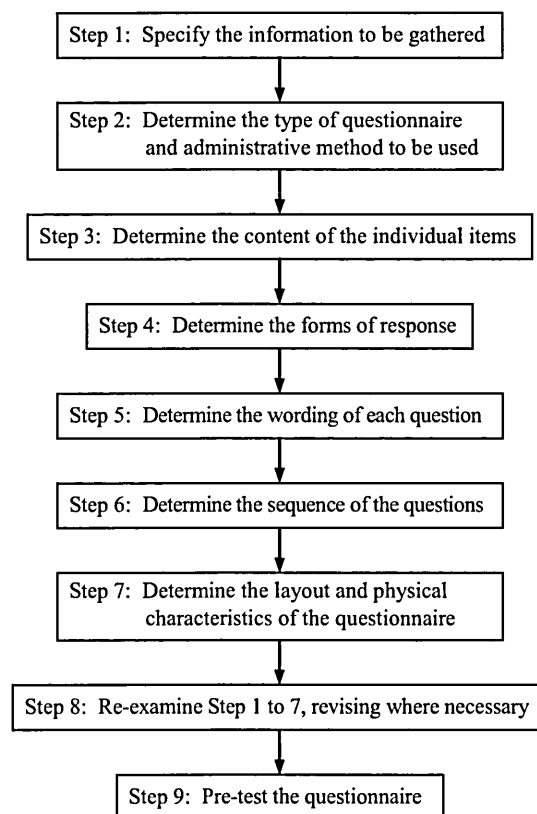


Figure 4-2 Questionnaire Design and Development Process

Source: Based on Churchill and Iacobucci (2009: 204-205)

The interviewees selected to consolidate the hypotheses in the exploratory study represented each of the three hierarchical levels, senior HR managers, line managers and workers (eight of the interviewees were senior HR managers, sixteen were line managers and sixteen were workers). As regards the quantitative research, a total of 180 questionnaires were issued for the pretest, with 2,200 questionnaires subsequently being issued for the formal study. A total of 1,571 questionnaires were returned, of which 1,380 provided valid samples.

Surveys and predictions were carried out on a large sample of Chinese subjects, comprising mainly of those living within Taiwanese society, although some of the participants lived in China or Hong Kong, but worked for Taiwanese firms. The main hypothesis to be corroborated was whether organisations expect different levels of commitment from their employees according to their different job positions.

4.5.2 Questionnaire Design

It is argued in this thesis that in order to achieve completeness, research into the domain of organisational commitment should essentially be expanded from traditional unilateral commitment, referring to the focus on the commitment provided by employees to their organisation, to bilateral commitment, the concept of organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) proposed here. Hence, the research focus in this thesis is placed primarily on ODC, and as such, the questionnaire

design is centered on ODC-related issues.

A major inherent problem for any study on commitment is the fact that an abstract word, such as ‘commitment’ itself, has many associated meanings. A similar situation may be seen to occur in defining the criteria for the proposed concept of ODC. The design of each of the positions within an organisation is based upon the major premise that the organisation has management demand, and that the employees within the organisation make contributions to the organisation through the positions that they hold. In this thesis, the characteristics of these positions are regarded as the factors potentially having key impacts on organisational demand-side (ODC) and employee supply-side (ESC) commitment; indeed, they may serve as a link between ODC and ESC.

Within the research design of this thesis, there is a strong indication that ODC may have a crucial role to play in the creation of different positions with different position characteristics, and in the designation of appropriate position holders. The six position characteristics examined here, which are ‘authority’, ‘complexity’, ‘variation’, ‘sensitivity’, ‘formalisation’ and ‘exclusivity of skills’, also carry multiple meanings, as indicated in the discussions undertaken in both the review of the literature in Chapter 2, and the exploratory study in Chapter 3.

The term ‘authority’, for example, is defined as being characterized by

decision-making power, empowerment, or a situation in which a person is endowed with a wide range and latitude of freedom, in terms of job goals, job sequences, and so on, whilst 'complexity' is associated with factors relating to discord within an organisation, the many vertical position strata, or the complex situations with which a particular position holder may be confronted. 'Variation' also carries multiple meanings, including situations in which position holders may be faced with jobs which vary in nature, or where there is some degree of urgency when the person is required to solve the same sort of problems.

The various definitions of 'sensitivity' are concerned with a position holder's job which involves considerable 'confidentiality', or which is, in essence, clandestine or sensitive. 'Formalisation' emphasizes the fact that there are often limitations relating to specific positions, including issues such as the standardisation and division of power and duty, as well as the regulations which the position holder must follow. 'Exclusivity of skills' evokes the feeling of the tacit, and indeed, potentially incommunicable, nature of the work skills of this particular position holder.

Since these position characteristics carry a range of meanings, it is considered inappropriate to simply develop one question per item definition, and that, instead, a range of questions should be included which might be seen as 'tapping' the relevant aspects of the ODC criteria as they relate to specific aspects of the commitment

expected by the organisation from its individual employees.

Finally, having devised the questionnaire and a framework to facilitate the collection of the empirical data, it will invariably prove worthwhile to carry out a pilot investigation on a small sample of the target population in order to determine the appropriateness of the items selected; that is, to ensure that they are measuring exactly what they are intended to measure (Canter, 1985: 268).

All of the questions in a structured questionnaire are fully written out, and as a result, each person can be asked the same questions in the same order, with the responses being recorded in the same way. In contrast, an unstructured questionnaire is simply a checklist of points used to guide a discussion. Hague (1992: 207) suggests that a structured questionnaire should be used in cases where a large number of interviews is to be carried out. Although an unstructured questionnaire allows researchers to modify interviews to suit the particular circumstances, this is a process which requires much skill and experience, and in practice, it is difficult to use such an approach when conducting a large number of interviews. It should be noted that a total of 1,380 valid questionnaires were undertaken in the formal survey of this thesis.

The formal questionnaires used in the present study (Appendix 4) uses a seven-point Likert-type scale to measure: (i) differences in the six position structure

characteristics, 'authority', 'complexity', 'variation', 'sensitivity', 'formalisation' and 'exclusivity of skills' (Part 1 of the questionnaires); and (ii) differences in the level of organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) expected of individual employees according to the positions they hold and the characteristics of these positions (Part 2 of the questionnaires). The validation of the variables is presented in Chapter 5, whilst the results and multivariate analyses of the different ratings provided by the respondents between ODC and the six position structure characteristics are discussed in Chapter 6.

It was argued by Green and Rao (1970) that response scales should contain at least six points, whilst Lehmann and Hulbert (1972) concluded that scales featuring a minimum of five to six points were usually necessary if the aim of a researcher was to gain a comprehensive understanding of individual behaviour. Based upon a review of the marketing literature over a twenty-year period, Churchill and Peter (1984: 365) concluded that the increase in the number of scale points was accompanied by a discernible increase in the reliability of the measure. They also demonstrated that scales with a mid-point represented forced-choice scales. Diefenbach et al. (1993) found a seven-point scale to be more sensitive than a five-point scale. The examples of the use of seven-point scales provided in Table 4-1 highlight the widespread adoption of such scales in research into organisational commitment.

Table 4-1 Summary of Selected Published Studies Using 7-point Likert-type Scales

Authors	Study Areas and Nature of Scales	Type of Scale	No. of Points Per Item	Sample Size
Stumpf and Hartman (1984)	Organisational commitment	Likert	7	85
Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro (1990)	Perceived organisational support	Likert	7	361
Stanley and Markman (1992)	Commitment inventory	Likert	7	279
Bishop, Scott and Burroughs (2000)	Organisational commitment and team commitment	Likert	7	389
Rhoades, Eisenberger and Armeli (2001)	Work experience; perceived organisational and affective commitment; and employee turnover	Likert	7	367
Wong and Sohal (2002)	Trust and commitment	Likert	7	1,261
Chen, Chen and Huang (2007)	Leadership and organisational commitment	Likert	7	2,462

A Likert scale is a comparative scale under which each question is measured uni-dimensionally. The placement by a questionnaire designer of an object which is to be measured using a Likert scale hinges on the positioning by the designer of each of the other objects; that is, they are comparative in nature. As these objects are mutually compared, this will, in turn, create effective differences between the objects being measured. Given that the scale permits significant latitude of measurement, whilst also allowing each of the objects to be measured to possess an independent characteristic, it is necessary to provide choices, such as “no opinion”, “neutral” or “I don’t know” (Peterson, 2000).

According to DeVellis (2011), the difference in the level of agreement between any of the two adjoining choices in a Likert-type scale should be roughly equal to

that between any of the other two adjoining choices. That is, it should form a regular series from 'strongly disagree', 'disagree' and 'disagree somewhat' to 'agree somewhat', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. It is also permissible to insert a 'mid-point' choice, which has two meanings 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'I may agree or disagree', both of which indicate that they are of equal importance. Where a mid-point choice is included, it provides respondents with the option of ticking a box which they see as a more proper and reasonable choice, thereby reflecting what they really think about the object being measured.

In consideration of all of these suggestions provided in the prior literature, seven-point Likert-type scales were also adopted in the present study to evaluate any differences in the level of organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) which the organisation may expect from its individual employees based upon their position structure characteristics.

4.5.3 Independent Variable Measurement

A total of six independent variables were identified in both the literature review undertaken in Chapter 2, and the exploratory study carried out in Chapter 3. These are described below, with each sub-section providing the statements designed to extract the relevant information; these are measured by responses which relate to the respondents' level of agreement/disagreement.

1. Degree of Authority

This part of the questionnaire measures the degree of authority possessed by a position holder when carrying out their role, with reference being made to the questionnaires conducted by Bell (1966), Hrebiniak (1974) and Liu (1991).

There were five statements in this part of the questionnaire, the measurement of which was based on a Likert seven-point summated scale. The responses to these statements involved placing a tick in the box alongside the level of agreement with the statements, ranging from 'strongly agree' (7 points) to 'strongly disagree' (1 point). The average number of points from the summation of the five statements equates to the level of authority possessed by the position holder.

Statement 1: *This position holder can determine which tasks to do and how to prioritize the tasks that he/she is required to do (based on Table 3-2/AA1/BA1/CA1).*

Statement 2: *This position holder is endowed with considerable power to adopt whatever means necessary to complete a job (based on Table 3-2/AA1/BA1/CA1/CA2).*

Statement 3: *This position holder will often be advised of changes in correlated policies slightly earlier than other position holders (based on CaseC-Issue4-General Manager/Authority).*

Statement 4: *This position holder has considerable influence with regard to setting his/her own job goals (based on Table 3-2/AA1).*

Statement 5: *This position holder has a wide range or latitude of freedom in terms of opportunities for decision making (based on Table 3-2/AA1/AA2/ AA3/AA4/BA1/CA3).*

2. Degree of Complexity

This part of the questionnaire was designed to measure a position holder's job complexity, with reference being made to the questionnaires conducted by Lynch (1974), Macintosh and Daft (1987); Glisson (1978) and Liu (1991). There were six statements in this part of the questionnaire, the measurement of which was based on Likert-type seven-point summated scales. The responses to these statements again involved placing a tick in the box alongside the level of agreement with the statements, ranging from 'strongly agree' (7 points) to 'strongly disagree' (1 point). The average number of points from the summation of the six statements equates to the position holder's level of job complexity.

Statement 1: *Most of the jobs of this position holder are imposed by various other units or positions (based on CaseA-Issue1-Assistant Manager/ Complexity).*

Statement 2: *Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are passed on to other units or position holders who then take over and continue handling the next stage of the jobs already completed by this position holder (based on Table 3-2/AC4).*

Statement 3: *Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are of*

considerable importance to other units or positions (based on Table 3-2/ AC3/AC5/CC3/CC4).

Statement 4: *This position holder can complete work by himself/herself without the need for discussion or consultation with others (based on CaseB-Issue3-Finance Manager/Complexity).*

Statement 5: *This position holder has to be equipped with very complex and sophisticated skills and expertise which enable him/her to effectively complete various tasks (based on Table 3-2/AC1/AC2/AC6/BC1/CC1/CC2).*

Statement 6: *This position holder will often encounter problems of quite a diverse nature (based on Table 3-2/AC7).*

3. Degree of Variation

This part of the questionnaire measures the job variation that a position holder enjoys, with reference being made to the questionnaires conducted by Withey, Daft and Cooper (1983). The measurement of the six statements in this part of the questionnaire was based on a Likert-type seven-point summated scale, with the responses again involving placing a tick in the box alongside the level of agreement with the statements, ranging from 'strongly agree' (7 points) to 'strongly disagree' (1 point). The average number of points from the summation of the six statements equates to the level of job variation provided to the position holder.

- Statement 1: *This position holder often encounters problems that have seldom occurred before (based on Table 3-2/ AV1/CV1).*
- Statement 2: *This position holder will often have to find answers to specific problems, and can often experience discrepancies between the solutions to the same problems (based on Table 3-2/AV3).*
- Statement 3: *This position holder has to find solutions to many general problems, despite often being pressed for time to find solutions to the most difficult problems (based on Table 3-2/AV1/BV1).*
- Statement 4: *This position holder is likely to regularly encounter problems which are extremely difficult to solve or which he/she has no prior experience of solving (based on Table 3-2/BV1/CV1).*
- Statement 5: *No other person within the organisation is capable of providing assistance to this position holder when he/she encounters any difficult situation, as suggested in Statement 4 (based on Table 3-2/AV2).*
- Statement 6: *There are opportunities for this position holder to take turns in other positions, involving the transfer of official duty (based on Table 3-2/ AV1).*

4. Degree of Sensitivity

This part of the questionnaire was designed to measure the degree of sensitivity in the work that a position holder is required to carry out. There were five statements in this part of the questionnaire, the measurement of which was based

upon a Likert-type seven-point summated scale. The responses to these statements again involved placing a tick in the box alongside the level of agreement with the statements, ranging from 'strongly agree' (7 points) to 'strongly disagree' (1 point). The average number of points from the summation of the five statements equates to the degree of sensitivity involved in the work undertaken by the position holder.

Statement 1. *This position holder is often given opportunities to deal with very important and confidential tasks (based on Table 3-2/CS1).*

Statement 2: *What is said and done by this position holder always arouses considerable attention (based on Table 3-2/BS1).*

Statement 3: *Very serious consequences can arise if this position holder has selfish motives (based on Table 3-2/AS1/CS1).*

Statement 4: *This position holder is invariably the first person to be informed about the major decisions to be undertaken by the organisation, such as the reshuffling of personnel, major engineering programmes and contracts, layoffs or salary reductions (based on Table 3-2/AS2/BS1).*

Statement 5: *This position holder is acutely aware of who the 'key men' are in the organisation, in each department or amongst its customers, and hence, is always on good terms with these 'key men' (based on Table 3-2/CS2).*

5. *Degree of Formalisation*

This part of the questionnaire measures the extent to which position holders are affected by rules or guidelines when carrying out their role, with reference being made to the questionnaires conducted by Bell (1966); Hrebiniak (1974); and Liu (1991). There were four statements in this part of the questionnaire, the measurement of which was again based on a Likert-type seven-point summated scale. The responses to these statements involved placing a tick in the box alongside the level of agreement with the statements, ranging from 'strongly agree' (7 points) to 'strongly disagree' (1 point). The average number of points from the summation of the four statements equates to the degree of formalisation involved in the work undertaken by the position holder.

Statement 1: *This position holder should perform his/her job in strict accordance with the company's ground rules or 'standard operating procedures' (SOPs) (based on Table 3-2/AF1/AF2/BF1/CF1/CF2).*

Statement 2: *This position holder should be provided with a copy of comprehensive integrated directions relating to how his/her role is to be carried out (based on Table 3-2/AF1/AF2/BF1/CF1/CF2).*

Statement 3: *There are clearly defined demarcation lines between the 'rights'*

and 'duties' of this position (based on CaseD-Issues5&6-Customer Service Attendant/Formalisation).

Statement 4: *The organisation has a suite of standard training programmes to train new holders of this position (based on CaseD-Issues5&6-Customer Service Attendant/Formalisation).*

6. Exclusivity of Skills

This part of the questionnaire measures the exclusivity of the skills possessed by this position holder, with reference being made to the questionnaires conducted by Lin (1995) and Kogut and Zander (2003), each containing statements aimed at measuring certain conditions that were incommunicable in words. Six statements were involved, the measurement of which was based upon a Likert-type seven-point summated scale, with the responses involving placing a tick in the box alongside the level of agreement with the statements, ranging from 'strongly agree' (7 points) to 'strongly disagree' (1 point). The average number of points from the summation of the six statements equates to the exclusivity of the skills possessed by the position holder.

Statement 1: *The work skills of this position holder are very difficult to describe in either written form or spoken language (based on Table 3-2/AE1/CE1).*

Statement 2: *It is difficult to separate the work skills required for this position*

from those of the 'specified individual' (based on CaseA-Issue2-Chef/ Exclusivity of Skills).

Statement 3: *It would be very difficult to attempt to analyze or stylize the work skills required for this position (based on Table 3-2/AE1).*

Statement 4: *The work skills required for this position cannot be acquired without experience (based on Table 3-2/BE1).*

Statement 5: *It is very difficult to find a competent position holder of this caliber in the HR market (based on Table 3-2/AE2).*

Statement 6: *Any holder of this position possessing such work skills, could easily change his/her occupation or engage in job-hopping to another company (based on CaseA-Issue2-Chef/Exclusivity of Skills).*

4.5.4 Dependent Variable Measurement

From an organisational perspective, particularly within a Taiwanese context, as a result of the power-dependence exchanges that go on between organisations and their employees relating to position characteristics, position holders may be expected to provide some necessary (or minimal) level of commitment to the organisation. As regards the contents and components, these are found to be the same as those relating to traditional commitment; thus, we can argue that they actually refer to the same thing.

Organisational demand-side commitment touches upon the requirements and implementation of planning by the organisation, whilst traditional commitment touches upon the performance of its employees. The former refers to the commitment required by the organisation from its employees, whilst the latter refers to the commitment provided by employees to meet the expectations of the organisation. Thus, question design and question measurement should correspond with each other, thereby enabling researchers to make comparisons between the differences, and to make connections between the organisational design and employee behaviour.

Lee, Chong and Lin (2000) carried out an empirical study on organisational commitment based upon the Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) 'Organisational Commitment Questionnaire' (OCQ). According to Lee et al. (2000), there are three components involved in measuring organisational commitment; these are: (i) 'value commitment' which refers to the strong belief in, and embracing of, the goals and values of the organisation amongst its members; (ii) 'effort commitment', which refers to the willingness amongst employees to put greater effort into their work for the benefit of the organisation; and (iii) 'job-retention commitment', which refers to the willingness amongst employees to continue working for the same organisation, and to consistently regard themselves as 'members' of the organisation.

Many other studies have since provided further support for this view of the three components of value, effort and job-retention commitment making up the measurement of organisational commitment between an organisation and its employees (examples include Hackett, Lapierre and Hausdorf, 2001; Whitener, 2001; Leong, Huang and Hsu, 2003; Bogler and Somech, 2004; and Kwon and Banks, 2004).

The measurement of the dependent variable is also carried out in this study using the OCQ measurement tool, originally compiled by Mowday et al. (1979), later revised by Wu and Yang (1982) and Ding (1987), and subsequently adopted by Jan (2006) and Hou (2006). The OCQ, which has been widely used in different fields, comprises of 15 'agree/disagree' statements, and, most importantly, has consistently been regarded as effectively meeting its primary purpose. The measure is based upon a Likert-type seven-point summated scale, where the options are 'strongly agree' (7 points), 'agree' (6 points), 'agree somewhat' (5 points), 'no opinion' (4 points), 'disagree somewhat' (3 points), 'disagree' (2 points) and 'strongly disagree' (1 point).

The questionnaire in the present study, which similarly comprises of 15 statements based upon a Likert-type seven-point scale, was designed from an organisational standpoint; that is, the line manager and HR manager of the

organisation were able to directly inquire into the necessary demand-side commitment level of a specific position holder. The appropriate syntax selected was that: “as compared to other position holders, this position holder should...”

The respondents were asked to place a tick in the appropriate box ranging from ‘strongly agree’ (7 points) to ‘strongly disagree’ (1 point) in accordance with their decreasing level of agreement. The average score from the summation of these 15 statements equates to the organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) for a particular position holder.

Statement 1: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a greater willingness to put in extra effort aimed at helping the organisation to achieve success.*

Statement 2: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder tends to describe the organisation to friends/colleagues as a “good” organisation that is worthy of his/her continuing efforts.*

Statement 3: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder is likely to have a higher degree of loyalty to the organisation.*

Statement 4: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder is likely to be more willing to do whatever the organisation tasks him/her with in order to show his/her desire to remain.*

Statement 5: *As compared to the personal goals of other position holders, the personal goals of this position holder are more likely to be very close to those of the organisation.*

Statement 6: *As compared to other position holders, at the mention of the name of the organisation, this position holder is likely to be very proud to be a member.*

Statement 7: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder is least likely to engage in job-hopping to another organization offering similar job opportunities.*

Statement 8: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a positive belief that he/she can bring his/her abilities into full play if he/she continues to work in this organisation.*

Statement 9: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder would be least likely to decide to leave purely as a result of certain changes within the organisation.*

Statement 10: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder would always regard themselves as being fortunate to work within this particular organisation, as opposed to any other.*

Statement 11: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a strong belief that it is worthwhile to continue working for this organisation.*

Statement 12: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder will undoubtedly consent to important policies pertaining to the employees within the organisation.*

Statement 13: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder is more concerned about the future of the organisation.*

Statement 14: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder*

always demonstrates a belief that the organisation is the best amongst all of the organisations for which he/she might potentially wish to work.

Statement 15: *As compared to other position holders, this position holder is of the opinion that it was absolutely right for him/her to decide to work for this organisation.*

4.5.5 Control Variable Measurement

1. Gender

In carrying out our regression analyses, 'Gender' operates as a dummy variable, taking the value of 1 for males, and 0 for females.

2. Tenure of the Respondents at their Current Position

Two methods are used to measure tenure in the present study: (i) the measurement of the exact number of years that the respondents have remained at their current position within the organisation; and (ii) the division of tenure into four specific time groups (in periods of years). These groups are 0-3 years, 4-5 years, 6-10 years and over 10 years.

4.6 Sampling Design

The study sample plays a crucial role in questionnaire research; indeed, the success or failure of a questionnaire survey can directly hinge upon the quality of the sample, which itself is reliant upon an appropriate sampling method to ensure the procurement

of a good quality sample. The present study employs 'stratified sampling', with the steps involved being described as follows.

All of the constituent elements (that is, the total target population) were first of all divided into small groups according to their different nature or type, with each small group being referred to as a 'stratum'. Some of the elements within each stratum were then extracted to form a sample group. When carrying out stratified sampling, we have to follow the principle, "the more homogeneity in the same strata the better, and the more heterogeneity in the different strata the better" (Chen et al., 2002; Scheaffer, Mendenhall and Ott, 2006; Chu, 2007, Neuman, 2010; and Babbie, 2010b). As regards the number of elements to be extracted from each stratum, this is dependent upon the proportion of the total elements in the population (Chen et al., 2002; Scheaffer et al., 2006; Ying, 2009; and Lin et al., 2009).

The research focus within the present study falls on four types of service industry, 'a hotel', 'a club', 'a boarding school' and 'others'; the reason for the selection of these four service industry types as the subjects of this research is essentially that in any of these four service industries in Taiwan, say for example, a boarding school, there are numerous types of positions, each associated with unique characteristics which can differ significantly from those of any other position within the organisation. Furthermore, there can often be numerous classes of 'position

rankings' which are endowed upon the various position holders by the school authorities.

The division of labor in a boarding school is also extremely subtle; that is to say, there are all kinds of departments or units within a boarding school that are responsible for offering services in their respective, specialist fields. In specific terms, there can be a food and beverage department, separate canteen and cafeteria departments, laundry department, lodging department, transportation department, renovation department, teachers' office and students' office, each of which is obliged to satisfy the respective demands of teachers, students and their parents.

Generally speaking, each of the service industries selected as the research subjects in this thesis can be said to be a society in miniature. The four types of service industry selected for this study corresponded to the author's research aims, which essentially involved the examination and analysis of the impacts of 'position characteristics' on ODC. In addition to employing stratified sampling, the sampling method should also correspond to the principles which were outlined earlier (in Sub-section 4.1.1), and which are further described below, in order to ensure the procurement of high quality samples (Chang, 2004; Chu, 2007; Liu, 2009; and Feng, 2009).

4.6.1 Principles of Sample Selection

The research theme in the present study is ‘organisational commitment’, with the study range focusing strongly on ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC), a concept which refers to the commitment expected by the organisation from its employees; therefore, the analysis of this concept should clearly be undertaken from the perspective of the organisation. The sample selection criteria adopted for this study are explained as follows.

The independent research variables selected for this thesis are position characteristics, and since both organisations and their employees are included within the research range, information or data pertaining to both parties should be acquired in an extremely thorough way. Thus, managerial-level respondents randomly selected a certain position and were then asked to respond, from an organisational perspective, to the characteristics of the assessed respondents’ position and commitment expected by the organisation.

In order to ensure that the respondents answered the statements objectively, ‘thing’ and ‘person’ were clearly separated; in other words, it was impressed upon the study sample that when responding to the statements in the questionnaire, their responses should be based on the ‘position’ as opposed to the identity of the ‘position holder’. Thus, objective information or data on the actual ODC situation

could be acquired from the employees within the organisation.

4.6.2 Sensitive Nature of the Samples

There are essentially two reasons for the high level of sensitivity in the information acquisition process in this thesis, as follows:

1. Commitment-related questions involve the examination of a person's loyalty, turnover intentions, desire to put in additional effort, and so on; thus, many of the respondents were clearly likely to be sensitive to such questioning.
2. As the questionnaire respondents were managerial-level employees, it is natural that they would not choose to reveal their likes or dislikes of a position or position holder to their subordinates; nor would they choose to reveal their attitude towards any specific employee by singling them out by name.

In order to overcome such problems in this thesis – problems which could quite easily undermine the validity and reliability of the responses to the statements – the following two methods were adopted:

1. Accompanied by the HR manager, the author visited employees who were in charge of different units within the target organisations, and also provided a firm promise that none of the data in the questionnaire would ever be revealed. The organisation was provided with a further promise that neither the name of the unit nor the name of any position holder within the organisation would ever

be made known during or after the analysis and exploration of the data.

2. In order to relieve the person in charge of the unit of any misgivings, the HR department convened the supervisors of the respective departments, sections or offices of the organisation under the guise of a lecture or seminar. The survey on the commitment expected by the organisation from a specific position was then carried out, with the participants responding anonymously to the questionnaire.

A seat list was prepared in advance, with a secret mark having been made beforehand on the questionnaire. The respondents were then asked to take their respective seats. This served as a check of the identification of each respondent for use only during the course of the research. In order to ensure that a high standard of moral ethics was maintained for this thesis, the HR department and the individuals concerned were specifically informed that there would be no clear indication of the actual name of any unit or person concerned in the research outcome.

4.6.3 The Cooperativeness of the Respondents

In addition to the high level of sensitivity involved in the data-collection process, there was clearly the possibility of the process taking up an enormous amount of time and resources for respondents in any enterprise to complete the task. Therefore, in order to take precautions against there being only a 'lukewarm' desire amongst the participants

to respond appropriately to the questionnaires, the following measures were taken in this research study.

The samples would be acquired as much as possible through interpersonal networks, such as introductions being made to a respondent by a personnel supervisor or by being accompanied by the superior of a department or a section chief when meeting the respondent. Furthermore, in addition to many of the service industry targets with which the author was already familiar, including hotels and clubs, several large-scale private boarding schools were also selected for presentation and completion of the questionnaire survey.

The selected boarding schools were fully-fledged schools with a complete system of functions and quite a complex hierarchy, with at least 1,500 students in each school. The respective departments, sections or offices were thoroughly surveyed, thereby avoiding the problem of the incompleteness of questionnaire surveys carried out by mail. Some of the Top 500 companies in Taiwan, as well as branches of Taiwan-based companies located in China and Hong Kong, were also selected as survey targets.

As alluded to earlier, both hotels and private boarding schools in Taiwan can essentially be regarded as societies in miniature, in that all manner of activities tend to occur within them, including the provision of food and beverages, laundry

facilities, contract construction, renovation work, the teachers' union, teaching affairs and student affairs, along with the management of their daily lives, personal hygiene, sanitation, health care, retail activities, and so on. Since all of the abovementioned large-scale hotels, firms and private boarding schools had complete functional systems and complex divisions of positions, much more correlated information would be offered to enable comparisons to be made between the various position structure characteristics and different levels of organisational demand-side commitment.

The initial step involved the presentation and completion of the questionnaire survey in three large-scale private boarding schools, each of which was located in diverse regions of Taiwan (in the Northern, Central and Southern regions), as well as in several hotels and firms. Throughout all of these target organisations, there were several dozen sections and offices, as well as over a hundred different positions. As a result, in the presentation of the questionnaire survey, two ideal research outcomes fortunately arose, as follows:

1. Since this thesis focuses on 'positions', the more positions there are, the better the external validity of the survey.
2. The author was provided with a large number of samples on which to undertake comparisons of the differences between a variety of position structure

characteristics and their effects on organisational demand-side commitment.

4.7 Validation of the Measurement Scales

Validation involves the systematic assessment of all factors influencing the results, including assessment of the uncertainty of the results based upon scientific understanding of the theoretical principle of the methodology and practical experience. The SPSS statistical software package was used for the analysis of all of the data collected for this study. Descriptive statistics were first of all computed, followed by calculation of the reliability – as a measure of internal consistency – and validation of the measurement scales. The validation of the measurement scales is presented in Chapter 5, whilst the methods employed for the data collection and corroboration of the hypotheses are explained in Chapter 6.

4.8 Data Analysis

The data analysis carried out in this thesis begins with careful examination of the univariate frequency distribution of each variable to be employed in a subsequent multivariate analysis. The data analysis methods employed for this thesis included ‘descriptive statistics’, ‘T-test’, ‘ANOVA test’ and ‘Pearson’s correlation coefficient test’, ‘cross tabulation’, the ‘Chi-square test of significance’, and both ‘regression’ and ‘factor’ analyses.

Along with the methods described above, ‘control variable analysis’ was also

undertaken in order to examine and analyze whether there were any discernible differences between the perspectives of male and female respondents in the correlation between each of the six position characteristics and ODC. Further details are subsequently presented in Chapter 6.

4.9 Conclusions

As noted in the previous chapter, the study on which this thesis is based may be the first of its kind to present this concept of organisational demand-side commitment (ODC). The reason for presenting this concept is that any examination, for example, of the 'solar family', would clearly not be regarded as being complete if it did not include any discussion on the outlying comets.

Similarly, when discussing 'organisational commitment', the discussion would clearly be incomplete if we failed to mention organisational demand-side commitment, in that the traditional focus on employee supply-side commitment to the organisation can only act as a one-way link between employees and their organisation, as opposed to an additional link between organisations and their employees. Clearly, this could, in turn, detract from the dynamic assertion of a 'harmonic organisation', regarded as a body in equilibrium, an entity in a perfect state, creating instead, a state of disequilibrium.

In summary, the exploration and discussion of organisational demand-side

commitment is indispensable if researchers wish to obtain comprehensive research findings pertaining to organisational commitment; however, it must be made clear that there has never been any intention in this study of neglecting or underrating the importance of traditional employee supply-side commitment to the organisation; indeed, this is equally scrutinized in the literature review presented in Chapter 2. What has been presented in this chapter is the research design, data collection, questionnaire design, variable measurement, sampling design and conceptual framework; thus, as illustrated in Figure 4-3, this chapter has been concerned with the conduct and validity of the research study, 'the research journey'.

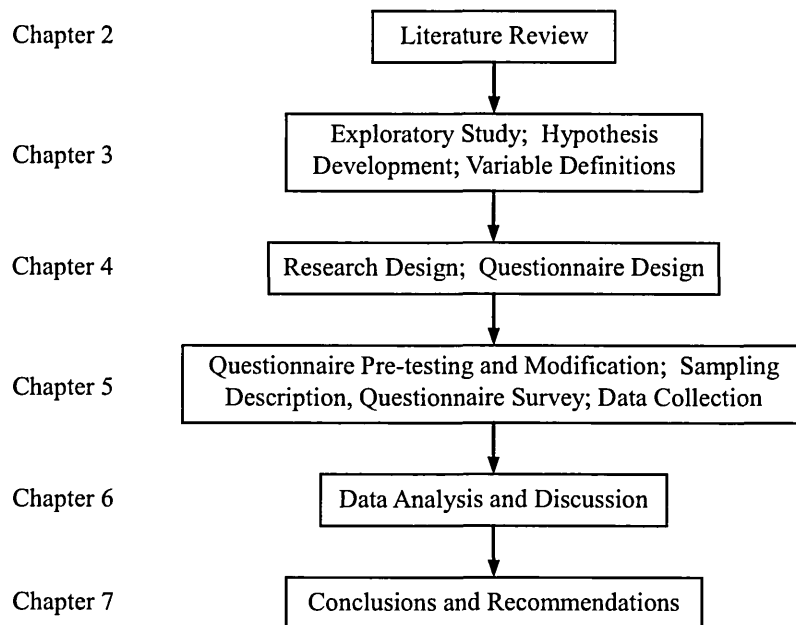


Figure 4-3 Research Framework

Chapter 5 Validation of the Measurement Scales

5.1 Introduction

The validation of the results of any research involves the systematic assessment of all factors influencing the final results (Chiu, 2011); in the present study, the assessment of the level of uncertainty of the results is based upon a scientific understanding of the theoretical principles, the methodology and practical experience. The data analysis in this thesis uses the SPSS statistics software package, and begins with the computation of the descriptive statistics, which is then followed by the validation of the measurement scales carried out using 'principal component analysis' (PCA). Finally, the calculation of the Cronbach's α is adopted as the measure of the reliability of internal consistency.

This chapter begins by providing a discussion on the process of the pretesting of the measurement instrument (the questionnaires), with the pretesting involving a sample of 180 respondents. Item analysis, validity analysis and reliability analysis were subsequently carried out on the questionnaires returned by these respondents, with these three types of analysis verifying the correctness and feasibility of the sample. This then served as the blueprint for the modification and development of the final questionnaires (Figure 5-1).

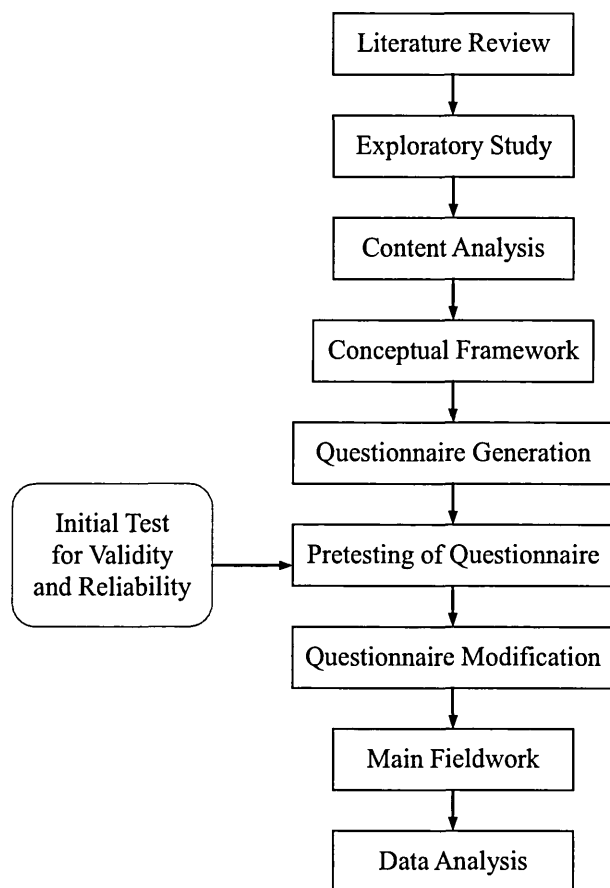


Figure 5-1 The Procedural Steps of the Study Survey

This chapter presents the sample selection methods and the approaches adopted for the data analysis in this thesis, with the validation of the measurement scales providing confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that the requirements for a specific intended use or application of an instrument, such as the questionnaire survey adopted for this thesis, have all been fulfilled.

5.2 Pre-testing the Questionnaires

Validation of an instrument is necessary in order to test its suitability for a particular purpose. As discussed in Chapter 4, the revision of the research instruments (the

questionnaires) is undertaken in this section in order to ensure that the research aims are measured in ways that are closely aligned with real-life situations. It is generally understood that once a questionnaire has been compiled by a researcher, it must undergo a pre-test before being delivered to the target population, with this pre-test usually being undertaken based upon a relatively small number of samples. The results of the pre-test must then undergo scrutiny to verify their reliability and validity, resulting in the contents being adjusted and inappropriate questions being deleted.

A test for reliability is a key method of evaluating research findings, in the sense that different researchers, or the same researcher on a different occasion, would “discover the same phenomena or generate the same constructs in the same or similar settings” ... such that reliability essentially refers to ... “the extent to which studies can be replicated” (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982: 32, 35).

The reliability of a measurement method also refers to its consistency; that is, the extent to which a measuring device will produce the same results when applied more than once to the same individual under similar conditions. The most straightforward way of testing for reliability is to replicate the situation. More sophisticated versions of these processes have been reviewed in significant detail by Moser and Kalton (1971), and more succinctly by Brennan (2001). Another meaning attached to ‘reliability’ is that this criterion basically refers to the consistency of the results

obtained throughout the processes of various research studies. According to Alwin (2007), such processes are seen as a vital aspect of scientific work.

‘Validity’ refers to the appropriateness of a group of questions reflecting the degree of a certain content domain (DeVellis, 2011), and also to the accuracy of the measurement process. Once all of this has been considered and applied, the final questionnaire can be created. Thus, the overall analysis of the proposed study (i.e., the testing of the hypotheses) can then be undertaken on a large scale.

The pretest samples for this thesis were obtained from 180 individual respondents in organisations of different sizes, with specific effort being placed into ensuring that the participants had diverse periods of tenure within the organisation. The response rate for the pre-test questionnaire was 100%. The main reason was that prior to doing the sample-pretesting, the author communicated in advance with senior HR managers through the personnel network to make sure that they were willing to participate in the pretest. Besides, the author went to the sample-pretesting scene in person to give some pretesting explanations to the participants, hand-issuing as well as hand-retrieving all the questionnaires. Once these questionnaires had been returned (having gone through the pre-testing process), the analysis of validity and reliability was subsequently carried out, with ‘item analysis’ initially being applied in order to ensure the deletion of those questions which did not exhibit

discriminant ability.

In the evaluation of construct validity, it is of crucial importance to ascertain whether or not a question has discriminant ability; this is essential because a question with no such discriminant ability will provide an invalid test result if there are no differences in attitudes between those respondents who obtain high scores when answering the question and those respondents who obtain low scores when answering the very same question. 'Principal Component Analysis' was subsequently carried out, resulting in those questions with factor loadings that were too low ultimately being deleted. Finally, the Cronbach's α coefficient test was undertaken in order to determine the reliability of all of the questions. The outcome of all of this is that the final questionnaire is equipped with high levels of both reliability and validity.

Following the compilation of the final questionnaire, a formal test was subsequently carried out, resulting in a total of 1,380 valid samples being returned. As a result of this process, a concise description was obtained of the characteristics of the sample respondents, including the distribution of the sample by gender, geographical location, distinction and tenure. The processes involved in the pretesting of the questionnaires in this thesis are described below.

5.2.1 Sample Selection

Three small-sized organisations (each with 49 employees or less), three medium-sized organisations (each with 50-249 employees), and three large-scale organisations (each with a total number of employees in excess of 250), were selected as the test sample in this thesis (Table 5-1). A total of 60 questionnaires were issued to each of the three different-sized groups of organisations, giving a grand total of 180 questionnaires, with the proportionate distribution between the small-, medium- and large-sized organisations being exactly 33.33 per cent.

The 60 questionnaires issued to each of the three groups of organisations were then divided into three sub-groups based upon the tenure of service of the respondents (0-3 years, 4-10 years and >10 years). Given that small-sized organisations are generally found to have very few employees with high tenure, the distribution of the 20 questionnaires in these organisations, as shown in Table 5-1, followed a ratio of eight questionnaires to those employees in the low-tenure group (0-3 years), eight to those employees in the medium-tenure group (4-10 years) and four to those employees in the high-tenure group (>10 years).

The distribution ratio of the questionnaires in a medium-sized organisation was seven for both the low- and medium-tenure groups, and six for the high-tenure group. In a large-size organisation, the distribution ratio of the questionnaires was six for the

low-tenure group, and seven for both the medium- and high-tenure groups.

Table 5-1 Sample Selection for the Questionnaire Pre-testing

Tenure (Years)	Number of Employees									Total	%
	≤49			50-249			≥250				
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I		
0-3	8	8	8	7	7	7	6	6	6	63	35.00
4-10	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	7	7	66	36.67
>10	4	4	4	6	6	6	7	7	7	51	28.33
Total	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	180	100.00

Table 5-1 also shows that those employees in the low-tenure group accounted for 35.00 per cent of the total sample, with those in the medium-tenure group accounting for 36.67 per cent, and those in the high-tenure group accounting for 28.33 per cent. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that the distribution structure of the sample in this study is well-balanced.

5.2.2 Item Analysis

Once the pretest questionnaires had been returned, they were then subjected to item analysis, which is one of many analysis methods adopted in various studies, with the main purpose being to identify whether the questions featured in two different question groups have ‘discriminant ability’; this is ascertained by carrying out a difference test between the two question groups (Chiu, 2011). Item analysis hinges upon the ‘critical ratio’ (CR) which, in this study, is actually the *t*-value in the *t*-test. The process involved in carrying out item analysis, the aim of which is to appropriately assess the pretest questions, is as follows.

First of all, those respondents answering the same question are divided into three scoring range groups, after which the middle group is deleted. Thereafter, the two remaining groups with high and low scores are tested in order to determine whether the difference between the two groups, in terms of the mean of the question, achieves any level of significance. Amongst all of the pretest questions, the scores of those questions accounting for the first 27 per cent are categorized as belonging to the high-score group, whilst the scores of those questions accounting for the last 27 per cent are categorized as belonging to the low-score group.

A *t*-test (difference test) is subsequently carried out to examine whether, for each of the questions, the difference between the high- and low-score groups has any statistical level of significance. The method of determining whether the pretest questions belong to the high- or low-score groups is dependent on the critical ratio (CR), and thus, the value obtained through the *t*-test is referred to as its CR value.

The greater the CR value of a particular question, then the larger the gap there is likely to be between the high and low scores of the question, which in turn, indicates that the question has higher discriminant ability (Neuman, 2010). The higher the CR value, the greater the level of significance; that is, the greater the difference between the high-score group and the low-score group, the higher the discriminant ability of a question, thereby indicating the importance of the CR value.

The position characteristics scale and the 'Organisational Demand-side Commitment Questionnaire' (ODCQ) for this thesis were previously developed in Chapter 4. We now examine the CR values in order to assess the quality of the questionnaires. A CR value of greater than 3 is usually regarded as acceptable, although it must reach a 0.01 level of significance, otherwise it will not achieve sufficiently high discriminant ability; if this is the case, then the relevant question should be deleted (Wu and Tu, 2009). In this study, the screening or deletion of an inappropriate questionnaire agree/disagree statement follows the abovementioned standard; that is, the CR of a questionnaire statement must be greater than 3, and it must achieve a 0.01 level of significance, otherwise, the statement will be deleted.

5.2.3 Item Analysis of the Position Characteristic Statements

The results of the item analysis on 32 agree/disagree statements relating to position characteristics are presented in Table 5-2. The process of item analysis highlighted four statements, the discriminant ability of which failed to achieve a 0.01 level of significance; thus, these statements were deleted. The four deleted items were Statements 3, 21, 22 and 26. On completion of this stage, validity analysis and reliability analysis were subsequently carried out.

Table 5-2 Questionnaire Statements on Position Characteristics

Questionnaire Statements on Position Characteristics	CR value	Deleted (Y/N)
1. This position holder can determine which tasks to do and how to prioritize the tasks that he/she is required to do.	4.938***	N
2. This position holder is endowed with considerable power to adopt whatever means necessary to complete a job.	3.779***	N
3. This position holder will often be advised of changes in correlated policies slightly earlier than other position holders.	2.566*	Y
4. This position holder has considerable influence with regard to setting his/her own job goals.	7.319***	N
5. This position holder has a wide range or latitude of freedom in terms of opportunities for decision making.	5.754***	N
6. Most of the jobs of this position holder are imposed by various other units or positions.	6.588***	N
7. Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are passed on to other units or position holders who then take over and continue handling the next stage of the jobs already completed by this position holder.	5.462***	N
8. Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are of considerable importance to other units or positions.	4.276***	N
9. This position holder can complete work by himself/herself without the need for discussion or consultation with others.	3.927***	N
10. This position holder has to be equipped with very complex and sophisticated skills and expertise which enable him/her to effectively complete various tasks.	4.877***	N
11. This position holder will often encounter problems of quite a diverse nature.	5.085***	N
12. This position holder often encounters problems that have seldom occurred before.	5.822***	N
13. This position holder will often have to find answers to specific problems, and can often experience discrepancies between the solutions to the same problems.	7.211***	N
14. This position holder has to find solutions to many general problems, despite often being pressed for time to find solutions to the most difficult problems.	6.112***	N
15. This position holder is likely to regularly encounter problems which are extremely difficult to solve or which he/she has no prior experience of solving.	5.357***	N
16. No other person within the organisation is capable of providing assistance to this position holder when he/she encounters any difficult situation, as suggested in Statement 15.	5.223***	N
17. There are opportunities for this position holder to take turns in other positions, involving the transfer of official duty.	4.201***	N
18. This position holder is often given opportunities to deal with very important and confidential tasks.	4.988***	N

Table 5-2 (Contd.)

Questionnaire Statements on Position Characteristics	CR value	Deleted (Y/N)
19. What is said and done by this position holder always arouses considerable attention.	5.633***	N
20. Very serious consequences can arise if this position holder has selfish motives.	3.766***	N
21. This position holder is invariably the first person to be informed about the major decisions to be undertaken by the organisation, such as the reshuffling of personnel, major engineering programmes and contracts, layoffs or salary reductions.	1.009*	Y
22. This position holder is acutely aware of who the 'key men' are in the organisation, in each department or amongst its customers, and hence, is always on good terms with these 'key men'.	0.940*	Y
23. This position holder should perform his/her job in strict accordance with the company's ground rules or 'standard operating procedures' (SOPs).	3.925***	N
24. This position holder should be provided with a copy of comprehensive integrated directions relating to how his/her role is to be carried out.	4.566***	N
25. There are clearly defined demarcation lines between the 'rights' and 'duties' of this position.	4.971***	N
26. The organisation has a suite of standard training programmes to train new holders of this position.	2.511*	Y
27. The work skills of this position holder are very difficult to describe in either written form or spoken language.	7.158***	N
28. It is difficult to separate the work skills required for this position from those of the 'specified individual'.	6.639***	N
29. It would be very difficult to attempt to analyze or stylize the work skills required for this position.	5.482***	N
30. The work skills required for this position cannot be acquired without experience.	5.219***	N
31. It is very difficult to find a competent position holder of this caliber in the HR market.	6.398***	N
32. Any holder of this position possessing such work skills, could easily change his/her occupation or engage in job-hopping to another company.	4.421***	N

Note: * indicates $p < 0.05$; ** indicates $p < 0.01$; and *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

5.2.4 Item Analysis of the ODCQ

The results of the item analysis, which was also carried out on the 15 agree/disagree statements in the ODCQ, are presented in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3 Organisational Demand-side Commitment Questionnaire Pre-test Statements

ODCQ Pre-test Statements	CR value	Deleted (Y/N)
1. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a greater willingness to put in extra effort aimed at helping the organisation to achieve success.	9.112***	N
2. As compared to other position holders, this position holder tends to describe the organisation to friends/colleagues as a "good" organisation that is worthy of his/her continuing efforts.	6.487***	N
3. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is likely to have a higher degree of loyalty to the organisation.	7.151***	N
4. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is likely to be more willing to do whatever the organisation tasks him/her with in order to show his/her desire to remain.	5.471***	N
5. As compared to the personal goals of other position holders, the personal goals of this position holder are more likely to be very close to those of the organisation.	4.656***	N
6. As compared to other position holders, at the mention of the name of the organisation, this position holder is likely to be very proud to be a member.	8.285***	N
7. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is least likely to engage in job-hopping to another organization offering similar job opportunities.	6.998***	N
8. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a positive belief that he/she can bring his/her abilities into full play if he/she continues to work in this organisation.	8.333***	N
9. As compared to other position holders, this position holder would be least likely to decide to leave purely as a result of certain changes within the organisation.	8.622***	N
10. As compared to other position holders, this position holder would always regard themselves as being fortunate to work within this particular organisation, as opposed to any other.	4.353***	N
11. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a strong belief that it is worthwhile to continue working for this organisation.	7.158***	N
12. As compared to other position holders, this position holder will undoubtedly consent to important policies pertaining to the employees within the organisation.	1.977*	Y
13. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is more concerned about the future of the organisation.	4.668***	N
14. As compared to other position holders, this position holder always demonstrates a belief that the organisation is the best amongst all of the organisations for which he/she might potentially wish to work.	10.989***	N
15. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is of the opinion that it was absolutely right for him/her to decide to work for this organisation.	9.541***	N

Note: * indicates $p < 0.05$; ** indicates $p < 0.01$; and *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

As a result of the application of item analysis, the CR value of Statement 12

achieved only a 0.05 level of significance, and thus, did not exhibit discriminant ability; this statement was therefore deleted.

5.3 Validity Analysis

Once the process of item analysis had been completed, the examination of the validity of the questionnaires was carried out. The 'validity' construct, which refers to authenticity, is a concept defined by a researcher to be implemented during the process of measurement; that is, the degree of the consistency of a concept is referred to as its 'validity' (Babbie, 2010a). External validity refers to the extent to which any research findings can be generalized, or extrapolated, emphasising the extensiveness (Chiu, 2011), the coverage and the sufficiency of the instrument, and is used as a main basis for external inference; thus, external validity is applied in this thesis.

The validity of the questionnaires was first of all examined by means of 'face validity', which refers to the degree of the validity of the outward form of a measurement instrument. Amongst the various forms of validity, face validity is the easiest to achieve. It is essentially a measurement instrument employed by the scientific community to decide whether a construct is actually measured; that is, face validity verifies, or appraises, the subjective assessment of the degree of validity of the outward form of the measurement instrument (Neuman, 2010).

The statements in the questionnaire adopted for the exploratory study in this

thesis can be said to have face validity, essentially because the mapping-out of these statements was based upon correlated literature, academic research and expert opinion (Dr. Edward C.K. Lin, Vice President of Ruentex Group). However, it is also clear that what face validity lacks is empirical assessment; that is, there is clearly a requirement for an additional method for the evaluation of the validity of the measurement scales (Chiu, 2011).

In order to take this into consideration, ‘principal component analysis’ (PCA) was also applied in this thesis to effectively examine the ‘construct validity’ of the measurement scales (Neuman, 2010). ‘Construct validity’ refers to the ability of the scales to actually measure certain abstract concepts or characteristics of the variables to be measured (Brown, 2000). The testing and verification of construct validity should be built upon a particular theoretical basis, ‘organisational commitment’ theory, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. The process of theory clarification can elicit items such as potential characteristics or behavioral performance that have much to do with the basic hypothesis. Empirical methodology is then employed in order to confirm whether the measurement result actually meets the theoretical content.

The particular type of PCA used in this thesis is known as a data-reduction technique, where the scores of the linear integration of the group with fewer questions or items for analysis (i.e., the principal components) can account for the

greatest explained variance of the variables to be measured. Since PCA can only build up scores of linear integration, it dismisses the possibility of any errors being incorporated in the variable measurement process (Chiu, 2011).

Bryman (2008) noted that we should be aware that PCA is often confused with 'factor analysis' (FA), the functions of which, despite also being a type of data reduction, are to identify the specific factor which best explains the covariates of the variables to be measured, and to estimate the effects of the errors on each of these variables; these are the main differences between FA and PCA. The data reduction in PCA is concerned with providing a valid explanation of the variance of the variables to be measured, whereas the primary purpose in applying FA is factor extraction; that is, ruling out the measurement errors in order to validly explain the covariance amongst the variables being measured. PCA is regarded as the more appropriate method of validation analysis for use in the present study (Chiu, 2011).

Once the process of item analysis was completed, the validity analysis of the position characteristics and ODC was subsequently carried out using factor analysis, where the factors with eigenvalues of >1 were extracted based upon the 'principal components analysis'. Varimax was used as the means of rotation (Bryman, 2008; Hair et al., 2009; Neuman, 2010, Healey, 2011; Chiu, 2011), with the ultimate aim being to delete those statements with a factor loading of less than 0.45.

5.3.1 Validity Analysis of the Position Characteristic Statements

Since item analysis resulted in the deletion of four of the 32 position characteristic statements, validity analysis, using PCA, was subsequently carried out on the remaining 28 statements. The results of the validity analysis are presented in Table 5-4, where the analysis sequence for the six position characteristics runs from the strongest to the weakest.

Table 5-4 Factor Loading Values of the Position Characteristic Statements

Position Characteristic Statements	Authority	Variation	Exclusivity of skills	Complexity	Formalisation	New Component	Deleted (Y/N)
2. This position holder is endowed with considerable power to adopt whatever means necessary to complete a job.	0.851	-	-	-	-	-	N
4. This position holder has considerable influence with regard to setting his/her own job goals.	0.812	-	-	-	-	-	N
1. This position holder can determine which tasks to do and how to prioritize the tasks that he/she is required to do.	0.809	-	-	-	-	-	N
5. This position holder has a wide range or latitude of freedom in terms of opportunities for decision making.	0.784	-	-	-	-	-	N
15. This position holder is likely to regularly encounter problems which are extremely difficult to solve or which he/she has no prior experience of solving.	-	0.826	-	-	-	-	N
13. This position holder will often have to find answers to specific problems, and can often experience discrepancies between the solutions to the same problems.	-	0.720	-	-	-	-	N
16. No other person within the organisation is capable of providing assistance to this position holder when he/she encounters any difficult situation, as suggested in Statement 15.	-	0.631	-	-	-	-	N
14. This position holder has to find solutions to many general problems, despite often being pressed for time to find solutions to the most difficult problems.	-	0.620	-	-	-	-	N
12. This position holder often encounters problems that seldom occurred before.	-	0.617	-	-	-	-	N
17. There are opportunities for this position holder to take turns in other positions, involving the transfer of official duty.	-	0.378	-	-	-	-	Y
29. It would be very difficult to attempt to analyze or stylize the work skills required for this position.	-	-	0.762	-	-	-	N
27. The work skills of this position holder are very difficult to describe in either written form or spoken language.	-	-	0.749	-	-	-	N
30. The work skills required for this position cannot be acquired without experience.	-	-	0.639	-	-	-	N
28. It is difficult to separate the work skills required for this position from those of the 'specified individual'.	-	-	0.624	-	-	-	N
32. Any holder of this position possessing such work skills, could easily change his/her occupation or engage in job-hopping to another company.	-	-	0.473	-	-	-	N

Table 5-4 (Contd.)

Position Characteristic Statements	Authority	Variation	Exclusivity of skills	Complexity	Formalisation	New Component	Deleted (Y/N)
31. It is very difficult to find a competent position holder of this caliber in the HR market.	-	-	0.471	-	-	-	N
11. This position holder will often encounter problems of quite a diverse nature.	-	-	-	0.715	-	-	N
8. Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are of considerable importance to other units or positions.	-	-	-	0.627	-	-	N
10. This position holder has to be equipped with very complex and sophisticated skills and expertise which enable him/her to effectively complete various tasks.	-	-	-	0.551	-	-	N
9. This position holder can complete work by himself/herself without the need for discussion or consultation with others.	-	-	-	0.424	-	-	Y
19. What is said and done by this position holder always arouses considerable attention.	-	-	-	0.419	-	-	Y
20. Very serious consequences can arise if this position holder has selfish motives.	-	-	-	0.365	-	-	Y
24. This position holder should be provided with a copy of comprehensive integrated directions relating to how his/her role is to be carried out.	-	-	-	-	0.867	-	N
25. There are clearly defined demarcation lines between the 'rights' and 'duties' of this position.	-	-	-	-	0.867	-	N
23. This position holder should perform his/her job in strict accordance with the company's ground rules or 'standard operating procedures' (SOPs).	-	-	-	-	0.783	-	N
7. Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are passed on to other units or position holders who then take over and continue handling the next stage of the jobs already completed by this position holder.	-	-	-	-	-	0.760	N
6. Most of the jobs of this position holder are imposed by various other units or positions.	-	-	-	-	-	0.727	N
18. This position holder is often given opportunities to deal with very important and confidential tasks.	-	-	-	-	-	0.519	N
Eigenvalues	7.399	2.560	2.143	1.532	1.265	1.059	
Share of explained variance (%)	13.887	11.555	11.071	9.642	9.262	8.415	
Total explained variance (%)				63.832			

The application of factor analysis resulted in the deletion of Statements 9, 17, 19 and 20, based upon their factor loading being too low, with six factors being extracted from the remaining statements. Factor 1, the concept of ‘authority’ was reflected in Statements 2, 4, 1 and 5; Factor 2, the concept of ‘variation’ was reflected in Statements 15, 13, 16, 14 and 12; and Factor 3, the concept of ‘exclusivity of skills’ was reflected in Statements 29, 27, 30, 28, 32 and 31.

A point particularly worth noting is the fact that the design of this thesis was based mainly on theories of organisational commitment from the extant literature; however, following the application of PCA and the subsequent restructuring of the statement groups, it was found that some of the statement groups (Statements 11, 8 and 10), which were originally categorized under both the ‘complexity’ and ‘sensitivity’ components, fell solely under the complexity component.

Other statement groups, such as Statements 24, 25 and 23, tended to reflect Factor 5, ‘formalisation’, whilst the concept reflected in Statements 7, 6 and 18, demanded the construction of a new component. As a result of the application of PCA, most of the statements originally placed under the ‘sensitivity’ characteristic were deleted, with the exception of Statement 18, which, along with Statements 6 and 7 (originally falling under the ‘complexity’ characteristic) subsequently formed the new statement group, Factor 6, a new component which is briefly discussed below.

The original independent variables were ‘authority’, ‘complexity’, ‘variation’, ‘sensitivity’, ‘formalisation’ and ‘exclusivity of skills’. Following the application of PCA, the extracted factors were ‘authority’, ‘variation’, ‘exclusivity of skills’, ‘complexity’, ‘formalisation’, and finally, ‘sensitivity’, albeit as a new component comprising of three sub-components (Table 5-5): Statements 6 and 7 (originally placed under the ‘complexity’ position characteristic) and Statement 18 (which remained under the original position characteristic of ‘sensitivity’).

Table 5-5 Statements 6, 7 and 18

Statement No.	Statement Content
6	Most of the jobs of this position holder are imposed by various other units or positions.
7	Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are passed on to other units or position holders who then take over and continue handling the next stage of the jobs already completed by this position holder.
18	This position holder is often given opportunities to deal with very important and confidential tasks.

The content of these three statements has much to do with the nature of an employee’s work, and indeed, the issue of whether an organisation places any value, respect or trust in individual employees essentially hinges upon the nature of their work. If the work carried out by an individual employee is seen as being very difficult, then it is unlikely that the organisation may be able to find another position holder to replace such an employee over a short period of time, despite the fact that this employee may provide only very low supply-side commitment to the organisation.

Under such circumstances, in order to avoid suffering any loss of face or respect, or any questioning of their moral scruples, which means that the employer's dependence on employee is higher than that of employee's dependence on employer, the organisation may continue to hire such employees or may even tend to ingratiate them. As far as culture inferences are concerned, Taiwanese employers seem to have one thing in common: They can not afford to lose face in front of their employees. It is generally recognized that loss of face or respect involves the 'sensitivity' construct, and according to the author's previous work experience and the interviews conducted in a Taiwanese context, this situation of sensitivity is actually quite widespread in Eastern organisations.

A very interesting issue arises from the exploratory study discussed in Chapter 3; that is, we can see that Issues 1, 3 and 4 appear to reflect exactly the original position characteristics of the new component, 'sensitivity', comprising of Statements 6, 7 and 18. An examination and analysis of the relationship between this new 'sensitivity' characteristic and ODC is carried out in Chapter 6, where it is noted that this is clearly an issue worthy of further research in the future.

The eigenvalues (explained variance) of each of the factors were 7.399 (13.887 per cent) for Factor 1; 2.560 (11.555 per cent) for Factor 2; 2.143 (11.071 per cent) for Factor 3; 1.532 (9.642 per cent) for Factor 4; 1.265 (9.262 per cent) for Factor 5;

and 1.059 (8.415 per cent) for Factor 6. The total explained variance of the six factors, at 63.832 per cent, is clearly a good result (Mulaik, 2009; Chiu, 2011). Factor analysis resulted in six position characteristic factors being extracted, thereby providing strong support for the theoretical presupposition of good construct validity.

5.3.2 Validity Analysis of the ODCQ

The application of 'item analysis', described earlier, resulted in the deletion of Statement 12 from the 'Organisational Demand-side Commitment Questionnaire' (ODCQ). The results of the principal component analysis carried out on the remaining fourteen statements are presented in Table 5-6, where the sequence of the validity analysis runs from strongest to weakest.

In this section, we focus on the statements in the ODCQ, discussing the results of the factor analysis of the statements on ODC in the following sub-sections. As a result of the application of factor analysis, no further statements were to be deleted; however, two factors were extracted from the statements presented in the ODCQ. Factor 1, the concept of 'turnover', was reflected in Statements 7, 14, 15, 10, 9, 11, 13, 3 and 4, whilst Factor 2, the concept of 'identity', was reflected in Statements 1, 2, 8, 6 and 5.

The eigenvalue of Factor 1 was found to be 8.202, with an explained variance on the statements of 35.465 per cent, whilst the eigenvalue of Factor 2 was found to

be 1.044, with an explained variance on the statements of 26.171 per cent; that is, the total explained variance for the two factors was 61.636 per cent. The extraction of these two factors as a result of factor analysis is consistent with the theoretical presuppositions discussed in Chapter 3.

Table 5-6 Factor Loading Values of the Pre-test Statements in the Organisational Demand-side Commitment Questionnaire

ODC Pre-test Statements	Component 1 Turnover	Component 2 Identity	Deleted (Y/N)
7. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is least likely to engage in job-hopping to another organization offering similar job opportunities.	0.802	-	N
14. As compared to other position holders, this position holder always demonstrates a belief that the organisation is the best amongst all of the organisations for which he/she might potentially wish to work.	0.767	-	N
15. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is of the opinion that it was absolutely right for him/her to decide to work for this organisation.	0.764	-	N
10. As compared to other position holders, this position holder would always regard themselves as being fortunate to work within this particular organisation, as opposed to any other.	0.709	-	N
9. As compared to other position holders, this position holder would be least likely to decide to leave purely as a result of certain changes within the organisation.	0.698	-	N
11. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a strong belief that it is worthwhile to continue working for this organisation.	0.691	-	N
13. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is more concerned about the future of the organisation.	0.682	-	N
3. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is likely to have a higher degree of loyalty to the organisation.	0.619	-	N
4. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is likely to be more willing to do whatever the organisation tasks him/her with in order to show his/her desire to remain.	0.501	-	N
1. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a greater willingness to put in extra effort aimed at helping the organisation to achieve success.	-	0.814	N
2. As compared to other position holders, this position holder tends to describe the organisation to friends/colleagues as a "good" organisation that is worthy of his/her continuing efforts.	-	0.769	N
8. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a positive belief that he/she can bring his/her abilities into full play if he/she continues to work in this organisation.	-	0.685	N
6. As compared to other position holders, at the mention of the name of the organisation, this position holder is likely to be very proud to be a member.	-	0.670	N
5. As compared to the personal goals of other position holders, the personal goals of this position holder are more likely to be very close to those of the organisation.	-	0.655	N
Eigenvalues	8.202	1.044	
Share of explained variance (%)	35.465	26.171	
Total explained variance (%)	61.636		

5.3.3 Questionnaire Modification

The questionnaire respondents were all employees working in Taiwan-based companies as well as their branch companies located in China and Hong Kong; therefore, the statements in the questionnaire were written in Chinese. However, in Appendix 4, the statements in the questionnaire of Part One were presented in English; that is, the Chinese statements were translated into English, and the statements in the questionnaire of Part Two were based on the OCQ, originally compiled by Mowday et al. (1979), later revised and translated into Chinese by Taiwanese scholars Wu and Yang (1982).

Slight differences existed between the statements presented in the pretest samples and in the final questionnaire pertaining to position characteristics (Part One) in Appendix 4. After realizing, that when answering the statements presented in the pretesting samples, some of the respondents couldn't fully understand the wording and phrasing of some statements, the author employed more appropriate and understandable words and phrases during the process of compiling the final questionnaire. The differences were shown in Table 5-7.

Table 5-7: Differences between the Statements in the Pretest Samples and the Final Questionnaire

No	Pretest Statement	Final Questionnaire
4	<i>This position holder has considerable 'power' with regard to setting his/her own goals.</i>	<i>This position holder has considerable 'influence' with regard to setting his/her own goals.</i>
8	<i>Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are 'indispensible' to other units or positions.</i>	<i>Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are 'of considerable importance' to other units or positions.</i>
11	<i>This position holder will often encounter 'many problems'.</i>	<i>This position holder will often encounter 'problems of quite a diverse nature'.</i>
18	<i>This position holder is often given the opportunity to deal with 'very important tasks'.</i>	<i>This position holder is often given the opportunity to deal with 'very important and confidential tasks'.</i>

The ODCQ statements of Part Two of the questionnaire in the pretest samples were the same as those in the final questionnaire. The main reason was that the ODCQ in this thesis was derived from the OCQ, which was compiled by Mowday et al. (1979), then adapted by the Taiwanese scholar, Wu and Yang (1982). Ever since the OCQ has been widely used in Taiwan in the research field of organisational commitment, it has set a good example for its consistently been regarded as effectively meeting its primary purpose. Besides, the two components (identity and turnover) in OCQ in measuring organisational commitment and the factors (identity and turnover) extracted from the exploratory study are really in keeping with original definitions of identity and turnover. As a result, the author had every reason to employ this OCQ in this study. To meet the need of this thesis, the author added "As compared to other position holders, this position holder should..." at the beginning of each of the statements of OCQ as ODCQ. However, when answering

the statements of Part Two of the questionnaire in the pretest samples, the 180 respondents did not raise any question about the ODCQ statements.

5.4 Reliability Analysis

5.4.1 Reliability Analysis of the Position Characteristic Statements

As a result of the application of both ‘item analysis’ and ‘validity analysis’, a total of eight of the position characteristic agree/disagree statements were deleted; that is, only 24 statements remained within the questionnaire. The six components were then extracted from these 24 statements, with reliability analysis subsequently being carried out on these six components using Cronbach’s α . The complete results of the reliability analysis are presented in Table 5-8.

Table 5-8 Cronbach’s Alpha of the Position Characteristics

Position Characteristics	Cronbach’s α
Authority	0.870
Variation	0.818
Exclusivity of Skills	0.762
Complexity	0.785
Formalisation	0.809
Sensitivity	0.660

As we can see from the table, the Cronbach’s α values were found to be 0.870 for ‘authority’; 0.818 for ‘variation’; 0.762 for ‘exclusivity of skills’; 0.785 for ‘complexity’; 0.809 for ‘formalisation’; and 0.660 for ‘sensitivity’. The coefficient of reliability was therefore found to be in excess of 0.70 for five of the six position

characteristics, thereby indicating that the pretest questionnaire exhibited very good reliability (Bryman, 2008; Hair et al., 2009; Neuman, 2010; Healey, 2011). Although the Cronbach's α of 'sensitivity' was less than 0.70, (0.660), it clearly still represents quite good reliability.

5.4.2 Reliability Analysis of the ODCQ

The internal congruence of the sub-scale and the summated scale of the Cronbach's α coefficient test reveals the summated reliability coefficient. As shown in Table 5-9, the Cronbach's α of 'turnover' (intent to stay, Iverson, 1992; Price, 1997) was found to be 0.914, whilst that of 'identity' was found to be 0.870. The coefficient of reliability in the subscale was over 0.70, indicating that the pretest questionnaire has good reliability (Bryman, 2008; Hair et al., 2009; Neuman, 2010; Healey, 2011).

Table 5-9 Cronbach's Alpha of the ODC Components

ODC Components	Cronbach's α
Turnover	0.914
Identity	0.870

Following the application of both the validity and reliability tests, the formal questionnaires were subsequently revised based upon their previously tested validity and reliability, with these revised questionnaires then being put into use.

5.4.3 Sample Description

As already noted throughout this thesis, the primary focus in this study is on

'position characteristics' as the target analysis unit; therefore, in order to ensure that the sampling analysis did not overlook any of the position characteristics, approximately 120 position titles were acquired from a variety of organisations in Taiwan, with random sampling from other business industries also being employed. The samples would ultimately provide a total of Classification of the Positions of Respondents and Assessed Respondents for subsequent empirical analysis (see Table 5-15).

A total of 2,200 questionnaires were issued to acquire the data for this study, of which 1,571 recipients eventually completed the response process by returning the questionnaires. Of the 1,571 returned questionnaires, 191 were found to be invalid by virtue of missing data or incompleteness of questionnaires (for example, where some respondents had shown themselves to be unwilling to respond to the more sensitive statements). The statistical data relating to the issue, return and valid of the questionnaires is provided in Table 5-10.

Table 5-10 Statistical Data on the Issue and Return of the Questionnaires

Stratum	Population		Sampling						
	Company Scale	No. of Companies	Population (%)	No. of Companies	Questionnaires Issued	Questionnaires Returned	Response Rate (%)	Valid Questionnaires	Valid Rate (%)
A (≤ 49)	107	21.4%	14	480	356	74.17%	309	86.80%	22.39%
B (50-249)	192	38.4%	22	840	582	69.29%	529	90.89%	38.33%
C (≥ 250)	201	40.2%	24	880	633	71.93%	542	85.62%	39.28%
Total	500	100%	60	2,200	1,571	71.41%	1,380	87.84%	100%

The distribution of the valid samples collected in this study, based upon gender, tenure at current position and geographical location, are respectively presented in Tables 5-11 to 5-13.

Table 5-11 Distribution of the Valid Samples, by Gender

Gender	Frequency	%	Valid %
Male	593	43.0	43.9
Female	757	54.9	56.1
Sub-total	1,350	97.9	100.0
Missing Samples	30	2.1	–
Total	1,380	100.0	–

Table 5-12 Distribution of the Valid Samples, by Tenure at Current Position

Tenure at Current Position	Frequency	%	Valid %
0-3 Years	435	31.5	34.9
4-5 Years	269	19.5	21.5
6-10 Years	354	25.7	28.3
>10 Years	191	13.8	15.3
Sub-total	1,249	90.5	100.0
Missing Samples	131	9.5	–
Total	1,380	100.0	–

Table 5-13 Distribution of the Valid Samples, by Geographical Location

Geographical Location	Frequency	%	Valid %
Taiwan	1,081	78.4	78.4
China	144	10.4	10.4
Hong Kong	155	11.2	11.2
Total	1,380	100.0	100.00

Details on the distribution of the sample in the four types of service industry (hotel, club, boarding school and ‘others’) are presented in Table 5-14.

Table 5-14 Sample Distribution in the Four Types of Service Industry

Service Industry Type	Frequency	%
Hotel	686	49.7
Club	407	29.5
Boarding School	74	5.4
'Others'	213	15.4
Total	1,380	100.0

A total of 686 samples were collected from the hotel, thereby accounting for the largest proportion of the returned samples, at 49.7 per cent. A further 407 samples were returned from the club, accounting for 29.5 per cent of the total. Only 74 samples were collected from the boarding school, thereby accounting for only 5.4 per cent of the total sample. Finally, 213 samples were returned from the category of 'others', accounting for 15.4 per cent of the total.

Descriptive statistics on the valid samples, in terms of the positions of the respondents, are provided in Tables 5-15 and 5-16, with Table 5-15 providing the classification of the positions of the respondents and the 'assessed' respondents.

Table 5-15 Classification of the Positions of Respondents and Assessed Respondents

Position	Frequency	%	Valid %
Panel A: Classification of the Positions of Respondents			
1. CEO	215	15.6	15.6
2. Senior Manager	248	18.0	18.0
3. Junior Manager	234	17.0	17.0
4. Senior Supervisor	220	15.9	15.9
5. Junior Supervisor	340	24.6	24.6
6. Staff in Charge of Planning	110	8.0	8.0
7. 'Others'	13	0.9	0.9
Total	1,380	100.0	100.0

Table 5-15 (Contd.)

Position	Frequency	%	Valid %
Panel B: Classification of the Positions of Assessed Respondents			
2. Senior Manager	135	9.8	9.8
3. Junior Manager	171	12.4	12.4
4. Senior Supervisor	164	11.9	11.9
5. Junior Supervisor	255	18.4	18.4
6. Staff in Charge of Planning	632	45.8	45.8
7. 'Others'	23	1.7	1.7
Total	1,380	100.0	100.0

As the respondents answered the questionnaires on behalf of their respective organisations, it was a matter of course that the positions they held were surely higher than those of the assessed respondents; as a result, these questionnaire respondents know quite well about the organisations expectations of the assessed respondents.

Given that a survey was employed in this thesis, the efficacy of position matching would have very significant impacts on the outcomes; nevertheless, it is clear from Table 5-16 that a desirable matching effect is discernible in this thesis.

Table 5-16 Matching of the Classification of the Positions of Respondents and Assessed Respondents

Classification of the Positions of Respondents	Classification of the Positions of Assessed Respondents							Total
	2 Senior Manager	3 Junior Manager	4 Senior Supervisor	5 Junior Supervisor	6 Staff in Charge of Planning	7 Others		
1. CEO	86	8	17	9	94	1	215	
2. Senior Manager	46	135	6	21	39	1	248	
3. Junior Manager	-	16	124	40	52	2	234	
4. Senior Supervisor	2	1	7	85	119	6	220	
5. Junior Supervisor	-	11	8	91	227	3	340	
6. Staff in Charge of Planning	-	-	1	8	98	3	110	
7. 'Others'	1	-	1	1	3	7	13	
Total	135	171	164	255	632	23	1,380	

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter has presented the validation of the measurement instrument used in this thesis. The ‘validation’ procedure – confirmation through the provision of objective evidence that the requirements for specific intended use or application of an instrument, such as a questionnaire survey, have been fulfilled – ensures much more convincing validity and reliability of the measurement instrument employed in this thesis.

This has, in turn, ensured a strong foundation for obtaining accurate results in the subsequent empirical analyses. The steps taken in this chapter to accomplish the effective validation of the measurement instrument employed in this thesis (the questionnaire survey) are described in the following concluding paragraphs.

Firstly, a sample pre-testing of the questionnaires was carried out in this chapter, the results of which provided important references for use in mapping out the final questionnaires. The 180 pretest samples were obtained from organisations of different sizes (those with ≤ 49 , 50-249 and ≥ 250 employees) and from participants with different tenure levels (0-3 years, 4-10 years and >10 years); thus, the distribution of the pre-test samples is regarded as having a well-balanced structure. The number of pre-test samples, as well as the outcome of the pre-test, was congruent with the formal sampling. Following the return of the 180 pre-test samples, statistical analyses of these samples were subsequently carried out, and the final questionnaires were formed through

modification of the questionnaire statements.

The pre-test samples were subjected to three statistical and analytical procedures, comprising of item, validity and reliability analyses. The main function of item analysis was to screen out those questionnaire statements which did not exhibit 'discriminant ability'. The original questionnaire contained a total of 32 agree/disagree statements relating to the independent variable, position characteristics. The application of item analysis led to the deletion of Statements 3, 21, 22 and 26 as a result of their low CR value and weak discriminant ability. Item analysis on the 'Organisational Demand-side Commitment Questionnaire' (ODCQ) – the Part 2 questionnaire constructed in this study relating to the dependent variable 'ODC' – resulted in Statement 12 being deleted; therefore, the ODCQ ultimately comprised of a total of 14 agree/disagree statements.

5.5.1 Validity Analysis

The agree/disagree statements in the questionnaires can be said to have face validity, essentially because the mapping-out of these statements was based on correlated academic research within the extant literature, as well as expert opinion. Principal component analysis (PCA) was subsequently carried out in order to examine the construct validity of the statements presented in the Part 1 questionnaire, resulting in the extraction of six factors. These factors, which represent the independent variables in this thesis, refer to the position characteristics of 'authority', 'variation',

‘formalisation’, ‘exclusivity of skills’, ‘complexity’ (Statements 8, 10 and 11) and ‘sensitivity’ (Statements 6, 7 and 18; of these, Statement 18 was the only one that had been placed under the original ‘sensitivity’ characteristic).

Four statements were deleted during the process of factor analysis, (Statements 9, 17, 19 and 20; Statement 20 originally came under ‘sensitivity’), as a result of which, the Part 1 questionnaire comprised of 24 statements. In the factor analysis of the Part 2 questionnaire (ODCQ), two factors pertaining to ODC, ‘turnover’ and ‘identity’, were extracted. Since all of the statements presented in the Part 1 and Part 2 questionnaires exhibited good factor loading, no further statements were deleted.

5.5.2 Reliability Analysis

The Cronbach’s α of each statement group was between 0.7 and 0.9, indicating that each of the groups had good consistency and stability; thus, the overall reliability analysis carried out in this thesis showed good analytical outcomes. Following the pre-testing of the samples and the modification of the questionnaires, the next step was to carry out the sampling and application of the final questionnaire. This involved the stratified sampling of a total of 2,200 questionnaires issued, of which 1,571 were returned; these ultimately provided 1,380 valid samples. The number of the 1,380 valid samples of company scale A, B, and C was 309, 529, 542 respectively. The proportional distribution of the samples was much in correspondence to the

proportional distribution of the population: 21.4%, 38.4%, and 40.2%. Such a large sample size should provide effective representation of the target population.

The 1,380 valid samples were analyzed based upon the respondents' gender, tenure at their current position, geographical location and type of service industry. These provided indicators of the effective distribution of the 1,380 samples. Finally, the cross-tabulation between the respondents and the assessed respondents was also analyzed. In the next chapter, the focus shifts to the development of the methodology for subsequent data analysis.

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Chapter 6 Results and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The fundamental proposition in this thesis is that the commitment required by organisations from their employees is linked to the specific characteristics of the positions held by such employees. Given that the primary aim of this thesis is to present and develop an innovative concept, 'organisational demand-side commitment' (ODC), and that based upon the variables explored and discussed so far in this thesis, position characteristics have been found to play a vital role, there seems to be a clear need for in-depth exploration, analysis and discussion on the relationships that may potentially exist between this new concept and position characteristics.

Therefore, the aim in this chapter is to carry out such exploration, discussion and analysis of these relationships focusing on the six position characteristics of: (i) the degree of authority; (ii) the degree of complexity; (iii) the degree of variation; (iv) the degree of sensitivity; (v) the degree of formalisation; and (vi) exclusivity of skills. This chapter concentrates on the analysis of the research hypotheses developed in Chapter 3, as restated below:

Hypothesis 0: *Different position characteristics create different kinds of organisational demand-side commitment.*

- Hypothesis 1:** *The greater the authority provided by a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*
- Hypothesis 2:** *The greater the complexity of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*
- Hypothesis 3:** *The greater the variation of a particular position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*
- Hypothesis 4:** *The greater the sensitivity that a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*
- Hypothesis 5:** *The less formalisation a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*
- Hypothesis 6:** *The greater the exclusivity of skills required of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

Since the focus in this thesis is placed on ODC in Taiwan-based organisations, it was felt that the responses should, if possible, be obtained from the branches of some of these Taiwan-based companies located in China and Hong Kong, thereby ensuring

that the responses reflected the opinions of the sample subjects in all three geographical locations. Prior to the formal analysis of the 1,380 valid responses to the questionnaire collected from Taiwan, China and Hong Kong, item analysis was first of all undertaken in order to determine whether it would be appropriate, or indeed necessary, to undertake a comparative analysis between the three different samples. Our analysis therefore begins by examining the distribution of the samples in these three geographical locations.

The tenure of the respondents in their respective organisations may well play an important role, insofar as employees may be found to have different levels of understanding of ODC according to their period of tenure within the organisation; thus, in responding to the ODCQ (Part 2 questionnaire), it was felt that the tenure of the respondents should be taken into consideration as an important control variable. Thus, a cross tabulation between gender and organisational tenure was carried out on the 1,380 samples collected from these three different locations.

Both single-variable descriptive statistical analysis and normality tests were carried out in order to determine whether the pattern of each of the variables corresponded with 'normal distribution'; this would ultimately ensure that the follow-up analyses (both correlation and regression analyses) were based upon a strong foundation. Once all of this had been completed, bivariate analysis was to be

subsequently undertaken. Thus, the examination in this thesis of the correlations between ODC and each of the six position characteristics included correlation analysis and t-tests.

A difference test (*t*-test) on the mean of the 1,380 samples, relating to ODC and the six position characteristics of 'authority' (decision-making power), 'complexity', 'variation', 'sensitivity', 'formalisation' and 'exclusivity of skills' was also carried out in order to analyse whether the differences between the 1,380 samples achieved any level of significance.

On completion of all of these analytical tests, multiple regression analysis was subsequently carried out to identify the extent of the impacts of each of the six position characteristics on ODC, in order to test the stated hypotheses. Finally, control variable analysis was carried out to determine whether there were any discernible differences between the perspectives of male and female respondents on the correlations between ODC and each of the six position characteristics.

6.2 Data Analysis Methods

The methods employed for the data analysis in this thesis included (i) descriptive statistics; (ii) *t*-tests (iii) 'analysis of variance' (ANOVA); (iv) Pearson's correlation coefficient; (v) cross-tabulation and the Chi-square test for significance; (vi) regression analysis; and (vii) factor analysis. In conjunction with these data analysis methods,

composite data analyses were also carried out on each of the research hypotheses, as illustrated in Figure 6-1.

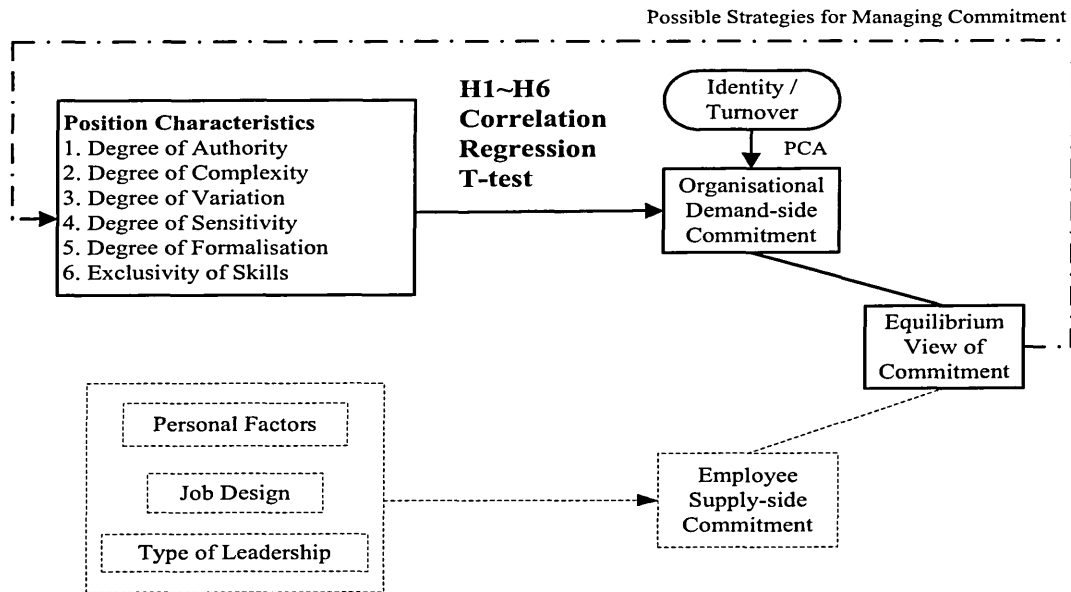


Figure 6-1 Data Analysis Methods Adopted in this Thesis

Note The continuous line refers to the research focus in this thesis; the dashed line refers to the traditional theoretical basis of employee or organisational commitment; and the dotted/ dashed line refers to possible focus for future research.

6.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics ensure that all of the basic conditions of a sample are described through frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation, with the normality test being conducted to analyse each of the variables.

6.2.2 T-test

The six position characteristics examined in this study are 'authority', 'complexity', 'variation', 'sensitivity', 'formalisation' and 'exclusivity of skills'. The samples were

first of all divided into two groups, those with high-level position characteristics and those with low-level position characteristics. A comparison was then undertaken using the difference test (*t*-test) to determine the mean of ODC between the high- and low-level position characteristic groups.

6.2.3 ANOVA

The 'analysis of variance' (ANOVA) method was adopted for the analysis of the differences in the mean of ODC amongst the respondent samples collected from the four types of service industry in the three geographical locations. The overall aim was to determine whether the differences in the mean of the position characteristics achieved any level of significance.

6.2.4 Pearson's Correlation Coefficients

Pearson's correlation analysis was subsequently undertaken between ODC and the six position characteristics.

6.2.5 Cross-Tabulation and Chi-square Test for Significance

Cross-tabulation was employed to analyze the sample distribution in the three geographical locations and the four types of service industry. Sample distribution based upon the gender of the samples and their tenure within the organisation was also conducted through cross-tabulation, with a Chi-square test being used to determine whether the differences amongst these samples achieved any level of significance.

6.2.6 Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the simultaneous effects of the six position characteristics (authority, complexity, variation, sensitivity, formalisation and exclusivity of skills) on ODC, and to determine which of these six position characteristics had the greatest effects.

6.2.7 Factor Analysis

Finally, common factors were extracted from the 14 statements listed in the Organisational Demand-side Commitment Questionnaire (ODCQ) as a result of the application of validity analysis.

6.3 Descriptive Statistics

This section provides an examination of the descriptive statistics of the dependent variable, ODC, and the six position characteristics. As a result of the principal component analysis undertaken in Chapter 5, the concept of ODC was further developed into two sub-scales: 'identity' and 'turnover', both of which will be analysed in the later sections of this chapter. A Likert-type summated scale was used as the measurement method for the scores, where 1 point was the lowest that could be awarded to a statement, and 7 points was the highest; thus the scale had a mid-point level of 4 points.

1. Authority

The descriptive statistics on ‘authority’ are presented in Table 6-1, which shows that 1,351 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples, with the remaining 29 responses exhibiting missing values; thus, valid samples accounted for 98 per cent of the total, thereby indicating that the samples were of excellent survey quality.

There were only four agree/disagree statements in the ‘authority’ section of the questionnaire, giving a minimum summation of 4.00 (1 point for each question), a maximum summation of 28.00 (7 points for each question), and a range of 24.00, thereby indicating a relatively wide spread for the statement responses. The mean score for all responses was found to be 20.56, with a median of 22.00, and a standard deviation of 5.31.

Table 6-1 Descriptive Statistics on Authority

Measure	Statistics on ‘Authority’
N of Observations	1,380
Valid samples	1,351
Samples with missing data	29
Mean	20.5574
Median	22.0000
S.D.	5.30557
Skewness	-0.949
Kurtosis	-0.485
Range	24.00
Min.	4.00
Max.	28.00

As shown in Figure 6-2, as compared to the ideal normal distribution curve, the responses to 'authority' were found to be slightly biased (sloped to the right), with skewness of -0.949 and kurtosis of -0.485. Thus, the histogram of responses to 'authority' approximated to normal distribution. Two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, were subsequently employed to determine whether the responses actually achieved normal distribution.

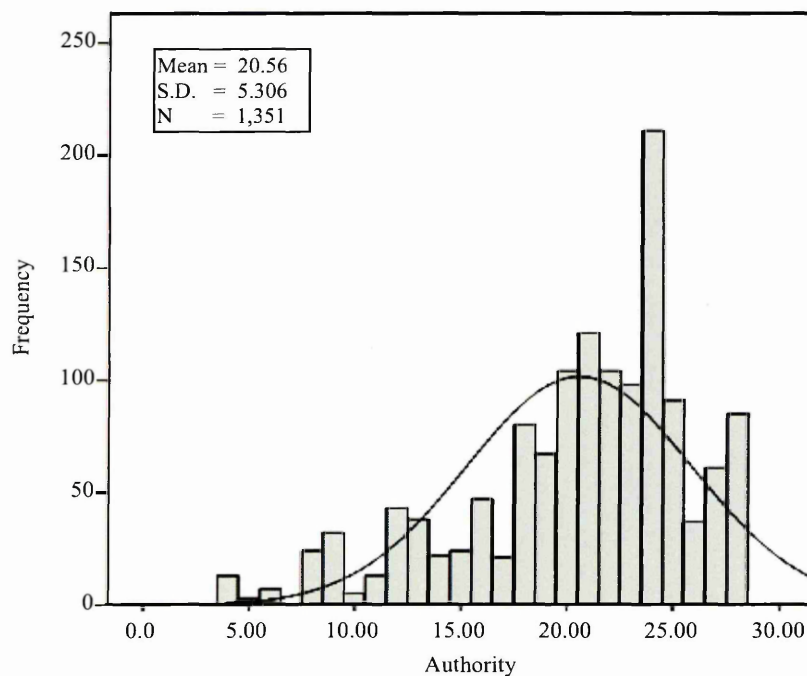


Figure 6-2 Histogram of Responses to the Statements on 'Authority'

As shown in Table 6-2, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.140, whilst that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.921, both with levels of significance of $p < 0.001$. These numerical values confirmed that the spread of 'authority' came close to the basic assumption of normal distribution, which in

turn, indicated that the 1,351 valid samples could be subjected to a series of subsequent statistical analyses.

Table 6-2 The Spread of Authority under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.
Authority	0.140	1351	0.000	0.921	1351	0.000

2. Complexity

The descriptive statistics on ‘complexity’ are presented in Table 6-3, which shows that 1,355 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples, with the remaining 25 responses exhibiting missing values; thus, the valid samples accounted for 98 per cent of the total. There were just three agree/disagree statements in the ‘complexity’ section of the questionnaire, giving a minimum summation of 3.00, a maximum of 21.00, and a relatively narrow range of 18.00. This therefore indicated that the ‘complexity’ responses also had a relatively narrow spread. The mean score for all responses was found to be 15.70, with a median of 16.00, and a standard deviation of 3.77.

Table 6-3 Descriptive Statistics on Complexity

Measure	Statistics on 'Complexity' (New)
N of Observations	1,380
Valid Samples	1,355
Missing Data	25
Mean	15.7033
Median	16.0000
Std. Deviation	3.77337
Skewness	-0.860
Kurtosis	-0.279
Range	18.00
Minimum	3.00
Maximum	21.00

Figure 6-3 shows that the histogram of the responses to the 'complexity' statements had skewness of -0.860 , and kurtosis of -0.279 , which indicates that the responses to 'complexity' were close to normal distribution. The two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, were again employed to determine whether the responses actually achieved normal distribution.

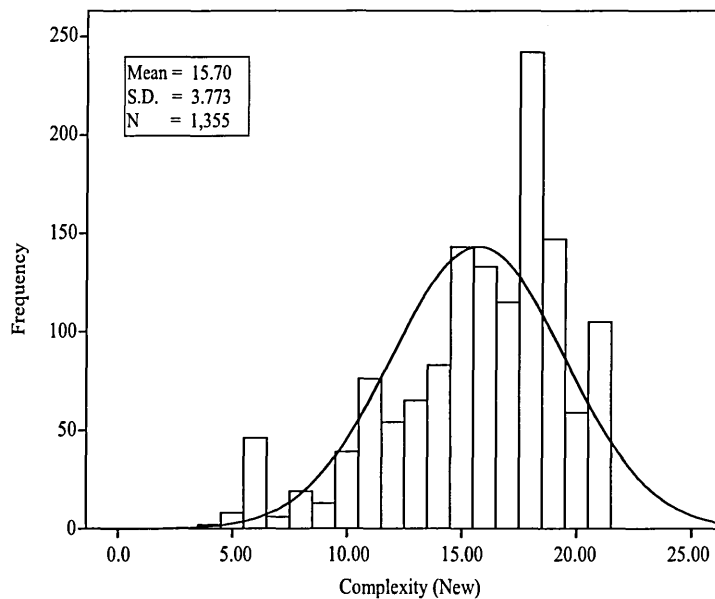


Figure 6-3 Histogram of Responses to the Statements on 'Complexity'

As shown in Table 6-4, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.137, and that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.928, both with a level of significance of $p < 0.001$. These numerical values again confirmed that the spread was close to the basic assumption of normal distribution, which, in turn, indicated that the 1,355 valid samples could be subjected to a series of subsequent analytical tests.

Table 6-4 The Spread of Complexity under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.
Complexity	0.137	1355	0.000	0.928	1355	0.000

Note: * indicates Lilliefors significance correction.

3. *Variation*

The descriptive statistics on ‘variation’ are presented in Table 6-5, which shows that 1,359 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples, with the remaining 21 responses exhibiting missing values; thus, the valid samples again accounted for a very respectable 98 per cent of the total.

Table 6-5 Descriptive Statistics on Variation

Measure	Statistics on 'Variation'
N of Observations	1,380
Valid Samples	1,359
Missing Data	21
Mean	21.3274
Median	22.0000
Std. Deviation	6.41101
Skewness	-0.155
Kurtosis	-0.640
Range	30.00
Minimum	5.00
Maximum	35.00

There were five agree/disagree statements in the 'variation' section of the questionnaire, giving a minimum summation of 5.00, a maximum summation of 35, and a range of 30, and thereby indicating a relatively wide spread for the statement responses. The mean score for all responses was found to be 21.33, with a median of 22.00 and a standard deviation of 6.41.

Figure 6-4 shows that when compared to the ideal normal distribution curve, the responses to 'variation' may be described as 'ideal', with skewness of -0.155 and kurtosis of -0.640. This indicates that the histogram of responses to 'variation' is very close to normal distribution. Two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, were subsequently employed to determine whether the responses achieved normal distribution.

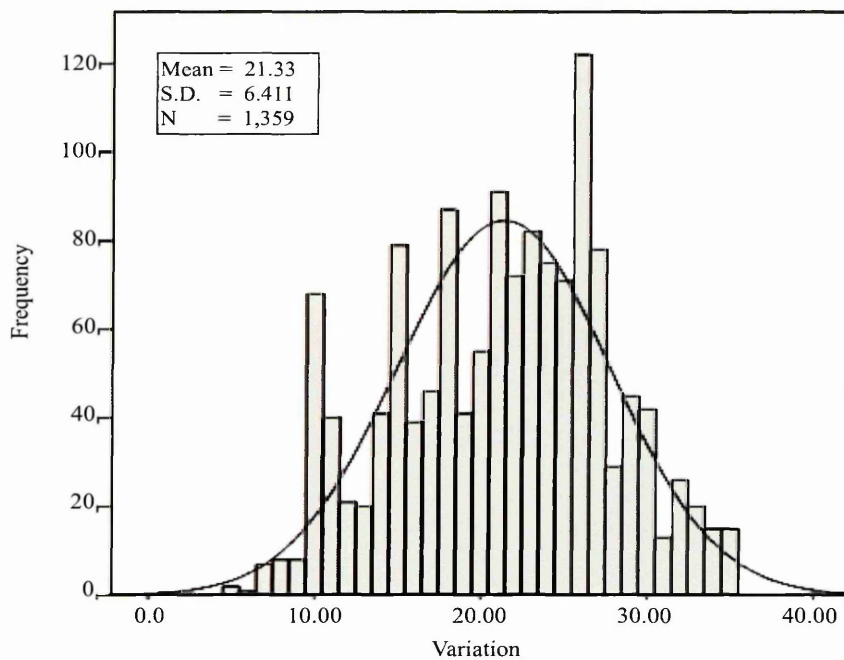


Figure 6-4 Histogram of Responses to the Statements on 'Variation'

As shown in Table 6-6, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.071 and that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.982, both with levels of significance of $p < 0.001$. All of these numerical values confirmed that the spread of variation was very close to the basic assumption of normal distribution, which in turn, indicated that the 1,359 valid samples could be subjected to a series of subsequent analytical tests.

Table 6-6 The Spread of Variation under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.
Variation	0.071	1359	0.000	0.982	1359	0.000

Note: * indicates Lilliefors significance correction.

4. Sensitivity

The descriptive statistics on 'sensitivity' are presented in Table 6-7; as the table

shows, 1,368 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples, thus, there were only 12 responses exhibiting missing values, such that the valid samples accounted for over 99 per cent of the total. Once again, there were just three agree/disagree statements in the 'sensitivity' section of the questionnaire, giving a minimum summation of 3.00, a maximum summation of 21.00, and a relatively narrow range of 18.00. This again indicates a relatively narrow spread for the statement responses. The mean score for all responses was found to be 13.32, with a median of 14.00, and a standard deviation of 4.17.

Table 6-7 Descriptive Statistics on Sensitivity

Measure	Statistics on 'Sensitivity'
N of Observations	1,380
Valid Samples	1,368
Missing Data	12
Mean	13.3202
Median	14.0000
Std. Deviation	4.16870
Skewness	-0.220
Kurtosis	-0.618
Range	18.00
Minimum	3.00
Maximum	21.00

The histogram of 'sensitivity' illustrated in Figure 6-5 shows that the responses were again very close to the normal distribution curve, although the relatively narrow range of the score distribution for 'sensitivity' leads to the bars appearing to be much wider.

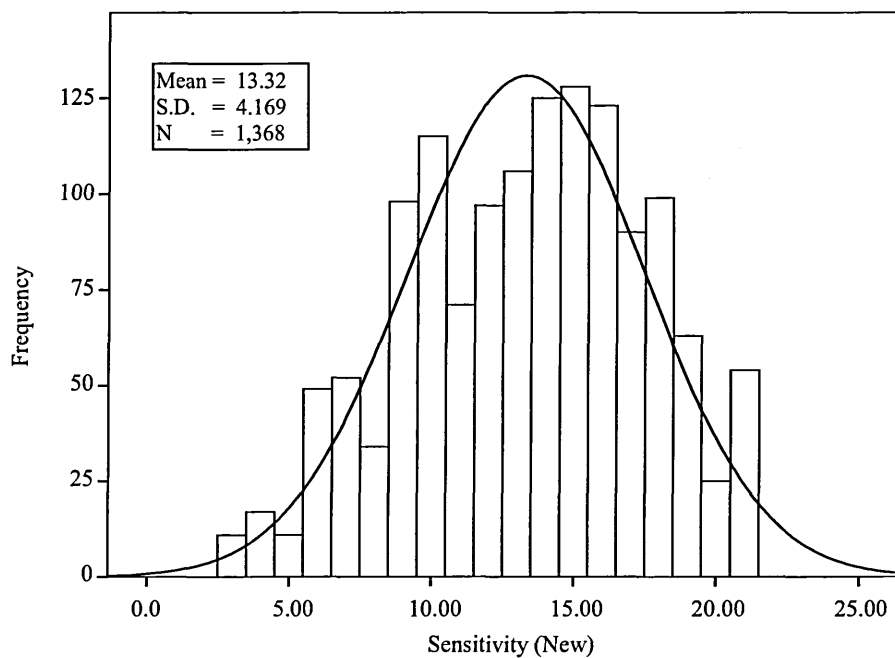


Figure 6-5 Histogram of Responses to the Statements on 'Sensitivity'

Skewness was found to be -0.220 , with kurtosis of -0.618 . The spread of the responses to 'sensitivity' was also found to be close to normal distribution. The two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, were once again employed to determine whether the spread actually achieved normal distribution.

As shown in Table 6-8, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.082 and that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.979 , both with levels of significance of $p < 0.001$. All of these numerical values confirmed that the spread of 'sensitivity' came close to the basic assumption of normal distribution, which in turn, indicated that the $1,368$ valid samples could subsequently be subjected to a series of analytical tests.

Table 6-8 The Spread of Sensitivity under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.
Sensitivity	0.082	1368	0.000	0.979	1368	0.000

Note: * indicates Lilliefors significance correction.

5. *Formalisation*

The descriptive statistics on ‘formalisation’ are presented in Table 6-9, which shows that 1,361 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples, with the remaining 19 responses exhibiting missing values; thus, the valid samples accounted for 99 per cent of the total. There were again just three agree/disagree statements in the ‘formalisation’ section of the questionnaire, thereby providing a minimum summation of 3.00, a maximum of 21.00, and a relatively narrow range of 18.00; thus, the responses again had a relatively narrow spread. The mean score for all responses was found to be 16.37, with a median of 17.00, and a standard deviation of 3.30.

Table 6-9 Descriptive Statistics on Formalisation

Measure	Statistics on ‘Formalisation’
N of Observations	1,380
Valid Samples	1,361
Missing Data	19
Mean	16.3674
Median	17.0000
Std. Deviation	3.29999
Skewness	-1.004
Kurtosis	1.570
Range	18.00
Minimum	3.00
Maximum	21.00

As shown in Figure 6-6, the histogram of the responses to ‘formalisation’ was very close to the normal distribution curve, with skewness of -1.004 , and kurtosis of 1.570 . The two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, were once again employed to determine whether the responses actually achieved normal distribution.

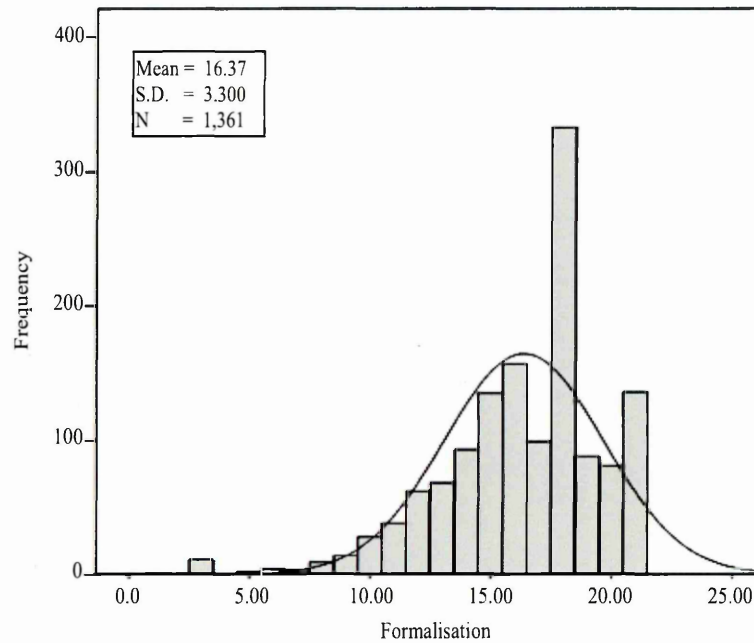


Figure 6-6 Histogram of Responses to the Statements on 'Formalisation'

As shown in Table 6-10, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.164 and that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.922 , both with levels of significance of $p < 0.001$. These values indicated that the spread of ‘formalisation’ was close to the basic assumption of normal distribution, thereby once again indicating that the 1,361 valid samples could be subjected to a series of subsequent analytical tests.

Table 6-10 The Spread of Formalisation under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.
Formalisation	0.164	1361	0.000	0.992	1361	0.000

Note: * indicates Lilliefors significance correction.

6. *Exclusivity of Skills*

The descriptive statistics on ‘exclusivity of skills’ are presented in Table 6-11, which reveals that 1,359 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples, with the remaining 21 responses exhibiting missing values; thus, the valid samples once again accounted for 98 per cent of the total.

Table 6-11 Descriptive Statistics on Exclusivity of Skills

Measure	Statistics on ‘Exclusivity of Skills’
N of Observations	1,380
Valid Samples	1,359
Missing Data	21
Mean	26.6946
Median	27.0000
Std. Deviation	6.98348
Skewness	-0.205
Kurtosis	-0.382
Range	36.00
Minimum	6.00
Maximum	42.00

There were a total of six agree/disagree statements within the ‘exclusivity of skills’ section of the questionnaire, thereby providing a minimum summation of 6.00, a maximum of 42.00, and a range of 36.00. Since this range was much higher than the range for the other five position characteristics, this clearly provided a

very wide spread for the statement responses. The mean score for all of the responses was found to be 26.69, with a median of 27.00, and a standard deviation of 6.98.

As shown in Figure 6-7, the responses to ‘exclusivity of skills’ were very close to the ideal normal distribution curve, with skewness of -0.205 and kurtosis of -0.382 . Two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, were subsequently employed to determine whether the responses actually achieved normal distribution.

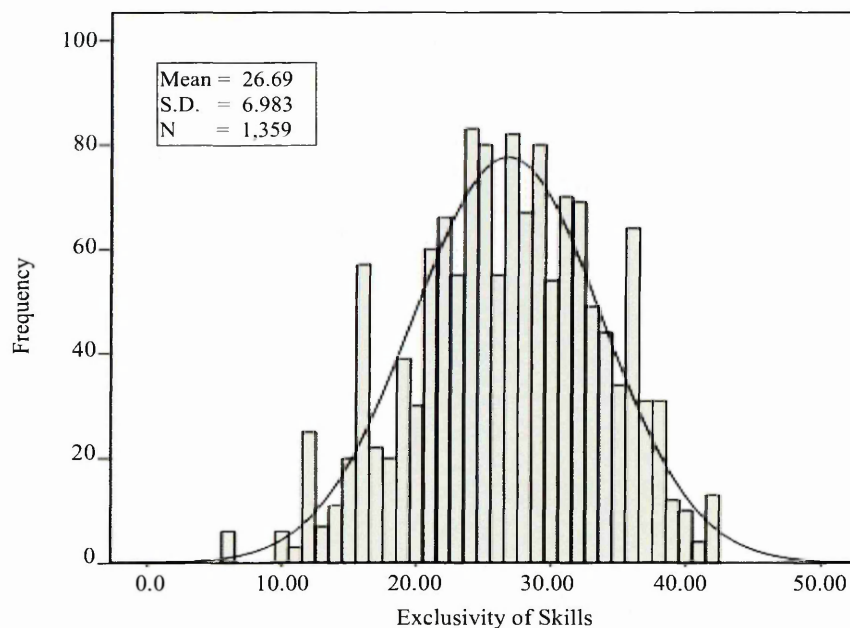


Figure 6-7 Histogram of Responses to the Statements on ‘Exclusivity of Skills’

As shown in Table 6-12, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.051 and that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.991, both with levels of significance of $p < 0.001$. All of these numerical values confirmed that the spread of ‘exclusivity of skills’ was close to the basic assumption of normal distribution,

thereby indicating that the 1,359 valid samples could be subjected to a series of subsequent analyses.

Table 6-12 The Spread of Exclusivity of Skills under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.
Exclusivity of Skills	0.051	1359	0.000	0.991	1359	0.000

Note: * indicates Lilliefors significance correction.

7. *Organisational Demand-Side Commitment (ODC)*

The descriptive statistics on ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC) are presented in Table 6-13, which shows that 1,335 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples, with the remaining 45 responses exhibiting missing values; thus, although slightly higher than the missing values for the six position characteristics, the valid samples nevertheless still accounted for 97 per cent of the total.

There were 14 agree/disagree statements in the ODC section of the questionnaire; giving a minimum summation of 14.00, a maximum summation of 98.00, and a range of 84.00. This particularly high range indicates that the statement responses had a very wide spread. The mean score for all responses was found to be 74.90, with a median of 77.00, and a standard deviation of 13.17.

Table 6-13 Descriptive Statistics on ODC

Measure	ODCQ-14 Scores
N of Observations	1,380
Valid Samples	1,335
Missing Data	45
Mean	74.8981
Median	77.0000
Std. Deviation	13.17004
Skewness	-0.564
Kurtosis	0.099
Range	84.00
Minimum	14.00
Maximum	98.00

The score range for ODC, at 84.00, was very high, resulting in the bars in Figure 6-8 appearing to be very narrow. The histogram of the responses to the ODCQ were again found to be close to the ideal normal distribution curve, with skewness of -0.564, and kurtosis of 0.099.

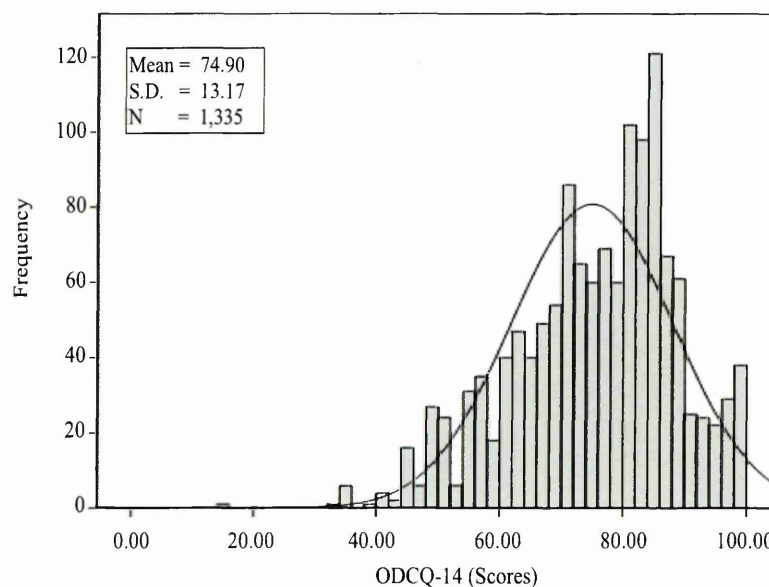


Figure 6-8 Histogram of Responses to the ODC Statements

The two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests,

were once again employed to determine whether the spread achieved normal distribution. As shown in Table 6-14, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was found to be 0.090 and that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.972, both with levels of significance of $p < 0.001$. All of these numerical values confirmed that the spread of ODC was close to the basic assumption of normal distribution, which, in turn, indicated that the 1,335 valid samples could be subjected to a series of subsequent analyses.

Table 6-14 The Spread of ODC under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.
ODCQ-14 (scores)	0.090	1335	0.000	0.972	1335	0.000

Note: * indicates Lilliefors significance correction.

8. *Turnover of Organisational Demand-Side Commitment (ODC)*

The descriptive statistics on ‘turnover of ODC’ are presented in Table 6-15, which shows that 1,341 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples, with the remaining 39 responses exhibiting missing values; thus, although again slightly higher than the missing values for the six position characteristics, the valid samples still accounted for 97 per cent of the total.

There were a total of nine agree/disagree statements in the ‘turnover of ODC’ section of the questionnaire; giving a minimum summation of 9.00, a maximum summation of 63.00, and a range of 54.00. This particularly high range

again indicates that the statement responses had a very wide spread. The mean score for all responses was found to be 47.66, with a median of 49.00, and a standard deviation of 9.02.

Table 6-15 Descriptive Statistics on Turnover of ODC

Measure	Statistics on 'Turnover of ODC'
N of Observations	1,380
Valid Samples	1,341
Missing Data	39
Mean	47.6555
Median	49.0000
Std. Deviation	9.01909
Skewness	-0.636
Kurtosis	0.196
Range	54.00
Minimum	9.00
Maximum	63.00

The 'turnover of ODC' had a very high score range of 54.00, as a result of which the bars in Figure 6-9 appear to be very narrow. The histogram of responses to 'turnover of ODC' was close to the ideal normal distribution curve, with skewness of -0.636, and kurtosis of 0.196. The two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, were once again employed in order to determine whether the spread achieved normal distribution.

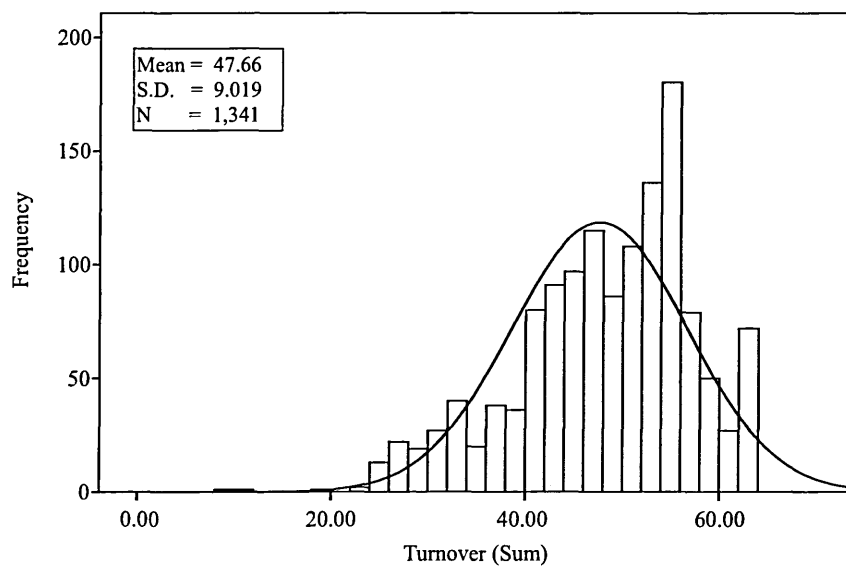


Figure 6-9 Histogram of Responses to the ODCQ 'Turnover' Statements

As shown in Table 6-16, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.091 and that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.965, both with levels of significance of $p < 0.001$. These numerical values confirmed that the spread of 'turnover of ODC' was close to the basic assumption of normal distribution, thereby indicating that the 1,341 valid samples could subsequently go through a series of analytical tests.

Table 6-16 The Spread of Turnover of ODC under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Stat.	df	Sig.	Stat.	df	Sig.
Turnover	0.091	1341	0.000	0.965	1341	0.000

Note: * indicates Lilliefors significance correction.

9. Identity of Organisational Demand-Side Commitment (ODC)

The descriptive statistics on 'identity of ODC' are presented in Table 6-17, which shows that 1,371 of the total of 1,380 responses provided valid samples; thus,

there were only nine responses exhibiting missing values, so the valid samples accounted for over 99 per cent of the total. There were five agree/disagree statements in the ‘turnover of ODC’ section of the questionnaire; giving a minimum summation of 5.00, a maximum of 35.00, and a range of 30.00. This range is again quite high, thereby indicating that the statement responses had a very wide spread. The mean score for all responses was found to be 27.29, with a median of 28.00, and a standard deviation of 5.04.

Table 6-17 Descriptive Statistics on Identity of ODC

Measure	Statistics on ‘Identity of ODC’
N of Observations	1,380
Valid Samples	1,371
Missing Data	9
Mean	27.2932
Median	28.0000
Std. Deviation	5.04014
Skewness	-0.824
Kurtosis	1.036
Range	30.00
Minimum	5.00
Maximum	35.00

As shown in Figure 6-10, ‘identity of ODC’ had a relatively high score range of 30, as a result of which the bars in the figure appear to be very narrow. The histogram of responses to ODC was close to the ideal normal distribution curve, with skewness of -0.824, and kurtosis of 1.036.

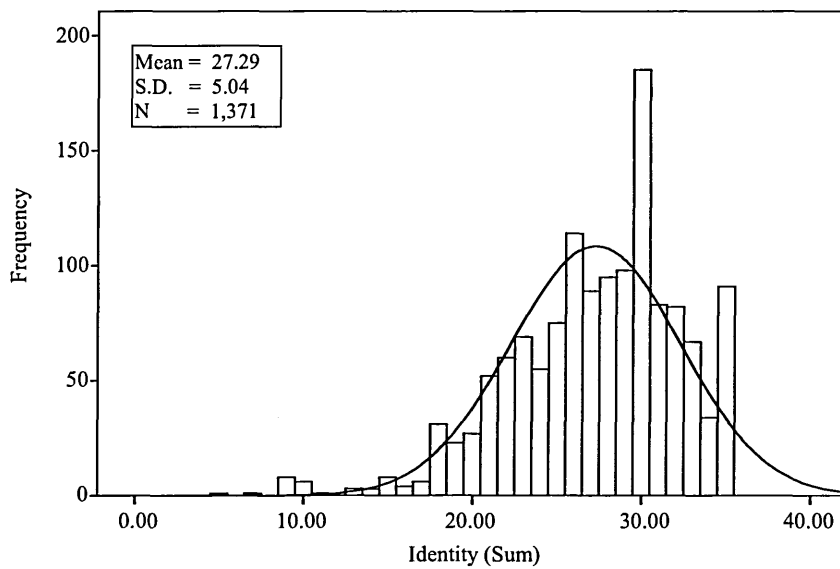


Figure 6-10 Histogram of Responses to the ODCQ 'Identity' Statements

The two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, were again employed to determine whether the spread actually achieved normal distribution. As shown in Table 6-18, the statistical value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was 0.100 and that of the Shapiro-Wilk test was 0.952, both with levels of significance of $p < 0.001$.

Table 6-18 The Spread of Identity of ODC under Normal Distribution

Position Characteristic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*			Shapiro-Wilk Test		
	Statistic	df	Significance	Statistic	df	Significance
Identity	0.100	1371	0.000	0.952	1371	0.000

Note: * indicates Lilliefors significance correction.

These numerical values confirm that the spread of 'identity of ODC' was very close to the basic assumption of normal distribution, which in turn, indicates that the 1,371 valid samples could be subjected to a series of subsequent analytical tests.

The variance condition and distribution of both the dependent and independent

variables are generally found to be at optimal levels, and thus, suitable for undergoing a series of quantitative analyses and for reference to the population as a whole.

6.4 Summary of 6.1~6.3

In the approach taken to quantitative data analysis, it has to be demonstrated that the distribution curve of the variables complies with normal distribution, in keeping with the basic presupposition of normal distribution, which, in turn, is suitable for the application of the two statistical methods of bivariate and multivariate analysis. The application of these methods will be of much significance to the subsequent analyses.

As a result of the descriptive statistics and normality test presented in the preceding section, all of the 1,380 samples analyzed in this thesis fitted the basic assumption of normal distribution with regard to the six position characteristics (independent variables) of ‘authority’, ‘complexity’, ‘variation’, ‘sensitivity’, ‘formalisation’ and ‘exclusivity of skills’, and the two dependent variable factors extracted from ODCQ, comprising of ‘identity’ and ‘turnover’. In other words, the subsequent series of statistical analyses should prove to be perfectly appropriate.

The *t*-test, correlation coefficient and regression analyses are presented in the following sub-section, with each of these methods contributing to the analysis of the relationships that may potentially exist between ODC and each of the six position characteristics. These analyses thereby facilitate the examination and verification of

the six hypotheses presented in this thesis; that is, the results of these analytical processes will indicate whether or not support is provided for the six hypotheses.

6.5 Correlation Coefficients

The procedure for identifying curvilinear correlations goes beyond the scope of the present study; thus, our attention focuses instead on the correlation coefficients which express the strength and direction of straight-line correlations in numerical form. As shown below, correlation coefficients generally range between -1.00 and $+1.00$ (Levin, Fox and Forde, 2010):

-1.00	←	Perfect negative correlation
⋮		
-0.60	←	Strong negative correlation
⋮		
-0.30	←	Moderate negative correlation
⋮		
-0.10	←	Weak negative correlation
⋮		
0.00	←	No correlation
⋮		
$+0.10$	←	Weak positive correlation
⋮		
$+0.30$	←	Moderate positive correlation
⋮		
$+0.60$	←	Strong positive correlation
⋮		
$+1.00$	←	Perfect positive correlation

Negative numerical values, such as -1.00 , -0.60 , -0.30 and -0.10 , obviously signify negative correlations, whereas positive numerical values, such as $+1.00$, $+0.60$, $+0.30$ and $+0.10$, also clearly indicate positive correlations. As regards the degree of association, the closer to 1.00 in either direction, the greater the strength of

the correlation. Since the strength of a correlation is independent of its direction, we can say that -0.10 and $+0.10$ are equal in strength (both are very weak), whilst -0.80 and $+0.80$ also have equal strength (both are very strong).

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of which of the position characteristics give rise to the various levels of organisational demand-side commitment, a thorough analysis and consequent understanding is required of the extent, and direction, of the relationships that may actually be found to exist between ODC and each of the position characteristics; the results of this analysis are presented in Table 6-19.

Table 6-19 Correlation Analysis between Position Characteristics and ODC

Position Characteristics	Correlation Coefficient	Correlation
1. Authority	0.508***	Good
2. Complexity	0.517***	Good
3. Variation	0.193***	None
4. Sensitivity	0.287***	Weak
5. Formalisation	0.238***	Weak
6. Exclusivity of Skills	0.303***	Moderate

Note: *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

6.6 Multiple Regression Analyses and T-test on ODCQ

Multiple regression analysis is employed in this thesis to examine the relationships between ODC and the six position characteristics of authority, complexity, variation, sensitivity, formalisation and exclusivity of skills, with the analysis of each of these position characteristics being undertaken in separate sub-sections.

A *t*-test is subsequently carried in order to determine whether the differences in ODC between those groups with high- and low-level position characteristics achieve any level of significance. For the purpose of clarity, the examinations and discussions of the relationships between ODC and the position characteristics, and the subsequent corroboration, or refutation, of the hypotheses are presented both in script and tabular form. In our examination of the relationships between ODC and the position characteristics, and the subsequent corroboration, or refutation, of the hypotheses. The multiple regression analysis undertaken in this section can take in more than one independent variable at any one time, thereby simultaneously exploring and discussing the composite explanatory power of all of the independent variables on the dependent variable (Hair et al., 2009). Based upon the *B*-value of each position characteristic, we can determine whether the impact of this kind of position characteristic on ODC reaches any level of significance, and by comparing the β -value of each position, we can also confirm which of the position characteristics has the greatest impacts on ODC. Thus, a more profound and accurate analysis can be obtained.

Given that the analyses undertaken in Chapter 5, providing the correlation coefficients on ODC and the six position characteristics, were only of a bivariate nature, they provided no clarification as to whether or not the independent variables

had composite explanatory power on the dependent variable. With this shortcoming in mind, this section adopts a multiple regression analysis model to analyze the effects on ODC attributable to the six position characteristics.

As shown in Table 6-20, the effects of the six position characteristics on ODC each achieved levels of significance, with the position characteristic ‘variation’ being found to have negative impacts on the dependent variable, ODC ($B = -0.056$), whereas the other five position characteristics were each found to have positive effects. In other words, the higher the degree of the position characteristics, the greater the level of ODC.

Table 6-20 Multiple Regression Analysis between the Position Characteristics and ODC

Position Characteristics	B	β	Significance
1. Authority	0.826	0.435	***
2. Complexity	0.840	0.446	***
3. Variation	-0.056	-0.030	
4. Sensitivity	0.206	0.109	***
5. Formalisation	0.404	0.213	***
6. Exclusivity of Skills	0.316	0.165	***
Constant	10.787***		
R^2	0.464***		
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.461***		
N of Observations	1,251		

Note: *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

A comparison of the effects of the six position characteristics on ODC reveals that ‘complexity’ has the greatest effects on the dependent variable ($\beta = 0.446$), followed by ‘authority’ ($\beta = 0.435$), ‘formalisation’ ($\beta = 0.213$), ‘exclusivity of skills’

($\beta = 0.165$) and 'sensitivity' ($\beta = 0.109$), with 'variation' not being found to have any significant effects on ODC ($\beta = -0.030$).

These effects of the five position characteristics on ODC all achieved a 0.001 level of significance, thereby indicating that after taking into account the mutual relationships existing amongst the six position characteristics, each single position characteristic alone still had huge impacts on ODC; this, in turn, implies that the causal relationships existing between each single position characteristic and ODC achieved levels of significance.

The overall composite explanatory power of the multiple regression analysis model was 0.461, thereby indicating that the control variables and the six position characteristics were capable of explaining 46.1 per cent of the variance occurring in ODC; that is, the multiple regression analysis model employed in this thesis clearly has strong composite explanatory power.

Table 6-21 T-test on Position Characteristics and ODC between Low- and High-score Groups

Position Characteristics	Low-score Group	High-score Group	Significance
1. Authority	63.51	78.69	***
2. Complexity	62.50	78.05	***
3. Variation	71.55	76.86	**
6. Sensitivity	69.98	78.92	***
5. Formalisation	69.81	75.69	***
3. Exclusivity of Skills	69.51	80.21	***

Note: ** indicates $p < 0.01$; and *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

Seven-point Likert-type summated scales were used to measure the statements

on ODC and position characteristics, thereby providing a median of 4 points. If the score of any statement was below the median level of 4 (1, 2 or 3 points), then the statement would be assigned to the low-score group; similarly, if the score was above the median level (5, 6 or 7 points), then the statement would be assigned to the high-score group. The separation of the high- and low-score groups facilitated a comparison between the level of ODC for the two sample groups based upon the *t*-test, the outcome of which is presented in Table 6-21 (above).

6.6.1 Relationship between ODC and the Degree of Authority (Hypothesis 1)

As shown in Table 6-19, the correlation coefficient between ODC and the position characteristic ‘degree of authority’ was found to be 0.508 ($p < 0.001$), with a good (significant) correlation between the two. These results demonstrate that all of the analyses carried out so far concur with the general tenet of Hypothesis 1.

There were four agree/disagree statements relating to the position characteristic ‘authority’; thus, if the score for any of the statements was 1, 2 or 3, then the total score would be in the range of 4 to 12 points, which would place these responses in the low-score group; if the score for any of the statements was 5, 6 or 7 points, then the total score would be in the range of 20 to 28 points, which would then place the responses in the high-score group.

The mean score for ODC with a high ‘degree of authority’ was 78.69, whilst

that for ODC with a low 'degree of authority' was 63.51 (Table 6-21). The significant difference between the two is self-evident; in other words, together with the outcomes of the correlation and regression analyses, Hypothesis 1 in this thesis, *'The greater the authority provided by a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position'*, has been corroborated through solid, empirical evidence.

6.6.2 Relationship between ODC and the Degree of Complexity (Hypothesis 2)

As shown in Table 6-19, the correlation coefficient between ODC and the position characteristic 'degree of complexity' was found to be 0.517 ($p < 0.001$), revealing a good (significant) correlation between the two. These results demonstrate that the analyses carried out so far are in line with the general tenet of Hypothesis 2.

There were three agree/disagree statements relating to the position characteristic 'complexity'; thus, if the score for any of the statements was 1, 2 or 3, then the total score would be in the range of 3 to 9 points, which would place these responses in the low-score group; if the score for any of the statements was 5, 6 or 7 points, then the total score would be in the range of 15 to 21 points, which would then place the responses in the high-score group.

The subsequent application of the *t*-test aimed at carrying out a comparison between the two groups showed that the mean score for ODC with a high 'degree of

complexity' was 78.05, whilst that for ODC with a low 'degree of complexity' was 62.50 (Table 6-21). This clearly demonstrates a significant difference between the two; in other words, in conjunction with the outcomes of the correlation and regression analyses, Hypothesis 2 in this thesis, '*The greater the complexity of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position*', has also been corroborated through solid, empirical evidence.

6.6.3 Relationship between ODC and the Degree of Variation (Hypothesis 3)

As shown in Table 6-19, the correlation coefficient between ODC and the position characteristic 'degree of variation' was only 0.193, although it did achieve a level of significance ($p < 0.001$). According to Levin et al. (2010), correlations between 0.1 and 0.3 should be regarded, at best, as being only weak correlations; thus, the small correlation value between ODC and 'degree of variation', of less than 0.25, indicates the existence of only a weak correlation (or indeed, no correlation whatsoever).

We must therefore conclude that 'variation' clearly has no significant relationship with ODC, a result that demonstrates that quantitative analyses so far carried out in this study have not provided any real support for Hypothesis 3, and as such, it should be rejected.

There were five agree/disagree statements relating to the position characteristic

‘variation’; thus, if the score for any of the statements was 1, 2 or 3, then the total score would be in the range of 5 to 15 points, which would place these responses in the low-score group; if the score for any of the statements was 5, 6 or 7 points, then the total score would be in the range of 25 to 35 points, which would then place the responses in the high-score group.

The outcome of the scatter test revealed that the mean score for ODC with a high ‘degree of variation’ was 76.86, whilst that for ODC with a low ‘degree of variation’ was 71.55 (Table 6-21). We can therefore conclude that there are significant differences between the two, and as such, the data analyses carried out in this study do not provide support for Hypothesis 3, *‘The greater the variation of a particular position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position’*. Despite the fact that the relationships between ODC and the position characteristic ‘variation’ did achieve a level of significance ($p < 0.001$), corroborated through the correlation and regression analyses, as a result of the very weak correlation, Hypothesis 3 is rejected.

6.6.4 Relationship between ODC and the Degree of Sensitivity (Hypothesis 4)

As shown in Table 6-19, the correlation coefficient between ODC and the position characteristic ‘degree of sensitivity’ was found to be 0.287 ($p < 0.001$) which, although a little higher than that between ODC and ‘variation’ (0.193), is still less

than 0.3, indicating only a weak correlation, albeit still higher than 0.25. These results demonstrate that all of the analyses carried out so far concur with the general tenet of Hypothesis 4.

There were just three agree/disagree statements relating to the position characteristic 'sensitivity'; thus, if the score for any of the statements was 1, 2 or 3, then the total score would be in the range of 3 to 9 points, which would place these responses in the low-score group; if the score for any of the statements was 5, 6 or 7 points, then the total score would be in the range of 15 to 21 points, which would then place the responses in the high-score group.

The outcome of the scatter test showed that the mean score for ODC with a high 'degree of sensitivity' was 78.92, whilst that for ODC with a low 'degree of sensitivity' was 69.98 (Table 6-21), clearly indicating a significant difference between the two. The correlation coefficient between ODC and the 'degree of sensitivity' was found to be 0.287 ($p < 0.001$), with the *t*-test on the high- and low-score groups also showing that the difference between these two groups achieved a level of significance. However, the conclusion drawn from the results of these analyses is that they have still failed to provide sufficient corroboration for Hypothesis 4, *'The greater the sensitivity that a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this*

position'. As a result, Hypothesis 4 is rejected.

6.6.5 Relationship between ODC and the Degree of Formalisation (Hypothesis 5)

As shown in Table 6-19, the correlation coefficient between ODC and the position characteristic 'degree of formalisation' was found to be 0.238 ($p < 0.001$), with such a low correlation coefficient indicating the existence of only a weak correlation between the two. In other words, this thesis can provide no support for Hypothesis 5, *'The less formalisation a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position'*.

There were just three agree/disagree statements relating to the position characteristic 'formalisation'; thus, if the score for any of the statements was 1, 2 or 3, then the total score would be in the range of 3 to 9 points, which would place these responses in the low-score group; if the score for any of the statements was 5, 6 or 7 points, then the total score would be in the range of 15 to 21 points, which would then place the responses in the high-score group.

As regards the outcome from the scatter test undertaken on this grouping, the mean score of ODC with a high 'degree of formalisation' was found to be 75.69, whilst that for ODC with a low 'degree of formalisation' was found to be 69.81 (Table 6-21); although showing a significant difference, no general support was

provided for Hypothesis 5.

6.6.6 Relationship between ODC and the Exclusivity of Skills (Hypothesis 6)

As shown in Table 6-19, the correlation coefficient between ODC and the position characteristic ‘exclusivity of skills’ was found to be 0.303 ($p < 0.001$), thereby indicating the existence of a moderate correlation between the two. These results concur with the general tenet of Hypothesis 6.

There were six agree/disagree statements relating to the position characteristic ‘exclusivity of skills’; thus, if the score for any of the statements was 1, 2 or 3, then the total score would be in the range of 6 to 18 points, which would place these responses in the low-score group; if the score for any of the statements was 5, 6 or 7 points, then the total score would be in the range of 30 to 42 points, which would place the responses in the high-score group.

The outcome of the scatter test showed that the mean score for ODC with a high level of ‘exclusivity of skills’ was 80.21, whilst that for ODC with a low level of ‘exclusivity of skills’ was 69.51, and that the difference did achieve a level of significance (Table 6-21). We can therefore conclude that, in conjunction with the outcomes of the correlation and regression analyses, Hypothesis 6 in this thesis, *‘The greater the exclusivity of skills required of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this*

position', has been corroborated through solid, empirical evidence.

6.7 Pearson's Correlations on OCDQ Factors, 'Turnover' and 'Identity'

The Pearson's correlations between each of the six position characteristics and the ODCQ factor, 'turnover' (intent to stay, Iverson, 1992; Price, 1997), are shown in Table 6-22, which shows that the correlations between position characteristics and 'turnover' are lower than those presented on the ODCQ factor, 'identity' in Table 6-23. Only 'authority' ($r = 0.464$) and 'complexity' ($r = 0.427$) are found to have any direct correlations with ODC, whilst 'sensitivity' ($r = 0.266$) and 'exclusivity of skills' ($r = 0.230$) are found to have only weak relationships with ODC. Surprisingly, 'variation' ($r = 0.161$) and 'formalisation' ($r = 0.166$) are found to have no correlations whatsoever with ODC. Furthermore, none of the correlations was found to be higher than 0.50, thereby indicating only weak correlations between each of the position characteristics and 'turnover'.

Table 6-22 Correlation Analysis between Position Characteristics and ODC (Turnover)

Position Characteristics	Coefficient
1. Authority	0.464***
2. Complexity	0.427***
3. Variation	0.161***
4. Sensitivity	0.266***
5. Formalisation	0.166***
6. Exclusivity of Skills	0.230***

Note: *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

Table 6-23, which shows the Pearson's correlation coefficients between the

ODCQ factor ‘identity’ and each of the six position characteristics, reveals some obvious differences between those presented on ‘turnover’ in Table 6-22.

Table 6-23 Correlation Analysis between Position Characteristics and ODC (Identity)

Position Characteristics	Coefficient
1. Authority	0.497***
2. Complexity	0.549***
3. Variation	0.203***
4. Sensitivity	0.293***
5. Formalisation	0.296***
6. Exclusivity of Skills	0.356***

Note: *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

The complexity characteristic was found to have a good correlation with ‘identity’ ($r = 0.549$), with moderate correlations with identity being found for both authority ($r = 0.497$) and exclusivity of skills ($r = 0.356$). However, only weak correlations with identity were found for the remaining three characteristics, variation ($r = 0.203$), sensitivity ($r = 0.293$) and formalisation ($r = 0.296$). Nevertheless, the correlations between each of the position characteristics and ‘identity’ were generally found to be higher than those for ‘turnover’.

As compared to the correlation analyses carried out between ODC and the position characteristics, with turnover and identity included (Table 6-19), the correlation between authority and identity was found to be lower, whilst the correlation between variation and identity was found to be higher, with some slight differences being found to exist amongst the remaining factors.

6.8 Multiple Regression Analysis on OCDQ Factors, 'Turnover' and 'Identity'

The analysis undertaken in Chapter 5 of this thesis led to the two factors of 'turnover' and 'identity' being extracted from the ODCQ. Multiple regression analyses were subsequently carried out to examine the effects on 'turnover' from the independent variables, the six position characteristics, as shown in Table 6-24.

The results of the analysis model showed that authority had the greatest impacts on turnover ($\beta = 0.418$); this was followed by 'complexity' ($\beta = 0.362$), formalisation ($\beta = 0.135$), sensitivity ($\beta = 0.121$) and exclusivity of skills ($\beta = 0.097$) which also achieved significance. The only independent variable which did not achieve any level of significance was variation ($\beta = -0.036$).

Table 6-24 Multiple Regression Analysis between the Position Characteristics and ODC (Turnover)

Position Characteristics	B	β	Significance
1. Authority	0.426	0.418	***
2. Complexity	0.366	0.362	***
3. Variation	-0.037	-0.036	
4. Sensitivity	0.122	0.121	***
5. Formalisation	0.138	0.135	***
6. Exclusivity of Skills	0.099	0.097	***
Constant	5.313***		
R^2	0.344***		
Adjusted R^2	0.341***		
N of Observations	1,256		

Note: *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

The total explained variance (composite explanatory power) was found to be 34.1 per cent, which was lower than that obtained from the previous analysis. The

results clearly show that the predictions obtained from the six position characteristics and the ‘turnover’ factor in the 14 ODCQ statements (including the question groups on ‘turnover’ and ‘identity’) still leave much to be desired.

Finally, multiple regression analyses were carried out in order to examine the effects of the six position characteristics on the other extracted factor, ‘identity’. As shown in Table 6-25, the results of the analytical model revealed that the greatest impact on identity was attributable to complexity ($\beta = 0.471$); this was followed by authority ($\beta = 0.398$), formalisation ($\beta = 0.271$), exclusivity of skills ($\beta = 0.218$) and sensitivity ($\beta = 0.091$), with the effects on identity arising from these five variables all achieving levels of significance ($p < 0.001$). The only variable failing to achieve any level of significance was variation ($\beta = -0.015$).

Table 6-25 Multiple Regression Analysis between the Position Characteristics and ODC (Identity)

Position Characteristics	B	β	Significance
1. Authority	0.405	0.398	***
2. Complexity	0.480	0.471	***
3. Variation	-0.015	-0.015	
4. Sensitivity	0.093	0.091	***
5. Formalisation	0.276	0.271	***
6. Exclusivity of Skills	0.222	0.218	***
Constant	5.476***		
R^2	0.510***		
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.508***		
N of Observations	1,282		

Note: *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

There is, however, one issue particularly worthy of note. The total explained

variance (composite explanatory power) of the regression model on 'identity' was found to be 50.8 per cent, much higher than that found in the previous model. We can therefore extrapolate from this that enhancing the identity of employees with their organisation, through the adjustment and regulation of position characteristics, could be the most effective strategy relating to organisational management identified in this research.

6.9 The Effects of Gender on Questionnaire Responses

The analysis in this section focuses on gender; that is, the differences in the correlations between position characteristics for males and females. The reason for employing gender as a pivotal segment of analysis in this thesis is that both male and female respondents responded to the series of statements pertaining to position characteristics and ODC on behalf of their respective organisations; however, in the process of responding to these statements, male and female respondents are very likely to exhibit different opinions and styles of thinking. The following analysis is therefore carried out in order to determine whether differences really do exist in the correlations between ODC and the six position characteristics for male and female respondents.

A *t*-test was undertaken to analyze whether the viewpoints of male and female respondents on the relationships between ODC and position characteristic achieved

any levels of significance. As shown in Table 6-26, the correlation between ODC and ‘authority’ attributable to female respondents was 0.485, whilst that attributable to male respondents was 0.546, thereby indicating that both male and female respondents regarded ODC and ‘authority’ as being highly correlated ($p < 0.001$). The t -value was found to be 1.76, which failed to achieve any level of significance ($p > 0.05$); we can therefore conclude that when responding to the questionnaire statements on behalf of their organisation, no particular differences were found to exist between male and female perspectives on the correlation between ODC and the position characteristic of ‘authority’.

Table 6-26 Correlations between Position Characteristics and ODC, based upon Male and Female Perspectives

Position Characteristics	Male		Female		t -value
	N	Coeff.	N	Coeff.	
1. Authority	557	0.546***	727	0.485***	1.76
2. Complexity	560	0.632***	724	0.421***	4.84***
3. Variation	561	0.304***	727	0.100**	3.69***
4. Sensitivity	570	0.459***	727	0.148***	6.43***
5. Formalisation	567	0.098*	725	0.339***	3.95***
6. Exclusivity of Skills	570	0.356***	722	0.277***	2.04*

Note: * indicates $p < 0.05$; and *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

As regards the gender perspectives on the correlation between ODC and ‘complexity’, the correlation coefficient for female respondents was found to be 0.421, whilst that for male respondents was found to be 0.632. These results indicate that both respondents regarded ODC and ‘complexity’ as being highly correlated.

The *t*-value obtained from the *t*-test was found to be 4.84, achieving a level of significance ($p < 0.001$); that is, from the perspective of male respondents, the correlation between ODC and the position characteristic of ‘complexity’ was thought to be higher than that obtained from the perspective of female respondents.

As regards the gender perspectives on the correlation between ODC and ‘variation’, as shown in Table 6-26, the correlation coefficient for female respondents was found to be 0.100 ($0.001 < p < 0.01$), which indicates that females felt that these factors were unrelated; however, the correlation coefficient for male respondents was found to be 0.304 ($p < 0.001$), thereby revealing a significant gender gap. A *t*-test was subsequently carried out, producing a *t*-value of 3.69, and also achieving a level of significance ($p < 0.001$). Thus, from the perspective of male respondents, the correlation between ODC and the position characteristic, ‘variation’, was higher than that obtained from the perspective of female respondents.

Turning to the gender perspectives on the correlation between ODC and ‘sensitivity’, the correlation coefficient for female respondents was found to be 0.148, whilst that for male respondents was 0.459, thereby indicating that male respondents regarded ODC and ‘sensitivity’ as being correlated. The *t*-value was found to be 6.43, achieving a level of significance ($p < 0.001$); thus, from the perspective of male respondents, the correlation between ODC and the position

characteristic of 'sensitivity' was found to be higher than that obtained from the perspective of female respondents.

The gender viewpoints on the correlation between ODC and 'formalisation', showed that the correlation coefficient for female respondents was 0.339, whilst that for male respondents was 0.098 ($0.01 < p < 0.05$), thereby highlighting a considerable gender gap. As a result of the application of the *t*-test, the *t*-value was found to be 3.95, achieving a level of significance ($p < 0.001$); thus, the correlation between ODC and the position characteristic 'formalisation' was found to be lower from the perspective of male respondents than that obtained from the perspective of female respondents.

As regards the gender perspectives on the correlation between ODC and 'exclusivity of skills', the correlation coefficient for female respondents was found to be 0.277, whilst that for male respondents was found to be 0.356. These results indicate that both male and female respondents regarded ODC and 'exclusivity of skills' as being correlated. The *t*-value resulting from the application of the *t*-test was found to be 2.04 ($0.01 < p < 0.05$), achieving a slight level of significance ($p < 0.05$); thus, the correlation between ODC and the position characteristic 'exclusivity of skills' was found to be a bit higher from the perspective of male respondents than that obtained from the perspective of female respondents.

As a result of the above analyses, three particular phenomena have been uncovered by this thesis, as follows:

1. Regardless of whether respondents are male or female, they generally regard ODC and each of the position characteristics as being correlated, with the correlation coefficient for each of these relationships achieving at least a 0.05 level of significance.
2. Both male and female respondents have been found to share the same opinion on the relationship between ODC and the position characteristics of authority and complexity, which were found to be highly correlated. As regards the perspective of male respondents on the remaining four position characteristics (variation, sensitivity, formalisation and exclusivity of skills), the correlations between ODC and these four position characteristics were found to differ from the perspective of female respondents, which, we surmise, may be attributable to the different roles traditionally played by males and females in Chinese societies.
3. The major gaps in the correlations are found to mirror the differences between the male and female respondents. On the one hand, the correlations between ODC and complexity, variation, sensitivity and exclusivity of skills were regarded as being higher from a male perspective,

as compared to a female perspective; on the other hand, the correlation between ODC and formalisation was found to be higher from a female perspective than from a male perspective.

6.10 The Effects of Sample Sources

Prior to the thorough analysis of the sample responses, a sample description was carried out along with comparisons of all the samples collected from the three geographical locations of Taiwan, China and Hong Kong. As shown in Table 6-27, a total of 1,081 valid samples were obtained from Taiwan, accounting for almost four-fifths (78.4 per cent) of all respondents, with the 144 samples from China and 155 from Hong Kong each accounting for just over 10 per cent of the total sample.

Table 6-27 Sample Sources, by Geographical Location

Frequency	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
N	1,081	144	155	1,380
%	78.4	10.4	11.2	100.0

The results of the difference test on gender ratio subsequently carried out using a one-way 'analysis of variance' (ANOVA) procedure are presented in Table 6-28, from which we can see that males (females) accounted for 43.9 per cent (56.1 per cent). The percentage shares of the male and female samples obtained from Taiwan were very close to the percentage for the total sample, whilst males (females) accounted for 48.3 per cent (51.7 per cent) in China, and 42.4 per cent (57.6 per cent)

in Hong Kong. From a statistical standpoint, such differences did not achieve any level of significance (Chi-square = 1.289, $p = 0.525$); thus, we can conclude that there is general consistency between the male and female ratios of the 1,380 sample respondents interviewed in these three geographical locations.

Table 6-28 Difference Test on the Gender Ratio of the Samples, by Geographical Location

Gender	Geographical Location (% Share)			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Male	43.6	48.3	42.4	43.9
Female	56.4	51.7	57.6	56.1
Chi-square		1.289		
<i>p</i> -value		0.525		

The results of the difference test, based upon both the geographical location of the 1,380 respondents and a range of periods of tenure at their current position, are presented in Table 6-29. Those respondents with tenure of 0-3 years accounted for 34.9 per cent of the total sample, followed by those with a tenures of 6-10 years (accounting for 28.3 per cent), those respondents with a tenure of 4-5 years (accounting for 21.5 per cent), and finally, those with tenure in excess of 10 years (accounting for 15.3 per cent). The cross-tabulation showed that, as compared to the samples collected from Taiwan and Hong Kong, the majority of the samples collected from China exhibited extremely long tenure, whereas samples obtained from China with relatively short tenure were very few and far between.

Table 6-29 Difference Test on the Tenure of the Samples, by Geographical Location

Tenure at Current Position (Years)	Geographical Location (% Share)			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
0-3	35.8	29.4	33.1	34.9
4-5	21.0	23.5	23.3	21.5
6-10	28.0	28.7	30.8	28.3
>10 years	15.2	18.4	12.8	15.3
Chi-square		3.851		
<i>p</i> -value		0.697		

As regards the differences in the tenure periods of the sample responses collected from Taiwan and Hong Kong, these appeared to be very closely related, although there were some slight differences in terms of tenure distribution; the analysis of these differences nevertheless failed to achieve any level of significance (Chi-square = 3.851, $p = 0.697$). We can therefore conclude that no significant differences were found to exist in the tenure distribution of the 1,380 samples collected from these three geographical locations.

A difference test was subsequently carried out in order to determine whether there was any level of significance in the differences for the 1,380 samples between the crucial concept, ODC, and the six position characteristics, based upon the different locations of the respondents. As shown in Table 6-30, the summation of the mean of ODC for the different samples were 74.79 for Taiwan, 76.52 for China and 74.14 for Hong Kong. As a result of the application of ANOVA, the *F*-ratio was found to be only 1.387; that is, the difference failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.250$).

We can therefore conclude that, regardless of the geographical location of the respondent, there appear to be no significant differences in the responses relating to ODC.

Table 6-30 Difference Test on the Mean of the Summation of ODC, by Geographical Location

	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Mean	74.79	76.52	74.14	74.90
S.D.	14.86	2.85	2.62	13.17
N of Observations	1,036	144	155	1,335
<i>F</i> -ratio		1.387		
<i>p</i> -value		0.250		

Tables 6-31 to 6-36 go on to present the difference tests on the six position characteristics for the samples collected from the three geographical locations. The means of authority in Table 6-31 were found to be 20.62 for the sample of respondents from Taiwan, 20.74 for the sample of respondents from China, and 19.99 for the sample of respondents from Hong Kong, whilst the *F*-ratio was found to be 0.990, thereby indicating that the differences between these respondent samples did not achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.372$).

Table 6-31 Difference Test on the Mean of Authority, by Geographical Location

	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Mean	20.62	20.74	19.99	20.56
S.D.	5.53	4.24	4.56	5.31
N of Observations	1,054	144	153	1,351
<i>F</i> -ratio		0.990		
<i>p</i> -value		0.372		

As shown in Table 6-32, the means of complexity were found to be 15.61 for the sample of respondents from Taiwan, 16.16 for the sample of respondents from China, and 15.95 for the sample of respondents from Hong Kong. The *F*-ratio was found to be 1.663, thereby indicating once again, that the differences between these respondent samples failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.190$). Furthermore, the position characteristic ‘complexity’ was found to be higher for those respondent samples obtained from both China and Hong Kong, as compared to those obtained from Taiwan.

Table 6-32 Difference Test on the Mean of Complexity, by Geographical Location

	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Mean	15.61	16.16	15.95	15.70
S.D.	3.91	2.97	3.45	3.77
N of Observations	1,064	138	153	1,355
<i>F</i> -ratio		1.663		
<i>p</i> -value		0.190		

As shown in Table 6-33, the means of variation were 21.18 for the sample of respondents from Taiwan, 22.05 for the sample of respondents from China, and 21.73 for the sample of respondents from Hong Kong. The *F*-ratio was found to be 1.483, thereby indicating that the difference between the respondent samples again failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.227$).

Table 6-33 Difference Test on the Mean of Variation, by Geographical Location

	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Mean	21.18	22.05	21.73	21.33
S.D.	6.53	6.05	5.85	6.41
N of Observations	1,066	138	155	1,359
<i>F</i> -ratio		1.483		
<i>p</i> -value		0.227		

The means of sensitivity for the different samples were found to be 13.16 for Taiwan, 14.08 for China, and 13.72 for Hong Kong (Table 6-34). Since the *F*-ratio was 3.798, this indicates that the difference between these samples did achieve a level of significance ($p < 0.050$). A possible reason for the China sample having the highest degree of position sensitivity could be that this is attributable to the course of socialism previously followed by China.

Table 6-34 Difference Test on the Mean of Sensitivity, by Geographical Location

	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Mean	13.16	14.08	13.72	9.46
S.D.	4.21	4.09	3.87	3.02
N of Observations	1,074	140	154	1368
<i>F</i> -ratio		3.798		
<i>p</i> -value		0.023*		

Note: * indicates $p < 0.05$.

The results presented in Table 6-35 show that the means of formalisation were 16.40 for the sample of respondents from Taiwan, 16.32 for the sample of respondents from China, and 16.17 for the sample of respondents from Hong Kong. The *F*-ratio was found to be 0.349, thereby once again revealing that the differences between the respondent samples obtained from the three different geographical

locations did not achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.706$).

Table 6-35 Difference Test on the Mean of Formalisation, by Geographical Location

	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Mean	16.40	16.32	16.17	16.37
S.D.	3.38	2.85	3.13	3.30
N of Observations	1,065	142	154	1,361
<i>F</i> -ratio		0.349		
<i>p</i> -value		0.706		

The results on exclusivity of skills presented in Table 6-36 show that the means were 26.51 for the sample of respondents from Taiwan, 27.57 for the sample of respondents from China, and 27.20 for the sample of respondents from Hong Kong. The *F*-ratio was found to be 1.901, thereby revealing that the differences between these respondent samples once again failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.150$).

Table 6-36 Difference Test on the Mean of Exclusivity of Skills, by Geographical Location

	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Mean	26.51	27.57	27.20	26.69
S.D.	7.20	5.93	6.30	6.98
N of Observations	1,065	142	152	1,359
<i>F</i> -ratio		1.901		
<i>p</i> -value		0.150		

Finally, Table 6-37 presents the results of the difference test on the summation of the means of the six position characteristics. The summation was 113.46 for the sample of respondents from Taiwan, 117.40 for the sample of respondents from

China, and 114.93 for the sample of respondents from Hong Kong. The *F*-ratio was found to be 2.345, thereby indicating that the differences between these samples did not achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.096$).

Table 6-37 Difference Test on the Mean of the Summation of the Six Position Characteristics, by Geographical Location

	Geographical Location			Total
	Taiwan	China	Hong Kong	
Mean	113.46	117.40	114.93	114.04
S.D.	21.23	16.68	17.58	20.44
N of Observations	1,008	133	147	1,288
<i>F</i> -ratio		2.345		
<i>p</i> -value		0.096		

6.10.1 Summary of the Geographical Distinctions

The above analyses reveal that the mean of one of the six position characteristics, sensitivity, did exhibit some difference; that is the difference test for this single item proved to be significant. However, the summation of the means of the six position characteristics showed that the difference amongst all of the samples still failed to achieve any level of significance ($p > 0.05$). We can therefore conclude that the differences between the samples collected from Taiwan, China and Hong Kong were very slight, and as such, further analysis of any distinctions between these samples is not really deemed to be necessary.

The results of the series of analyses undertaken in the above sections of this chapter clearly show some justification for deciding not to carry out either

distinctive or comparative analyses on the 1,380 respondent samples obtained from the three different geographical locations of Taiwan, China and Hong Kong. There are two possible reasons for this, as explained below.

Firstly, although the data adopted for analysis throughout this thesis were collected from the three geographical locations of Taiwan, China and Hong Kong, both China and Hong Kong happen to be places where Taiwan-based enterprises have established branch companies, and under such circumstances, employees working within these Taiwan-based branch companies had opportunities to become respondents to this study. Thus, cross-regional sampling was essentially ruled out in the original research design phase.

Secondly, as regards the difference between ODC and each of the six position characteristics, only sensitivity achieved any level of significance amongst the 1,380 samples collected from the three geographical locations. As such, the samples collected from these three locations were clearly homogeneous; therefore, there is no real requirement for distinctive or comparative analyses to be carried out.

6.10.2 Item Analysis on the Four Types of Service Industry

The cross-tabulation tests between the position characteristics and the respondent samples obtained from the three geographical locations of Taiwan, China and Hong Kong were all presented earlier in this chapter. The results of the analysis showed that

the differences between these three locations failed to achieve any level of significance; that is, the results indicated that the samples collected for this thesis from these three locations were not really suitable for comparative analysis.

This sub-section presents a cross-tabulation test on the four types of service industry, taking into consideration both gender and tenure, as well as a difference test on the mean of ODC and the six position characteristics examined in this thesis, in order to determine whether it is necessary to undertake comparative analyses of the samples collected from the different types of industry.

Details of the sample distribution within the four types of service industry, comprising of a hotel, a club, a boarding school and 'others', are presented in Table 6-38. A total of 686 respondent samples were collected from the hotel, accounting for the largest proportion of the sample (49.7 per cent). A further 407 respondent samples were collected from the club, accounting for 29.5 per cent of the total, and 213 samples were collected from the category of 'others', thereby accounting for 15.4 per cent. Only 74 respondent samples were collected from the boarding school, accounting for just 5.4 per cent of the total.

Table 6-38 Sample Distribution, by the Four Types of Service Industry

Frequency	Type of Service Industry				Total
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	
N	686	407	74	213	1,380
%	49.7	29.5	5.4	15.4	100.0

A difference test was subsequently carried out on the sample characteristics, with the details of the cross-tabulation distribution of the respondent samples collected from the four types of service industry and the three geographical locations being presented in Table 6-39. Most of the samples pertaining to the club and the boarding school had been obtained from Taiwan, and accounted for over 80 per cent; the boarding school samples collected from Hong Kong accounted for only 5.4 per cent, the lowest proportion, whilst the club samples collected from China were only slightly higher, at about 8.4 per cent, but again representing a very low proportion of the total distribution.

Table 6-39 Difference Test on Sample Distribution, by the Four Types of Service Industry and Geographical Location

Geographical Location	Type of Service Industry (%)				Total
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	
Taiwan	77.2	80.5	83.8	75.6	78.4
China	11.1	8.4	10.8	12.2	10.4
Hong Kong	11.7	11.1	5.4	12.2	11.2
Chi-square					6.005
<i>p</i> -value					0.423

Although distinct differences were found to exist in the sample distribution in the three geographical locations, the results of these differences did not reveal any level of significance (Chi-square = 6.005, $p = 0.423$). Thus, we can conclude that there were virtually no differences between the distribution of the sample in the three geographical locations and in the four types of service industry.

The details on the gender distribution of the respondent samples are presented in Table 6-40, which shows that males (females) accounted for 43.9 per cent (56.1 per cent) of the total. The boarding school samples revealed that males (females) accounted for 45.8 per cent (54.2 per cent), whilst the club samples showed that males (females) accounted for 41.7 per cent (58.3 per cent), and the category of 'others' revealed that males (females) accounted for 44.1 per cent (55.9 per cent). The statistical figures (Chi-square = 1.203, $p = 0.752$) indicated that none of the differences observed in the 'gender' distribution in the four types of service industry managed to achieve any level of significance.

Table 6-40 Difference Test on Sample Distribution, by Gender and the Four Types of Service Industry

Gender	Type of Service Industry (%)				Total
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	
Male	45.0	41.7	45.8	44.1	43.9
Female	55.0	58.3	54.2	55.9	56.1
Chi-square					1.203
<i>p</i> -value					0.752

A difference test was also carried out on the samples obtained from the four types of service industry with regard to the tenure of the respondents at their current position. Of the total samples presented in Table 6-41, those respondents with tenure of 0-3 years accounted for 34.9 per cent, followed by those with tenure of 6-10 years, accounting for 28.3 per cent. In third place were the samples with a tenure of 4-5 years, accounting for 21.5 per cent, and finally, the respondent samples with tenure

in excess of 10 years, which accounted for 15.3 per cent.

The cross-tabulation analysis revealed that there were virtually no differences between the samples relating to the three types of industry comprising of hotel, club and 'others', but that the boarding school samples provided a clear exception. That is, obvious differences were found in the tenure of the boarding school samples, with those respondents with tenure of 6-10 years accounting for 34.3 per cent, followed by those respondents with tenure of 4-5 years, who accounted for 28.4 per cent. Those respondents with tenure of 0-3 years accounted for a slightly lower proportion of the total sample, at 26.9 per cent.

Table 6-41 Difference Test on Sample Distribution, by Tenure at Current Position and the Four Types of Service Industry

Tenure (Years)	Type of Service Industry (%)				Total
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	
0-3	35.8	35.8	26.9	32.7	34.9
4-5	19.7	22.4	28.4	23.3	21.5
6-10	29.1	27.3	34.3	25.9	28.3
>10	15.4	14.5	10.4	18.1	15.3
Chi-square					8.246
p-value					0.510

Although it appeared that some differences did exist between the various samples, cross-tabulation revealed that these differences failed to achieve any level of significance (Chi-square = 8.246, $p = 0.510$). Thus, we can conclude that almost no differences were found to exist with regard to tenure distribution amongst the samples obtained from the four types of service industry.

The above discussion has provided details on the general situation with regard to sample distribution in this study; we now go on to examine whether any significant differences are found to exist, in terms of ODC and the six position characteristics, between the respondent samples obtained from the four types of service industry.

As shown in Table 6-42, the mean of the summation of ODC was 74.90, with the means of the four types of industry from high to low being 75.50 for the club samples, 74.77 for the hotel samples, 74.51 for the boarding school samples, and 74.27 for the 'others' samples. The *F*-value obtained from the application of ANOVA was 0.471, with no level of significance being achieved ($p = 0.703$), thereby indicating that there were no significant differences between the ODC of the respondents from the four types of industry.

Table 6-42 Difference Test on the Mean of the Summation of ODC for the Four Types of Service Industry

Variables	Type of Service Industry					<i>F</i> -ratio	<i>p</i> -value
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	Total		
Mean	74.77	75.50	74.51	74.27	74.90	0.471	0.703
S.D.	12.96	13.31	14.23	13.25	13.17		
N of Obs.	664	395	72	201	1,335		

The results of the difference tests between the six position characteristics and the respondent samples obtained from the four types of industry are presented in Tables 6-43 to 6-48.

As shown in Table 6-43, the mean value of authority for the hotel, club and ‘others’ samples was over 20, whilst the mean value of authority for the boarding school samples was 19.56, thereby indicating that only tenuous differences were found to exist between the different types of service industry. The difference test resulted in an F -value of 0.925, which once again failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.428$).

Table 6-43 Difference Test on the Mean of Authority for the Four Types of Service Industry

Variables	Type of Service Industry					F -ratio	p -value
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	Total		
Mean	20.60	20.60	19.56	20.70	20.56	0.925	0.428
S.D.	5.34	5.24	5.82	5.13	5.31		
N of Obs.	673	398	73	207	1,351		

The results on complexity are presented in Table 6-44, which shows that the means for the hotel, club and ‘others’ samples were all close to 15.7, whilst the mean for the boarding school samples was 15.3. The F -value was 0.431, once again revealing that the differences failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.731$).

Table 6-44 Difference Test on the Mean of Complexity for the Four Types of Service Industry

Variables	Type of Service Industry					F -ratio	p -value
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	Total		
Mean	15.79	15.63	15.30	15.71	15.70	0.431	0.731
S.D.	3.73	3.75	4.27	3.79	3.77		
N of Obs.	676	396	73	210	1,355		

As regards the position characteristic of variation, Table 6-45 reveals that the

means were 21.21 for the boarding school samples, 21.40 for the hotel samples, 21.22 for the club samples, and 21.34 for the ‘others’ samples. The difference test resulted in an *F*-value of 0.078, which once again confirms that the difference failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.972$).

Table 6-45 Difference Test on the Mean of Variation for the Four Types of Service Industry

Variables	Type of Service Industry					<i>F</i> -ratio	<i>p</i> -value
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	Total		
Mean	21.40	21.22	21.21	21.34	21.33	0.078	0.972
S.D.	6.36	6.61	6.42	6.23	6.41		
N of Obs.	676	402	73	208	1,359		

As shown in Table 6-46, the means of the position characteristic, sensitivity, were found to be 12.93 for the boarding school samples, 13.32 for the hotel samples, 13.52 for the club samples, and 13.06 for the ‘others’ samples, with an *F*-value of 0.804. The differences between the samples again failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.492$).

Table 6-46 Difference Test on the Mean of Sensitivity for the Four Types of Service Industry

Variables	Type of Service Industry					<i>F</i> -ratio	<i>p</i> -value
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	Total		
Mean	13.32	13.52	12.93	13.06	13.32	0.804	0.492
S.D.	4.19	3.98	4.29	4.42	4.17		
N of Obs.	681	404	73	210	1,368		

As regards the position characteristic, formalisation, there were almost no differences between the means of the samples obtained from the four types of

industry, all of which were between 16.00 and 16.50 (Table 6-47). The F -value was found to be 0.290, which was again insignificant ($p = 0.832$).

Table 6-47 Difference Test on the Mean of Formalisation for the Four Types of Service Industry

Variables	Type of Service Industry					F -ratio	p -value
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	Total		
Mean	16.36	16.46	16.10	16.30	16.37	0.290	0.832
S.D.	3.46	3.24	2.89	3.02	3.30		
N of Obs.	672	405	73	211	1,361		

As regards the position characteristic, exclusivity of skills, Table 6-48 shows that the means of this characteristic were 26.78 for the boarding school samples, 26.48 for the hotel samples, and 26.86 for the club samples, whilst the mean for the ‘others’ samples was slightly higher, at 27.03; however, the difference test resulted in an F -value of 0.451, thereby indicating that the differences between these samples still failed to reach any level of significance ($p = 0.717$).

Table 6-48 Difference Test on the Mean of Exclusivity of Skills for the Four Types of Service Industry

Variables	Type of Service Industry					F -ratio	p -value
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	Total		
Mean	26.48	26.86	26.78	27.03	26.69	0.451	0.717
S.D.	6.90	6.98	7.11	7.24	6.98		
N of Obs.	676	401	73	209	1,359		

As shown in Table 6-49, the means of the summation of the six position characteristics for both the hotel and club samples were over 114.00, whilst the mean for the boarding school samples was 111.97, and the mean for the ‘others’

samples was 113.91. However, the difference test resulted in an *F*-ratio of 0.262, thereby indicating that the differences between the samples once again failed to achieve any level of significance ($p = 0.853$).

Table 6-49 Difference Test on the Mean of the Summation of the Six Position Characteristics for the Four Types of Service Industry

Variables	Type of Service Industry					<i>F</i> -ratio	<i>p</i> -value
	Hotel	Club	Boarding School	Others	Total		
Mean	114.19	114.22	111.97	113.91	114.04	0.262	0.853
S.D.	20.36	20.13	23.04	20.43	20.44		
N of Obs.	643	376	70	199	1,288		

The application of the difference test showed that the means of the six position characteristics for the hotel, club, boarding school and ‘others’ samples all failed to achieve any level of significance, with the mean of the summation of the position characteristics being no exception ($p > 0.05$). We can therefore conclude from this that as a result of the rather tenuous differences between the hotel, club, boarding school and ‘others’ samples, there really was no requirement to carry out any distinctive analysis in this thesis.

Based upon the results of the above series of analyses, we have determined that the four types of service industry (hotel, club, boarding school and ‘others’) are essentially homogeneous. Furthermore, the application of ANOVA on ODC and the six position characteristics, and their association with the four types of service industry, revealed that none of the items achieved any level of significance. A

similar conclusion can also be drawn with regard to geographical location; that is, there was no real requirement for distinctive or comparative analyses to be carried out on the samples obtained from these four types of service industry.

As a result of the series of analyses undertaken in the preceding sections of this chapter, the research findings of this thesis are as follows. Despite the existence of inconsistencies in the sample distribution in the four types of industry, the results of the cross tabulation between the four types of industry and the associated variables, including geographical location, gender, tenure at current position, ODC and the six position characteristics, have consistently revealed that these differences fail to achieve any level of significance.

The results of the analyses carried out in this thesis correspond to those reported in many of the Taiwan-based research studies (Su, Chen and Yeh, 1999; Huang, 2001a, 2001b; Chang and Chuang, 2004; Tsai, 2008; Lin and Chen, 2009; Cheng, 2010). As in the present study, the differences arising from the type of industry did not generally reach any level of significance in all of the aforementioned studies; hence, the focus was invariably placed on their main discussion points of position characteristics and organisational commitment.

Such being the case, it is argued in this thesis that although engaged in different types of industry, the respondents still appear to be equipped with consistent special

qualities. This therefore leads to the conclusion that there is no real requirement for any distinctive analysis to be undertaken on the samples obtained from the four types of service industry.

6.11 Summary and Conclusions

The series of analyses carried out in this chapter give rise to the following research findings. In addition to the unequal sample distribution in the three geographical locations (with Taiwan accounting for about 80 per cent, and China and Hong Kong each accounting for about 10 per cent), as regards the gender, tenure and ODC presented on the 1,380 respondent samples, the differences in these three regions all failed to achieve any level of significance.

As for the six position characteristics, only 'sensitivity' was found to achieve level of significance, with the other five position characteristics, including the summation of the six position characteristics, consistently being found to be insignificant. Accordingly, it is clear that despite the 1,380 respondents samples having been obtained from Taiwan, China and Hong Kong, all of the respondents worked for Taiwan-based firms, and thus, exhibited considerable homogeneity. In conclusion, there was no requirement for any distinctive analysis of the 1,380 samples obtained from these three geographical locations.

According to the results of this thesis, the operational definition of ODC

provided by various position holders is formed as a result of the existence of the six position characteristics, 'authority', 'complexity', 'variation', 'sensitivity', 'formalisation' and 'exclusivity of skills'. The key point in this thesis lies in the fact that 'position characteristics' are a target unit of analysis in the examination of ODC. That is to say, ODC is based on an organisational perspective rather than an employee perspective, which renders this study quite distinct from the prior traditional studies.

The definitions of the constructs of these six position characteristics and their correlated inferences were comprehensively explained in Chapter 5. The main aims of this chapter have been to test and verify the overall Hypothesis and the branch Hypotheses (1-6) through statistical tests of the levels of both the correlations and significance, and to explore (i) whether Taiwanese organisations always nurture organisational commitment amongst their individual employees; and (ii) whether organisations tend to require different levels of ODC from various position holders according to the six position characteristics. To test and verify all of the hypotheses in this thesis, a total analysis (aimed at testing and verifying the main Hypothesis) and single component analyses (aimed at testing and verifying the branch Hypotheses 1-6) have been carried out in order to examine whether these hypotheses are supported or rejected.

A series of empirical analyses have been carried out in this chapter. First of all, a normality test was carried out on ODC and the six position characteristics with a view to examining whether the sample distribution of each single variable corresponded to the basic assumption of normal distribution. Secondly, *t*-tests were applied to the 1,380 samples obtained from the four types of service industry (hotel, club, boarding school and 'others') located in Taiwan, China and Hong Kong. Thirdly, the correlations between ODC and the six position characteristics have been explored, discussed and further analyzed; that is, multiple regression analyses were employed to determine which of the six position characteristics (independent variables) had the most crucial impacts on ODC.

Fourthly, gender and tenure were included as control variables in the analysis to determine whether differences were found to exist with regard to the viewpoints of male and female respondents relating to the correlations between ODC and the six position characteristics. Finally, brief descriptions of the empirical analyses undertaken in this chapter are provided in the following concluding paragraphs.

6.11.1 Normality Test

A single variable description of ODC and the six position characteristics was carried out prior to undertaking the cross tabulation, with the distribution of each variable being presented in the form of histograms; a normality test was also carried out

employing two statistical methods, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. The analytical results of the normality test showed that the valid samples for each variable accounted for a very high proportion of the total (in excess of 97 per cent). The distribution of both the independent and dependent variables was found to fully correspond with the basic assumption of normal distribution. Thus, the research data presented in this thesis have clearly been of very good quality, and eminently suited to being subjected to a series of follow-up statistical analyses.

6.11.2 T-test (Difference Test)

A cross-tabulation test was carried out in order to verify whether any level of significance was achieved with regard to the distribution of the respondents based upon gender and tenure, comprising of the analysis of 1,380 samples collected from the four types of service industry located in Taiwan, China and Hong Kong. Thereafter, ANOVA was applied in order to determine whether the differences between ODC and the position characteristics achieved any level of significance for the four types of service industry and each of the geographical locations.

The results obtained through the application of the *t*-test and ANOVA revealed that the differences between ODC and five of the six position characteristics were insignificant, with only one of the position characteristics, 'sensitivity', revealing a slight difference with ODC for the 1,380 samples obtained from the four types

of service industry in the three geographical locations.

We can conclude from this that despite having been obtained from different types of service industries in different locations, there was no evidence of heterogeneity in the 1,380 samples used for the analyses carried out in this thesis. That is, in the analyses undertaken in this thesis, the 1,380 samples could be regarded as a homogeneous group. Hence, it seems reasonable and appropriate to conclude that there is no requirement to undertake any distinctive or comparative analysis.

6.11.3 Bivariate Analysis

Once the single variable descriptive statistics had been examined, bivariate analysis was subsequently carried out, with the correlation coefficients between ODC and each of the six position characteristics being employed to explore and analyze the correlation ratios. The research findings indicated positive correlations between ODC and each of the six position characteristic; that is, each of the correlations exhibited significance, with each position characteristic potentially serving as an excellent predictor of ODC and the predictions achieving appropriate levels of significance ($p < 0.001$).

The samples were subsequently divided into two groups, the high-score sample group and the low-score sample group, according to the scores of the six position characteristics. A difference test was carried out in order to examine whether any

significant differences existed between these two groups, with the analytical results revealing that the differences between the six position characteristics did achieve levels of significance (at least $p < 0.01$).

6.11.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

In order to gain a complete understanding of the extent of the various impacts of each position characteristic on ODC, a multiple regression analysis was carried out to explore and analyze the ways in which ODC was affected by the six position characteristics (independent variables). The analysis results showed that ‘authority’ and ‘complexity’ had the greatest impacts on ODC. With the independent variables exhibiting 50.8 per cent composite explanatory power on ‘identity’; thus, we can conclude that ‘identity’ extracted from ODCQ could act as strong predictor of ODC.

6.11.5 Gender Differences

Gender was used as a control variable to explore and analyze the correlations between ODC and each position characteristic, with each correlation coefficient being compared and analyzed to determine whether the perspectives of male and female respondents on the correlations between ODC and the position characteristics achieved any level of significance. The analytical findings revealed no differences between the perspectives of male and female respondents on the correlations between ODC and ‘authority’; however, the perspective of male respondents on the

remaining five correlations (those between ODC and ‘complexity’, ‘variation’, ‘sensitivity’, ‘formalisation’ and ‘exclusivity of skills’) were found to differ from the perspective of female respondents.

The research results presented in this thesis have been obtained through a series of empirical analyses examining the different forms of correlations between ODC and the six position characteristics. As a result of the *t*-tests and both the correlation and regression analyses, the existence of correlations or differences between the dependent variable and the independent variables have been identified. In summary, all of the analyses presented here have not only demonstrated the ability to perfectly identify the correlations between ODC and the six position characteristics, but that they can also further clarify the relationships that exist between them.

The validation of the measurement scales was undertaken in Chapter 5, with different research methods being employed to corroborate, or refute, Hypotheses 1 to 6. The research results presented in this chapter are briefly described as follows:

1. **Hypothesis 1:** *The greater the authority provided by a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

This hypothesis has been corroborated through solid, empirical evidence together with the results of correlation and regression analyses.

2. **Hypothesis 2:** *The greater the complexity of a position, the higher the*

level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.

This hypothesis has also been corroborated through solid, empirical evidence combined with the results of correlation and regression analyses.

3. **Hypothesis 3:** *The greater the variation of a particular position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

Although the application of Pearson's correlation and regression analyses in this thesis showed that 'variation' did achieve a level of significance, the correlation coefficient was, nevertheless, very weak ($r = 0.193$); thus, Hypothesis 3 has not been corroborated in this thesis.

4. **Hypothesis 4:** *The greater the sensitivity that a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

The Pearson's correlation and regression analyses again showed that 'sensitivity' achieved a level of significance; however, the data analysis revealed only a weak correlation with ODC ($r=0.287$). Hence, Hypothesis 4 is not corroborated in this thesis.

5. **Hypothesis 5:** *The less formalisation a position has, the higher the level of*

demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.

Once again, although the application of Pearson's correlation and regression analyses revealed that 'formalisation' achieved a level of significance, the data analysis revealed a very weak correlation with ODC ($r = 0.238$). Therefore, Hypothesis 5 is not supported or corroborated in this thesis.

Theoretically, there may be no requirement for any organisation to demand higher levels of commitment from its employees holding positions with high degrees of formalisation. Practically, however, in order to ensure that the organisation remains more flexible, there is a need for large-scale organisations with a long-standing business history to demand higher levels of commitment from their employees holding such positions.

6. **Hypothesis 6:** *The greater the exclusivity of skills required of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.*

This hypothesis has been corroborated through solid, empirical evidence together with the results of the correlation and regression analyses.

In conclusion, Hypotheses 1 to 6 proposed in this thesis have undergone processes of 'confirmation' (Hypothesis 1, 2 and 6) and 'rejection' (Hypothesis 3, 4

Chapter 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter presents a reflection on the theoretical and practical implications arising from the findings of this thesis, as presented in the preceding chapters. An attempt has been made throughout this study to highlight the fact that the whole issue of organisational commitment has gained considerable interest and importance in the overall discussion of organisational behavior; indeed, the concept has been held in high regard by scholars and experts ever since it was first presented by Whyte in 1956.

Abundant empirical studies and experiences of organisational commitment have been accumulated over the years with the correlated theoretical frameworks having already become established, and commonly recognised, as suitable models for carrying out research into the associated issue of organisational behavior. However, within most of the prior studies on organisational commitment, the analysis has invariably been undertaken on the basis of individual employees as the assigned unit of research, as opposed to the organisation as a whole, thereby ignoring the fact that organisational commitment is concerned with both parties; that is, both employees and the organisation.

In view of this, the primary aim of this study has been to test and analyse the relationships that exist between position characteristics, which are defined in this thesis as antecedents of the extent of ‘organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC).

To this end, the research process began with an attempt to gain an understanding of the existence of these constructs and their interrelationships through the practical work experience of the author, as well as relevant illustrative cases. The research framework was subsequently established by means of a review of the extant literature, analysis of the contents of the hypotheses proposed in this study – as well as their links to the related theories – and the further development of the hypotheses based upon inferences. Questionnaires were designed along with the methods for subsequent measurement of the responses.

Section 7.2 provides a critical examination of the principal research findings of the survey data, which are statistically analyzed to test the hypotheses (discussed further below), which ultimately lead us to the summary and conclusions of this thesis. Section 7.3 goes on to present and explain the theoretical and practical implications of all of the research findings of this thesis. The research limitations encountered during the process of this study are presented in Section 7.4, with a brief discussion on the contribution to the existing knowledge being presented in

Section 7.5. Finally, suggestions for future similar research are offered in Section 7.6, where references are also provided for such follow-up research.

7.2 Research Findings

The findings in this thesis appropriately reflect the research aims presented in Chapter One; that is, from an organizational perspective, the organizational demand-side commitment (ODC) is actually a necessary component which should be distinguished from employee supply-side commitment (ESC).

A summary list including all of the hypotheses tested in this thesis, as well as the results of their empirical testing and verification, is presented in Table 7-1, which shows that the series of data analyses resulted in the rejection of three of the six hypotheses presented in this thesis.

Table 7-1 Summary List of the Hypotheses Tested in this Thesis

Hypothesis	Empirical Result	Explanations
0 Different position characteristics create different kinds of organisational demand-side commitment.	Supported	ODC differs significantly from one position structure to another. The correlations between ODC and each of the six position characteristics achieved significance; however, whilst those of 'authority' and 'complexity' were quite good, those of 'variation', 'sensitivity' and 'formalisation' were very weak. Therefore, the hypotheses presented in this thesis generally gained support.
1 The greater the authority provided by a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.	Supported	The correlation between authority and ODC reached a level of significance, and the strength of the correlation coefficient was good. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported.
2 The greater the complexity of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.	Supported	The correlation between complexity and ODC reached a level of significance, and the strength of the correlation coefficient was good. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.
3 The greater the variation of a particular position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.	Rejected	Although the correlation between variation and ODC reached a level of significance, the strength of the correlation coefficient was quite weak. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was not supported. The reason for this may be that in organisations in a Chinese context, the same job could be carried out in various ways or based on different procedures.

Table 7-1 (Contd.)

Hypothesis	Empirical Result	Explanations
4 The greater the sensitivity that a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.	Rejected	The correlation between sensitivity and ODC reached a level of significance; however, the strength of the correlation coefficient was weak. Therefore, the Hypothesis 4 was not supported. The reason for this may be that most Chinese and Taiwanese people both superiors and subordinates alike are reserved when doing questionnaires; hence, they may avoid touching upon anything involving 'sensitivity.'
5 The less formalisation a position has, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.	Rejected	Although the correlation between formalisation and ODC reached a level of significance, the result was exactly the opposite to the original hypothesis, and the strength of the correlation coefficient was also weak. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was not supported. According to the original hypothesis, 'formalisation' should have had a negative correlation with ODC; however, in the research outcome, contrary to the hypothesis, it was found that 'formalisation' had a positive correlation with ODC. The reason for this may be that in organisation of Chinese or Taiwanese context, organisation-related affairs may quite often be negotiated or transacted covertly, so it is quite difficult to control the correlation between 'formalisation' and ODC.
6 The greater the exclusivity of skills required of a position, the higher the level of demand-side commitment that the organisation may require from the employee holding this position.	Supported	The correlation between exclusivity of skills and ODC reached a level of significance, with the correlation coefficient exhibiting moderate strength. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was supported.

After carrying out formal testing, it soon became clear that the 1,380 valid samples reflected some real organisational phenomena; that is, through 'principal component analysis' (PCA), the components of the six position characteristics were found to differ somewhat from the originally established components (presented in Chapter 3), the follow-up analysis had to be conducted based upon the PCA results (presented in Chapter 5).

The fact that three of the six hypotheses established in the exploratory study did not gain support by quantitative analyses does not undermine the value of this thesis, but rather, it conveys the general gist of quantitative research. Some of the research outcomes which did not correspond to the initial hypotheses may be regarded as another facet in the context of Taiwanese organisations, which can in turn serve as references for follow-up research into ODC.

Extra support for this argument was evident through the 'Organisational Demand-side Commitment Questionnaire' (ODCQ), from which the two factors 'identity' and 'turnover' were extracted, with the former being found to act as a stronger predictor of ODC than the latter. This, in turn, reflected what had previously been presented in the exploratory study; that is, in order to enhance the extent to which employees identify with their organisation, the organisation itself will sometimes have to sacrifice some of its own benefits, or reduce its original

expectations of individual employees (ODC: Yin).

In conclusion, the key research findings generally corresponded with the main idea of this thesis, that an organisation will demand different levels of commitment from its employees, according to their different positions and the different expectations that the organisation has of individual employees.

7.3 Theoretical and Practical Implications

7.3.1 The New Concepts (Constructs)

The research outcomes of this thesis, obtained on the basis of Figure 7-1, provide a greater understanding of the relationships between ODC and ESC. In-depth analysis and discussion have been carried out on the concept of Yin and Yang and the relationships that have been found to exist between ODC and ESC, with Yin (Yang) being described as referring to ODC (ESC) during the process of this discussion.

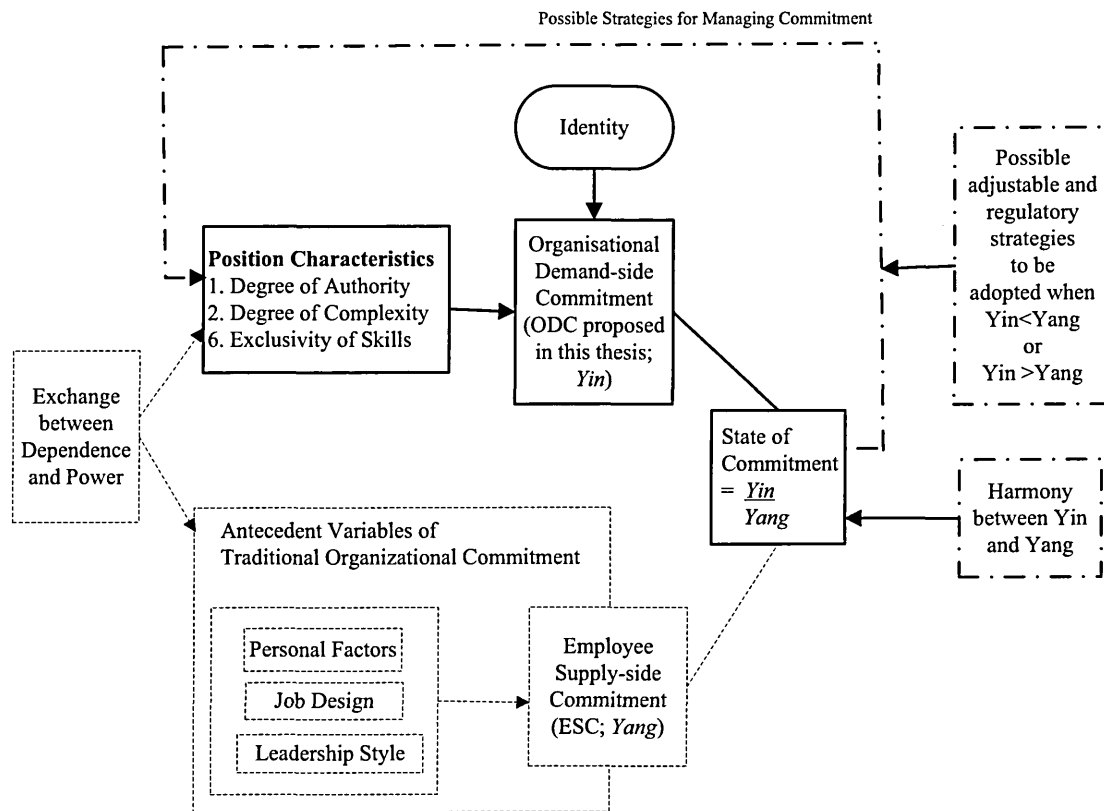


Figure 7-1 A New Model of Organisational Commitment

Note: The continuous line refers to the research focus in this thesis; the dotted line refers to the traditional theoretical basis of employee or organizational commitment; and the dotted/dashed line refers to possible focus for future research.

Through the process of exchanges in the mutual growth and decline between Yin (ODC) and Yang (ESC), the organisation can attain its subsequent goal, the achievement of a new optimal state of organisation equilibrium.

The emphasis in this thesis is placed on the commitment expected by the organisation from its individual employees (ODC). With this primary focus on ODC, ‘positions’ within organisations are then adopted within this study as the assigned unit for research and analysis. By presenting this new construct, we can ensure that all of the aspects and situations pertaining to both the organisation and its employees are controlled.

7.3.2 The Position Characteristics Supported in this Thesis

A 'position' is a basic and necessary constituent element of an organisation. Each type of position within an organisation has its own specific position range, goals and assignments, with one item added; that is, each position holder is under an obligation to maintain contact with other position holders in the same organisation or with people outside of the organisation. Therefore, if researchers intend to carry out research and analysis into the ways in which organisations function, then they should recognise that there is a need to attach greater importance to the structural characteristics of positions. All of the evidence presented in this thesis demonstrates that three position characteristic constructs, the 'degree of authority', the 'degree of complexity' and 'exclusivity of skills', have strong correlations with organisational demand-side commitment (ODC).

7.3.3 The Assigned Unit of Analysis

The focus within the prior studies has traditionally been placed on 'employee' as the assigned unit of analysis for organisational commitment, typically regarding employees as connecting agents. The view has always been that by making a commitment to the organisation for which they work, employees become connected to the organisation; at the same time, organisations will use every means at their disposal to gain stronger organisational commitment from their employees. However,

it is argued throughout this thesis that the assigned unit of analysis for organizational commitment has now changed from 'employee supply-side commitment' to the 'organisation demand-side commitment' as a whole.

It is necessary for organisations of all types to carefully weigh up every possible circumstance that may arise; and indeed, they must recognise that an indispensable prerequisite is that the analysis of organisation demand-side commitment is based on positions designed by the organisation. That is, position should be employed as an assigned analysis unit if they are to gain a complete understanding of the actual level of commitment that their organisations require when considering the available resources. On the one hand, a 'position' can mirror the overall policies, structures and actions of the organisation, all of which can then act as ingredients in the formulation of position characteristics; on the other hand, each position obviously needs a position holder, as well as strategies for their effective management. Thus, in order to ensure the connection between 'organisations' and 'employees', it is necessary to explore and discuss the relationships between these two parties using 'position characteristics' as the assigned unit of analysis. This type of analytical approach, above all others, can fully account for the reasons why organisations have such a demand for different levels of commitment.

With this key point in mind, organisational demand-side commitment is presented in this thesis in the hope that it may assist researchers to carry out more satisfactory, comprehensive and confirmatory analysis of organisational commitment; that is, by using ‘position characteristics’ as an assigned unit of analysis, researchers in this field will be provided with better opportunities to identify the ideal ‘fit’ between organisations and their employees. In specific terms, as expounded in this thesis, if the level of supply-side commitment (Yang) meets that of demand-side commitment (Yin), then the problems associated with the interconnection of both sides – the organisation and its employees – can potentially be solved.

7.3.4 The Demand Model of Organisational Commitment

The new ODC construct presented in this thesis, has been corroborated by means of both factor and empirical analyses; that is, the establishment of the demand model of organisational commitment proposed here is based upon an organisational perspective, as opposed to an employee perspective, which may well remedy the shortcomings (the lack of research into ‘organisational demand-side commitment’) that currently exist in the traditional approach to the research and analysis of organisational commitment.

Through the presentation of this new model, this thesis makes a contribution to the methodology currently adopted in the academic field of organisational

commitment. Thus, it is argued here that a solution to achieving organisational equilibrium can be found by using this new model to carry out research and analysis into organisational commitment, since the model appropriately compensates for the inadequacies of the traditional approach to research into commitment. This issue is seen as being of significant importance, essentially because it involves breaking down theory barriers and obstacles to such research.

7.3.5 The Practical Meaning of Position Characteristics

Position characteristics are found to have strong influences on the coordination of the design of the positions and subsequent recruitment of the necessary position holders. As demonstrated in this thesis, the three position characteristics of ‘authority’, ‘complexity’ and ‘exclusivity of skills’ are found to be strongly correlated with ODC.

Position characteristics are also of considerable benefit to various aspects of the functioning of an organisation, examples of which include the ‘rationalisation of resource distribution’, ‘leadership-style design’ and ‘work design’ (such as job design and related personal factors). According to McAuley (2007), any position in an organisation is designed, coordinated and directed with the aim of enabling the position holder to achieve commonly shared goals or objectives.

7.4 Research Limitations

7.4.1 Limitations of the Sample and the Survey

A limitation of this study is that the information being sought would have been particularly sensitive to many organisations, insofar as such questionnaires require respondents to reveal their position titles, which is of much sensitivity. As a result, it became necessary to drop some of the organisations from the proposed sample for this study, despite the fact that they had expressed a desire to be involved in the survey.

7.4.2 Obstacles to Generalisation

The research scope for this thesis focused on the service industry, including a hotel, a club and a private boarding school; thus, the generalisation of both the research structure and the explanatory power of the 'variables' will clearly be quite limited. This is a special property of 'middle-range' theory (Merton, 1968). The management theory of 'structure follows strategy' best represents a macro theory, insofar as the theory has already stood many tests involving different research contexts without being repudiated. In other words, a macro theory is a sound theory. A middle-range theory can be readily transformed into a generalised macro theory through uninterrupted knowledge accumulation and the process of theory revision. In this thesis, both the hotel and private boarding school in Taiwan can be said to be

societies in miniature, in terms of their business extension or expansion, and can be developed simultaneously.

7.4.3 Unequal Geographical Distribution of the Samples

Another research limitation in this thesis was the unequal proportions and distribution of the samples collected from the three geographical locations of Taiwan, China and Hong Kong in a sample ratio of 8:1:1. The samples were collected from those companies located in China and Hong Kong that were actually branch offices of the Taiwan-based organisations. The reason for such unequal proportions and distribution was that the sampling design for this thesis was not aimed at any regional, comparative analyses between the samples collected from the four types of service industry in these three geographical locations, but instead, it was based first of all on the scale (or size) of the organisations, with such scale subsequently determining the number of samples.

7.4.4 Problems Associated with Questionnaires

Finally, the only method that was employed to gather the correlated data for this thesis was the questionnaires; therefore, it is clear that this thesis may be prone to the potential impediments which all empirical studies relying upon such questionnaires are subjected to, such as the subjective judgment of respondents, fading memory, retrospective errors, the unwillingness to answer questions

truthfully because of personal misgivings, and so on; thus, contamination of the results in this research attributable to such issues cannot be completely ruled out. Future studies may, therefore, also elect to employ qualitative methods to investigate the various issues.

7.5 Contributions to Knowledge

The main contribution of this thesis has been to propose a little-studied typology of organisational commitment called ODC, which is believed to provide grounds for the consolidation and reconciliation of much of the literature pertaining to organisational commitment. ‘Organisational demand-side commitment’ (ODC), which refers to the expectations of employers from their employees, is a core variable of interest in interpersonal and group behaviour. However, it seems apparent from a critical analysis of the extant literature that the traditional view of organizational commitment can only serve as a one-way linkage (from employees to the organization); therefore, the other one-way linkage (from the organization to its employees) is a new conceptualization utilizing the ODC construct. Given that traditional organisational commitment refers almost exclusively to the commitment provided by employees to their organisation, the state of equilibrium between organisations and employees could never have been completely fulfilled. Thus, ODC could function as a balancing force for the organisation, and may help to

achieve a desired state of equilibrium between organisations and employees. It is argued that it is possible to distinguish between types of organisational commitment on the basis of analytical dimensions relating to the employer expectations from its individual employees. This study makes several contributions to researchers and practitioners on organisational commitment.

First, the uniqueness of ODC as a concept and analytical tool that this study has adopted offers a crucial but often neglected approach to understanding the managing commitment-related determinants, which was corroborated by means of 40 in-depth interviews undertaken in the exploratory study as well as the 1,380 valid questionnaires in the quantitative analysis.

Second, in the vast majority of the prior studies on organisational commitment, the samples are not sub-divided into ODC and ESC (employee supply-side commitment). The traditional organisational commitment research model (ESC) itself limits the research direction and the selection of research questions essentially because it involves only supply-side commitment provided to the organisation by employees; therefore, any observations of anomalous phenomena would not have fallen under the remit of normal scientific exploration. The author has developed the notion of ODC and has been taking the lead in doing research on ODC, which may result in making organisational commitment sub-divided into a two-way linkage

system possible and put into practice. That is, ODC (linkage from organisation to employees) and ESC (linkage from employees to organisation). Furthermore, we will have seen a shift in patterns of research: from only research into ESC to research into both ODC and ESC. To sum up, the key point in this thesis lies in the fact that “position characteristics” are a target unit of analysis in the examination of ODC. That is, ODC is based on an organisation perspective rather than an employee perspective, which renders this study quite distinct from prior traditional studies (ESC). Furthermore, due to the fact that the traditional studies have continued to adopt the use of ‘employee’ as the assigned unit of analysis, using this to explore the definitions, antecedents and outcomes of traditional organisational commitment – that is, ESC – as opposed to carrying out in-depth research into the commitment expected by the organisation from individual employees, which could clearly serve as a linkage between organisations and their employees. Within an organisation, employee supply-side commitment (ESC) is seen as being Yang in nature (the visible) whilst organisational demand-side commitment (ODC) is regarded as being Yin in nature (the invisible), essentially because only through indirect observation of the organisational behavior of employees at work can ODC be visualised. With limited resources and different goals, an organisation is neither able, nor likely, to enhance the supply-side commitment of each individual employee. Thus, the present

study contributes to the literature through the provision of an integrated organisational perspective conceptualised with the overall aim of advancing the existing knowledge on organisational demand-side commitment within a Taiwanese context. The importance of the processes is explained in this thesis by considering the effects of ODC on the ways in which employees comprehend what their organisation wants from them, and exactly what they are expected to achieve.

Third, this research on the alternative view of ODC rests principally on the meticulous development of hypotheses and a grounded conceptual framework based on the exploratory study to gain a better understanding of the nature and practice of managing commitment in the Taiwan-based workplace. The corroboration of the quantitative analysis of the 1,380 valid samples was then undertaken. Both of them form a sound basis from which to conduct further meaningful research into integrated organisational commitment.

Fourth, this research has examined the relationship between employer expectations and different position characteristics held by individual employees based on the organizational demand-side commitment (ODC) model presented in this thesis. The research findings show that both male and female respondents with diverse periods of tenure within the organisation have been found to share the same opinion that the relationship between ODC and each of the two position

characteristics of authority and complexity were highly correlated. That is, the ODC model can explain why and how such employers (male / female) adopt a “positive (promotion or boost)” or “negative (demotion or suppression)” method in dealing with their individual employees’ positions to meet employer expectations.

Practically speaking, what has been corroborated in this thesis is efficient and effective enough in terms of the judgment of the facts and choices of human resource management strategy, and therefore, represents one of the contributions made to the extant academic literature. In specific terms, through the use of the position characteristics examined in this study (authority, complexity and exclusivity of skills), a particular job can be linked to a particular person, as a result of which it may be easier to match the type of person required to what is expected of the employee, and to ensure the effective management and development of that person over the longer term.

Fifth, through the quantitative (PCA) approach adopted in this study, it was also found that identity as a sub dependent variable with the organisation played a more important role than the other sub dependent variable turnover intentions, in terms of predicting ODC amongst the Taiwanese samples. This result suggests that Taiwanese organisations tend to focus more on enhancing an employee’s identity than an employee’s retention through the position characteristics held by certain individual

employees. This echoed the situation observed and discussed in the exploratory study that when the disequilibrium between employer expectations and employee supply-side commitment arises, the organisation tends to take one adjustable and regulatory strategy or another to make its expectations meet its employee supply-side commitment. For example, either sacrificing some of its benefits or increasing/reducing its dependence on its employees by adjusting position characteristics (the degree of authority and complexity) designs to secure the desired balance between expectation and achievement in a workplace.

7.6 Conclusions and Recommendations for Follow-up Research

It is clearly evident from the research findings presented in Chapter 6 that three of the position characteristics presented in this study, 'authority', 'complexity' and 'exclusivity of skills' have been solidly corroborated as having impacts on ODC, whilst the other three characteristics, 'variation', 'sensitivity' and 'formalisation' were rejected as a result of their weak correlation coefficients. This suggests that organisations are unlikely to change or adjust employee positions simply because certain employees hold positions that involve the characteristics of variation, sensitivity or formalisation.

This also echoes the three issues outlined in Chapter 1. Issue 1, organisations in Taiwan have a propensity for hiring and retaining employees with low

organizational commitment and indeed, there were even examples of such employees sometimes being promoted or accruing additional bonuses or fringe benefits. Issue 2, Taiwanese organisations were found to have a tendency to demote or dismiss employees with high organisational commitment, or even reduce the salary of such employees if they were to be allowed to stay. And Issue 3, where it was found that Taiwanese organisations will not always nurture organizational commitment amongst their employees; indeed, it has been demonstrated that in some cases, they may actually attempt to lower the commitment of employees with naturally high commitment levels if their overall intention was to engage in downsizing, as a result of which they may well have a desire to see such employees leave of their own accord. This also highlights the fact that ODC and ESC are two totally different constructs.

The two factors of 'identity' (an organization expectations of individual employees identifying with the 'organization') and 'turnover' (an organisation expectations of individual employees demonstrating a desire to remain in their job) were extracted from the ODCQ. The analysis of these factors clearly indicates that 'identity' has stronger predictive ability on ODC than 'turnover', which, in turn, suggests that a priority task for any organisation is to place specific focus on enhancing mutual identity between the organisation itself and its employees (the

organisation's identity with its employees, and the employees' identity with the organisation).

There are numerous factors that are clearly capable of having strong influences on organisations, including the working environment, managerial strategies and organisational structures. It is therefore recommended that, based upon the research outcomes of this thesis, researchers should aim to further explore and discuss the relationships between ODC and all of the factors referred to throughout this thesis.

From a theoretical standpoint, whether or not ODC can be achieved may well have direct impacts on the job satisfaction, productivity and turnover intentions of employees. Hence, it is recommended that when carrying out follow-up research on organisational commitment, researchers should aim to take further steps in this general direction.

All of the position characteristics have been meticulously described in this thesis; therefore, future follow-up research should carefully explore whether these position characteristics and the overall level of ODC have different effects on the methods of position management which organisations choose to adopt. Thus, further exploration and discussion into whether organisations may choose to adopt different methods of position management to deal with different position holders is clearly worth pursuing.

It has been demonstrated in this thesis that within the context of exchange relationships between organisations and their individual employees, an urgent requirement exists for additional research to be carried out with the overall aim of exploring the new concept proposed here on ODC and ESC, and their influence on the state of equilibrium or disequilibrium. Based upon the results of this study, it is suggested that the boundaries of the commitment between organisational demand-side commitment (ODC, Yin) and employee supply-side commitment (ESC, Yang) should be regarded as a two-way flow, which is highly permeable. Such a situation will ultimately result in ESC meeting ODC, and the 'holy grail' of organisational equilibrium thereby being achieved.

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Appendix 1 Traditional Organisational Commitment

Table A1-1 Existing Dimensions of Traditional Organisational Commitment based upon Multi-dimensional Commitment Models

Authors	Study Focus	Definitions
Angle and Perry (1981: 4)	1. Value Commitment 2. Commitment to Stay	Commitment to support the goals of the organisation. Commitment to retain organisational membership.
O'Reilly and Chatman (1986: 493)	1. Compliance 2. Identification 3. Internalisation	Instrumental involvement for specific extrinsic rewards. Attachment based upon a desire for affiliation with the organisation. Involvement predicated on the basis of congruence between individual and organisational values.
Penley and Gould (1988: 46)	1. Moral 2. Calculative 3. Alienative	Acceptance of, and identification with, organisational goals. Commitment to the organisation based on employees receiving inducements to match their contributions. Organisational attachment arises when employees no longer perceive rewards as being commensurate with investment, and yet they remain due to environmental pressure.
Meyer and Allen (1991: 67)	1. Affective 2. Continuance 3. Normative	Employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in, the organisation. Awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organisation. A feeling of obligation to continue in employment.
Mayer and Schoorman (1992: 673)	1. Value 2. Continuance	A belief in, and acceptance of, organisational goals and values, and a willingness to exert considerable effort for the sake of the organisation. The desire to remain a member of the organisation.
Jaros et al. (1993: 953-954)	1. Affective 2. Continuance 3. Moral	The extent to which an individual is psycho-socially attached to an employing organisation through feelings such as loyalty, affection, warmth, fondness, pleasure and a sense of belonging. The extent to which individuals feel locked in place based upon the high costs of leaving. The extent to which an individual is psycho-socially attached to an employing organisation through the internalization of its goals and values.

Source: Meyer and Herscovitch (2001: 304).

Appendix 2 Illustrative Cases

Illustrative Case 1: Company A

Company A is a first-rate international sightseeing hotel which has been around for a very long time. Its standard of service provision has consistently placed it amongst the leading five-star hotels in Taiwan. Recent years have witnessed the emergence of numerous hotels keen to become involved within the island's hotel industry, essentially as a result of their belief that this is a very lucrative market. Despite seeing such an exponential rise in competitors over recent years, Company A has continued to adhere to its own management style, standing firm as one of the leading hotels. The basic information relating to Company A is provided below:

1. Enterprise

Company A (an international sightseeing hotel)

2. Characteristics

- a. Total number of Guest Rooms: approximately one thousand.
- b. Total number of Chinese and foreign-style Restaurants: more than ten.
- c. Total Annual Turnover: more than NT\$ one billion.
- d. Total number of Staff: 1,300.

3. Organisational Structure

The organisational structure of Company A is illustrated in Appendix Figure A2-1.

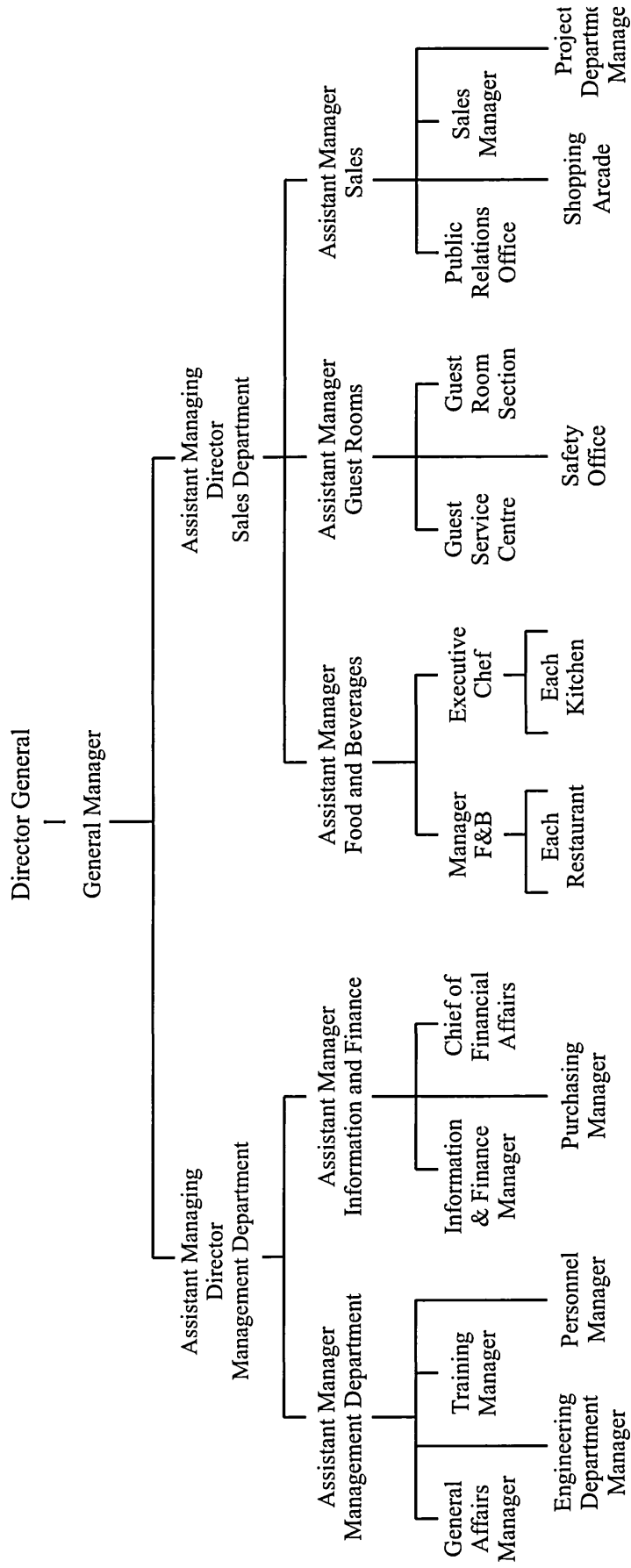


Figure A2-1 Organizational Structure of Company A

Within the organisational structure of Company A shown above, the Assistant Manager in the Management Department is the person who actually wields the real power and authority in this company, whereas the titled positions of the 'General Manager' and 'Assistant Managing Director' of the Management Department exist only nominally; indeed, it is actually the case that the real power of the Assistant Manager often exceeds that of these two more senior professional positions. The reason for this is that the positions of both the Assistant Managing Director and General Manager are filled by professional managers, 'outsiders', who have barely any close relationship with the overall head of the company, the Director General. Conversely, virtually all of the Assistant Managers are either close friends of the Director General or trusted subordinates.

The senior managers within the company have two characteristics in common. Firstly, they have each been working with the Director General for more than 15 years, and secondly, they are all 'insiders'; in other words, they may well be schoolmates, business-saving benefactors, long-term employees or even relatives of the company head. Using a term often adopted in Chinese societies to refer to the heavyweights within an organization, these members of the organisation form the so-called 'five heavenly kings'; such being the case, the head of the company is assured of the trust of these managers in the overall management of the company.

The Assistant Manager of the Management Department of Company A is a man in his early fifties who, following his graduation from university in Taiwan, went to the US to undertake advanced studies, ultimately obtaining Masters degrees in both commerce and accounting. He has been working at Company A ever since he returned to Taiwan; and thus, his own life process can essentially be described by the growth process of Company A. He once said:

“We Assistant Managers are not necessarily more professional than Assistant Managing Directors; for those of us who hold a high office such as ‘Assistant Manager’, what counts most is not bringing their abilities into full play, but gaining the boss’s faith in them. We can make the boss rest assured; therefore, he does not have to worry about our presuming on high position and power. Besides, the boss needn’t worry that we might intimidate him as a result of grasping most of the company’s resources; nor does he need to worry that we are likely to be headhunted by another company and turn our backs on the company.”

When asked how the company handles such worries, he then added:

“In fact, by telling what something really is, by putting faith in us and by having a sense of identification with us, the company can neatly solve the abovementioned problems. On a reciprocal basis, we should be loyal to the

company, always making efforts for the company's sake. Most important of all, we are never supposed to work by fits and starts; instead, we should hang on, come what may."

He then commented, on his own initiative, on the way that the company treated them, saying:

"Our boss is very nice to us. For example, we are wholly authorized to deal with correlated affairs, we are in charge of the entire department in terms of the company's development and operation. It means that he trusts us to have not only dominance over the company's resources, but also the influence to affect the company's decisions and the abilities of handling contingency as well. Moreover, the company is obliged to recognize whatever we have been promised.

Because of our direct access to the core of power, we also act as a message conveyor between the senior superiors and the junior subordinates. Besides, we are responsible for handling sensitive matters such as land-purchasing, major project-planning and lobbying with people outside the company. What's more, holding higher offices in the company, we are able to have wider range of jurisdiction and are often involved in various kinds of jobs, some of which are of much complexity.

Usually, we have to deal with problems that are not only confusing but also difficult to solve. In other words, our enjoyment of good luck and popularity is a must because our positions in the company are irreplaceable. We ourselves are the key resource of the company. Hence, we all have a sense of achievement. We are held in high esteem, and besides, the boss has been taking good care of us. For example, each of the assistant managers enjoys such offerings as a car and a house. He lets us feel that there will be no worries left behind.”

It was clear from his facial expressions that he had placed considerable dependence upon the company. He continued:

“So far, you know, I have never had any complaints about the boss and the company. What’s more, I have been accustomed to getting on well with the other co-workers; therefore, I am 100 per cent reluctant to part from them. I will keep exerting myself to the utmost for the company’s sake in that I feel that I should go through thick and thin together with the company”.

Everything that he said essentially expounds a state whereby both the boss and the employees are having a ‘good time’ working in this organisation, through the obvious interdependence between both sides and the self-management of the

employees, which is clearly made possible by the commitment provided by these employees to their organisation.

A primary aim in any hotel is to offer places where all types of cuisine and delicacies are served for customers to enjoy; in a comparison with all other hotels in Taiwan, none is more outstanding than Company A. Examples of such delicacies served in the restaurants of Company A are Taiwanese, Hunan and Cantonese cuisine, delicacies from the Jiangsu and Chejiang areas, cafes, Italian, French and Japanese cuisine, including iron plate roasted or grilled delicacies (that is, Japanese teppanyaki-style presentation).

In addition to all of this, the hotel features clubs, nightclubs, banquet halls, piano bars, and so on. The quality of its restaurants consistently places it in the top five of all five-star hotels in Taiwan. The fact that Company A is worthy of such a renowned reputation is attributable both to the knack that it has amassed in running these restaurants, and the unique insights of the head of the company.

However, one particular issue which has the potential of creating a headache within the food and beverage industry lies not in the décor, atmosphere or, to some extent, the service in the restaurant, but in the cooks who prepare the various dishes, the master chefs in particular. Some would describe cooking as an art form comprising of a combination of cookery skills and experience, all of which are

extremely difficult to describe; nevertheless, an attempt to define these in written form would probably lead to terms such as ‘expertise’, ‘personal intuition’ and ‘endowments’.

What all of this essentially refers to is the ability of such chefs to: (i) prepare and cook dishes that will be to the taste of their customers; (ii) concoct an enormous variety of different types of dishes; (iii) tacitly, and accurately, grasp the required cooking time for countless dishes; and (iv) achieve ‘perfection on a plate’, in terms of the various colours, aromas and flavours, whilst also taking into consideration preparation costs and appropriate price. All of this takes real talent which is extremely difficult to imitate, and no chef can become so well-versed in just a short period of time, since the necessary professional and culinary skills involve training in their particular field for at least a decade.

Another potential headache for a hotel is the fact that, on the one hand, top quality chefs are always highly sought after and difficult to source from within the HR market, whilst on the other hand, hotels are extremely dependent on their restaurant chefs, in terms of the maintenance of their customer base and the overall operation of the restaurants. This makes the problem all the more serious since there is no shortage of other hotels and restaurants trying to lure away a good chef so that it can boast that it owns a ‘pre-eminent’ chef.

The Assistant Manager in Company A, commented that:

“Finding out how to ensure that excellent chefs-in-chief stay at our restaurants is a big headache for me. What I dread most of all is when I wake up in the morning, I will be told that the chefs-in-chief of ‘Restaurant X’ - the best French cuisine restaurant in Taiwan, and ‘Restaurant Y’ - the best Cantonese cuisine restaurant, have tendered their resignations. If they make up their minds to quit, we as a company will fail to make them give up the intention to quit.

In order to solve such indefinite time bombs and to eliminate the disequilibrium between the company and the chefs-in-chief, one of the measures our company takes is as follows. Many of the chefs-in-chief have been working at our restaurants ever since they were young. They went through a few stages, climbing up from the bottom of the ladder, say, from third-grade cooks or fourth-grade cooks, and they gradually reached the position of chef-in-chief.

Generally speaking, instead of headhunting elsewhere, we have our own internal promotion system here, which will make them consign their emotions to their work and depend on the company. Additionally, when it comes to the day-to-day running, the higher position a chef holds, the more respect for them

we will show. We are as friendly as possible in order not to offend them. What's more, each kitchen itself at our restaurant is a profit center in itself; therefore, the chef-in-chief is authorized to determine: (i) individual dish designs; (ii) recipes; (iii) the cooking utensils required; and (iv) their staff.

However, there is a difference between our treatment of the chef-in-chief and that of the cooks employed in lower positions, such as assistant cooks. Of course, no matter what position such employees hold, loyalty to the company, putting in extra effort and a desire to remain are what we demand from them. It is true that our energy and stamina are not unlimited, and what we want to put into practice should be pivotal and indispensable. Even if someone wants to quit the job, there is always another one to fill the vacancy.

Furthermore, they all know that if they do their best and acquire unique work skills in the process of doing their bounden duties, our company will not treat them unfairly. That is, with their increasing proficiency and skills, they are assured to synchronously receive better treatment and greater respect.”

Illustrative Case 2: Company B

Company B was the first enterprise of its kind in Taiwan to pursue the introduction of a chain of high-quality country clubs based upon a model similar to that found in Western countries. It was also the first enterprise of its kind to have pursued the integration of its city clubs with a number of golf clubs situated throughout Taiwan.

The brief correlated notes on the company are as follows:

1. Enterprise

Company B

2. Sphere of Business and Business Sites

Country clubs located from Northern to Southern Taiwan. City clubs located in Taipei, Taichung and Kaohsiung. Three golf clubs located in Northern, Central and Southern Taiwan.

3. Characteristics

- a. Company B owns all of the construction land.
- b. All of the clubs were built by Company B itself.
- c. All of the clubs are currently being operated by Company B itself.

4. Organisational Structure

The organisational structure of Company B is illustrated in Appendix Figure A2-2 below.

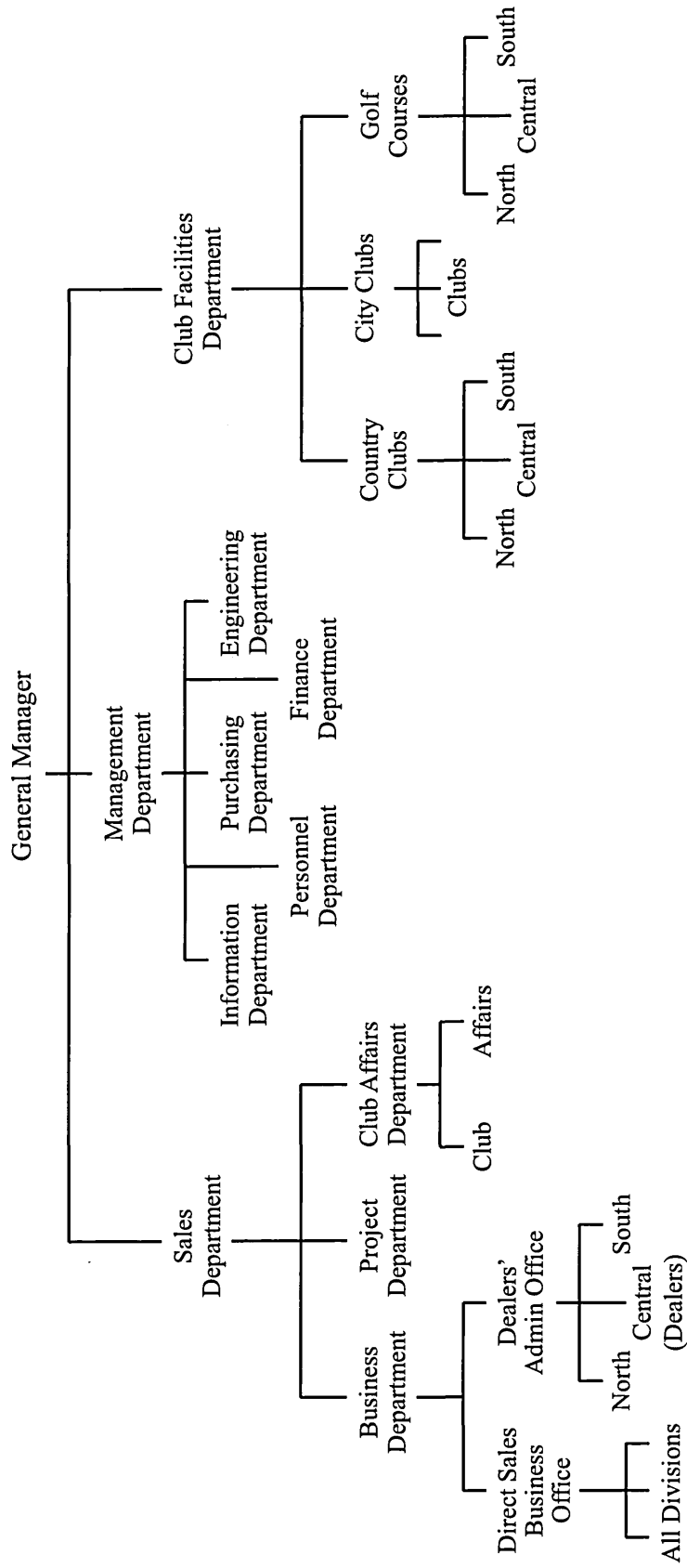


Figure A2-2 Organizational Structure of Company B

Company B entered the preparatory stage of its proposed business in the early 1990s, with the majority of its shareholders being heavyweights actively involved in both political and business circles, including dignitaries, tycoons and business magnates. The focus in the initial stage was placed upon carrying out painstaking preparations for its proposed business, involving strategy, planning, design, and so on. It wasn't until three years later that all those involved felt ready to launch the business, and it very quickly enjoyed an outstanding reputation throughout Taiwan. In just a few months, Company B had achieved sales of an enormous number of membership cards, and has since been providing services to its growing clientele of club members.

Things have so far gone very smoothly in terms of both service and business; however, the biggest bottleneck lies in the problems within the organisation itself, including the mental attitude and morale of its employees. Being a fairly new company within an emerging industry, Company B cannot run the company by following "the beaten track" nor can it rely on learning based upon previous experiences, given that there are no prior established protocols or experiences, so the company can do little else but rely upon the devotion of its employees.

Whenever problems arise, Company B appears to have no option but to turn to its employees as the means of finding appropriate solutions. Under these

circumstances, it is highly likely that the company would have no real idea as to whether or not its employees harboured selfish motives; indeed, there are occasions when the company doesn't even know that some of its employees have done wrong. For example, when the company pushed forward with its plans for computerization, several groups colluded with the computer manufacturing company which sold cybernation equipment and programs to Company B which could only be compatible with current software, but was incapable of meeting future demand. Inexperienced as it was, Company B slavishly pursued the planned schedule, and accepted the whole batch of computers. Thus, the company and its employees are still fumbling around to establish a sound standard system applicable to management and control.

What Company B is able to depend upon is the voluntary and tacit accord between mind and judgment (truth) amongst all of its employees. However, at this stage of development, numerous problems and challenges have arisen, and given that it is a new company in a new industry and new market, Company B has found the characteristics and variations of these problems somewhat overwhelming. Company B has no choice but to rely on the cohesion and loyalty towards the company amongst its employees. Fortunately, self-management amongst these employees has so been far demonstrated to be quite fruitful.

In addition to the problems alluded to above, the problems of headhunting and job-hopping have also posed a constant threat to the company. As a result of Company B's enormous success in its early days, the business quickly became of interest to numerous others, attracting close to a hundred competitors to follow suit. However, these follow-up companies also faced problems similar to those encountered by Company B, one of these being a shortage of talent. Thus, it was inevitable that employees of Company B would become targets for headhunting by many of these other companies; such is often the case whenever a new club opens.

The situation can, however, be greatly exacerbated by the fact that the targets for such headhunting are often unit or department supervisors, which can then lead to a chain reaction; that is, the core subordinates identified by the supervisor may also leave so that they can continue working together in the alternative company. Along with the loss of these supervisors and their core subordinates, confidential business documents of the company may also be taken away. All of these issues have forced Company B to take urgent measures with a view to disposing of these thorny issues.

The Director General of Company B, a celebrity in various business circles, is known for his hot-tempered nature; he used to say to his employees, "Your excellent work performance is what I want", and this came to be regarded as a

particular cliché of his. However, he has since changed his tune, offering more material inducements, and showing more concern for the comfort and consideration of his employees. Furthermore, he now allows both supervisors and their subordinates to have a free hand in the overall process of their job performance, whilst professional employees are treated with particular respect.

As regards other positions, such as cashiers and official clerks, these employees are treated just the same as before, since the Director General is of the opinion that it makes no difference whether or not these employees are treated differently; as he sees it, given the surplus in the HR market, lesser position holders still have to be subservient to the company in order to remain in their job, which in turn, simplifies the management and control of these employees.

With the overall change in the business trend, the whole situation has completely changed for Company B. Any company, of any kind, should aim to develop new methods to manage and control its employees, striking a balance with its excessive reliance on its employees. One of the many approaches is by demonstrating demand for commitment by employees to the company, and then facilitating, exercising and managing the process.

The saying “every cloud has a silver lining” is quite appropriate to Company B; after undergoing turmoil and chaos for three consecutive years, the company has

finally found itself increasingly prosperous. Unfortunately, it was soon to become clear that the situation was not satisfactory in every respect, as a major problem subsequently arose in Company B.

Generally speaking, the finance manager in any company, particularly a membership club, plays an extremely vital role. On the one hand, such a person is at the top of the business value chain, since every department of the company has to cooperate with this executive; on the other hand, the finance manager is in charge of significant amounts of confidential information on the company relating to issues such as membership fees, the buying and selling of land, tax-related affairs, and so on.

A finance manager is also authorized to wield great power, since this position holder has to check and approve almost every application form pertaining to money, personnel, and all kinds of related issues; thus, unit or department supervisors cannot afford to offend this person, and indeed, nor can the head of the company, who always takes the word and/or advice of his finance manager. The Director General even lacks the capacity to control this particular position holder because there are always numerous official duties awaiting his attention, some of which involve much complexity and sensitivity; an example of such duties is the lobbying that the finance manager undertakes on behalf of the boss.

It is very difficult to undertake any comparison of the work of the finance manager, or to provide any feedback or correction; however, it is clear that if he were to do something wrong, it could clearly turn out to be catastrophic. Furthermore, such an executive would be in a position to obtain evidence that might be described as being disadvantageous to the company, and such information could be used to intimidate the company. Therefore, the company can do little else but depend totally upon this position holder, so much so that it may be in constant fear of him ceasing to respect the company and his work, or even deciding to defect. As a result, not only is he authorized to wield great power, but he is also treated with a considerably enhanced level of respect. Furthermore, he also receives extra 'special' bonuses on appropriate occasions, which the company hopes will provide an appropriate check and balance, thereby leading to his greater respect for the company. Thus, the interdependence between the company and this position holder is capable of achieving a state of equilibrium.

Despite all of this, the finance manager found himself in a situation involving personal factors which gave rise to an urgent need for money, and subsequently colluded with the sales manager to launch a new marketing promotion campaign involving the awarding of bonuses. Although the new system did bring in short-term profits, it was, nevertheless, destined to have long-term ramifications on the

company's development. For example, the company announced that there would be a rise in price on a certain day, say 10th September, and indeed, the product sold very well prior to that date; however, afterwards, the marketing virtually came to a standstill.

Throughout the process of this marketing promotion campaign, it was an open secret that the finance manager was "feathering his own nest", and to the increasing disappointment of the company, he also failed to provide any strong organisational commitment to his organisation. After recalling the past, the company took a resolute measure, which was on the one hand, to review the contents of the position, thereby reducing his authorized power, and on the other hand, to impose stricter surveillance on him, whilst also demanding more commitment from him.

As a result of all of the issues relating to the finance manager, he subsequently became a little passive in his attitude, and as soon as his successor was capable of taking over as the finance manager of the company, the company took an appropriate adjustable and regulatory strategy, which was to seemingly promote him, yet in practice, he was actually being demoted. The outgoing finance manager was transferred to the position of high commissioner, which also meant that he received a salary raise. As far as the company was concerned, it was felt that the incident had been put to an end, and satisfactorily handled.

Illustrative Case 3: Company C

Company C, a consortium in Taiwan with extremely abundant financial resources, has been running holiday resorts, leisure centres and clubs for several years. All of these establishments are regarded as being 'second to none', with the company enjoying a very strong reputation amongst other companies in the same business.

Its correlated brief notes are as follows:

1. Enterprise

Consortium, Leisure Clubs, Holiday Villas (Resorts).

2. Sphere of Business and Business Sites

The consortium is based in Southern Taiwan and runs high-class, private clubs and golf clubs, as well as high-class holiday leisure villas for use by celebrities and dignitaries.

3. Management Characteristics

High-class style, secrecy and sensitivity.

4. Organizational Structure

The organisational structure of Company C is illustrated in Appendix Figure

A2-3 below:

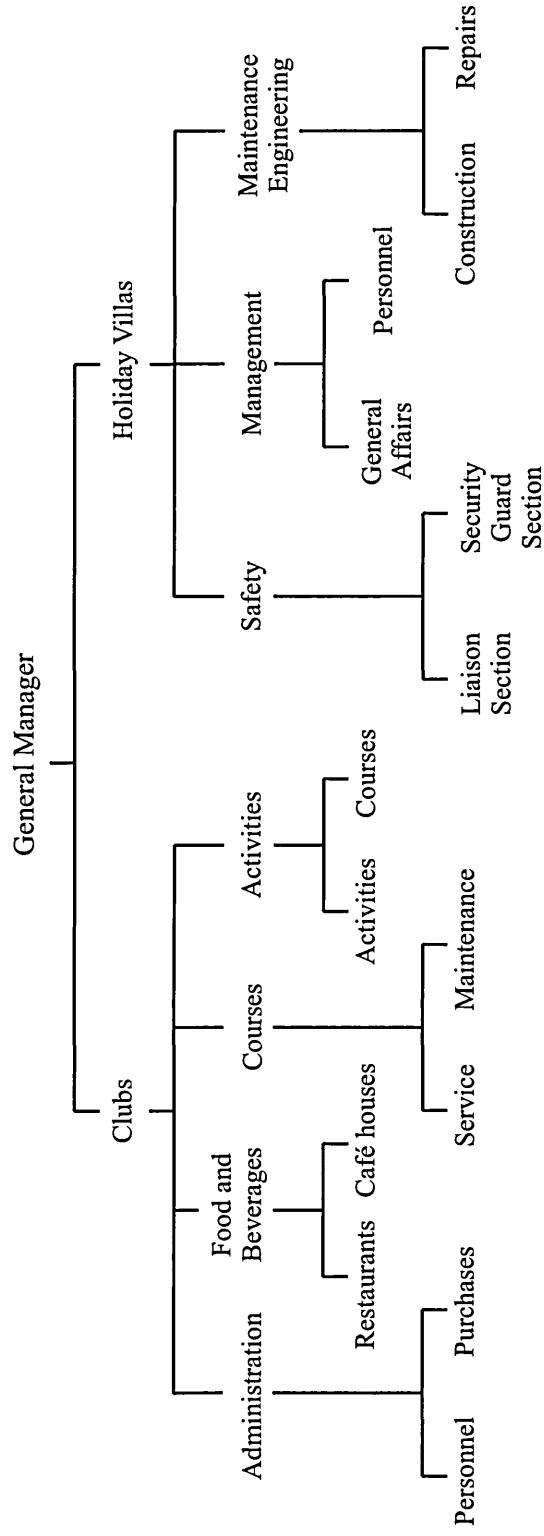


Figure A2-3 Organizational Structure of Company C

Ever since its commencement in business in the early part of this century, the golf clubs and holiday villas run by Company C have been held in high regard amongst both dignitaries and celebrities; indeed, the vast majority of the company's customers and clients are people of fame and prestige. As a result, all of the company's golf club membership cards have sold out, and its associated real estate is also selling very well.

As regards the quality of the company management, it is undoubtedly seen as first-rate. Company C has always held a strong belief that technical problems are easily solved, whilst precautions are necessary in dealing with other problems of a highly sensitive nature; thus, such problems continually prove to be a headache for the company.

The General Manager of Company C is a man in his late fifties. He went to Japan for advanced studies in his early twenties, and became familiar with the boss of Company C from a very early age; thus, it was a matter of course that they would become business associates. He always feels greatly honored to have been chosen as the General Manager, especially as it involves working with his old friend - the boss. He also feels very proud that he shows far more concern for the company than any other co-workers in the company.

He once said:

“I have devoted the greater part of my life to the company, and I will keep exerting myself to the utmost for the sake of the company in that I feel that I should go through thick and thin together with the company.”

One of the primary characteristics of this position lies in the requirement for commitment to sensitivity, and this is borne out by the insistence of the boss that a certain message is always conveyed at any internal meeting:

“We have known so well about the living habits, interests, hobbies, financial resources and even detailed daily lives of so many dignitaries and business tycoons and magnates; therefore, first and foremost is the need to keep their personal data secret, which can also act as the essential definition of making honorable customers satisfied.

There are always many people willing to spend a large sum of money to buy such kinds of information. What’s more, there must always be politicians and people of the same trade or of the same walk of life who are eager to beat us by fair means or foul. To sum up, here we need an executive who can maintain secrecy and in whom we can rest assured.”

It is the General Manager himself who always says, quite confidently, that no other person in the company can play the role of ‘General Manager’ as well as he

does, essentially because he constantly finds himself in very complex and difficult situations. He has to deal with people of all walks of life, including the media and those who have control over news release. It is also his duty to attend social gatherings with dignitaries and celebrities from both political and business circles, and indeed, this includes socializing or serving government VIPs and officials.

When he encounters something unusual or eccentric, there is no-one within the headquarters capable of being of any help to him; for example, if there were to be a protest by a 'non-governmental organisation' (NGO) or by a certain person, within a few days, the company may well receive a telephone call from an assistant to a certain legislator inquiring about consumer data of certain VIP customers, or even further, requiring action to be taken to have all foods and beverage outlets of the clubs or the environments of the holiday villas inspected by government security institutions. Clearly, as the General Manager, he cannot be too careful.

The General Manager always bears in mind the fact that he and the company complement one another. Although he may be regarded as having 'too many irons in the fire', he always completes every task without any hint of reluctance, since in the process of carrying out such tasks, he can bring his abilities into full play, and irrespective of whether the end result is success or failure, he takes full responsibility. He is well past 50 years of age and has been totally devoted to the

company, enjoying an almost symbiotic relationship with the boss for the greater part of his life. It is extremely difficult to bring such life investment, and family-like commitment, to an end; that is, he will continue to do his best to pursue whatever is good for the company.

This position holder firmly believes that the role of General Manager is a conscientious role. A tacit understanding has always existed between him and the company; accordingly, there is no requirement for the imposition of rules or restraints upon him to prevent him from strengthening his position as a result of being authorized to wield such great power. As for the General Manager himself, he has never transgressed the bounds of correctness. With the passage of time, his goals and ideas have already become aligned with those of the company. The more respect he receives, the more he “minds his p’s and q’s”; that is, mutual trust and encouragement is what is needed, and provided, by both parties to this relationship, with the end result being that the company cannot do without him and he cannot do without the company.

The general manager recently had to deal with a dissatisfied employee, and as a result, now has a very competent subordinate in charge of recording all the contest affairs. When this person was formerly in charge of information processing and finance management at the head office, he often complained that he was

overwhelmed with too much work, which made him too stressed out to take full responsibility; he therefore voluntarily requested a position transfer. Although he already knew that the job of recording all of the contest affairs was an extremely monotonous job, he gladly endures its monotony and gets the job done.

The General Manager said, “as a superior, I make it a point of letting my subordinates find a niche for themselves based on their respective talents, which, I am sure, will bring about a desirable result, so all’s well that ends well.”

Illustrative Case 4: Company D

Company D is one of the major construction companies in Taiwan, and is also known as a fast-growing brokerage company. The company has been renowned for excellent quality and creditworthiness, and since its establishment, it has become one of the top-notch construction companies under the direction of its leader. It has always adhered to its management motto, “Reason, Technique, Service”. Furthermore, it has attached considerable importance to ensuring that every single employee is a person of good temperament, culture and professional commitment. There is, therefore, little wonder that it has rapidly claimed a niche market in the competitive construction industry.

1. Enterprise

Company D

2. Sphere of Business and Business Sites

Engineering, contracting, house construction in counties and cities across Taiwan, China and Hong Kong.

3. Management Characteristics

Advanced, technological construction methods.

4. Organizational structure

The organisational structure of Company B is illustrated in Appendix Figure A2-3 below:

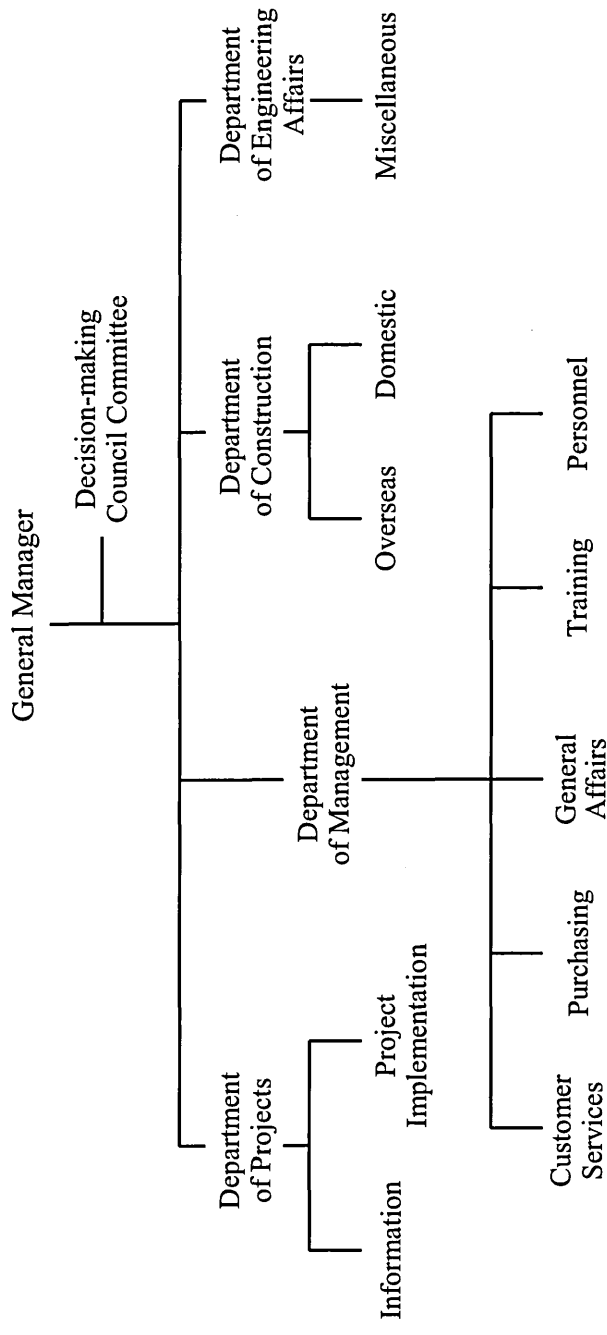


Figure A2-4 Organizational Structure of Company D

All of the management measures taken by Company D continually tally with its management motto, “Reason, Technique, Service”. With this management idea in mind, Company D stands on its own two feet amongst many major players in the construction industry, despite many of these other companies still striving to reduce costs and raise prices.

The rapid growth of Company D is attributable to several senior executives, one of whom is the Project Department Manager, an MBA graduate from a prestigious university in Taiwan. He and the General Manager, along with certain other superiors from other departments have exerted themselves to the utmost to ensure the expansion of Company D, from a company a dozen employees to a complement in excess of one hundred. During the process of such company expansion, the Project Department Manager laid the foundation for fulfilling the Company’s management motto, “Reason, Technique, Service”, and it was always his insistence that:

“Things should be done based on reason not only should employees have a clear way of thinking but they should also be able to distinguish right from wrong communication should be conducted more in spoken language and less in written form.”

He went on to say:

“There is one more point; that is, we will not pamper our employees lest they should fail to do their part. It is taken for granted that all servers or customer service attendants should do their job according to SOPs (standard operating procedures). Unfortunately, it sometimes happens that ‘so-and-so’ attendant is overzealous to such an extent that he acts as if he were the boss.

One of the customer service attendants is full of enthusiasm and is always eager to make contributions to the company. He hardly acts in accordance with SOPs; instead, he always has his own way to improve situations only to make customers full of excessive expectations. When there is a complaint case from a customer on the scene, he always volunteers to handle it in a hasty way. In cases of customer complaints, a customer service attendant can do nothing but stay at the scene where the complaint case occurs and wait for the executive to arrive at the scene and then hand the case over for the executive to deal with.

Although it is true that sometimes this customer service attendant can successfully handle it, most of the time this behavior of his may create different standards of service, which in turn will have a negative effect on our company because it will make customers have too much expectation and cause disturbance to other customer service attendants working on the scene.

When he was still a newcomer of the company, his breakdown of discipline because of over-eagerness was tolerable; however, as time went by, being familiar with the working environment, this customer-service attendant had numerous opinions about various affairs. His behavior was already beyond his proper function in the position, adding annoyance to his service unit. If corrected, he used to defend himself without regret by saying that what he did was all for the good of the company, and he tended to think of the person who rectified him as ‘muddle-headed’.

An attendant of this kind may carry ‘patriotism to excess’. Instead of encouraging him to keep doing so, I use a reverse method to put a brake on the ‘blind devotion to the boss’ or the frequency of doing things in a mechanical way. We would often tell him, ‘Hey! Old Chap, you don’t need to do the jobs that you are not authorized to!’ ... or ... ‘perform your duties; as for the rest, you don’t need to do them until you are promoted’.

In fact, this kind of employee has more anti-personnel force than an incompetent and lazy one. When our company is undergoing changes, he is told to do the same in order to coordinate with the company changes, and yet, he is often reluctant to do so because of his stubbornness. He turns a deaf ear to the notification that he has to follow, and may play a negative role; yet he

always displays a faithful attitude. We can do nothing about this kind of employee; it is 100 per cent true that a loyal official who mismanages national affairs does more harm than a treacherous official who injures the nation. Therefore, we think of this kind of employee as being incompetent and inept. If he stays the same as before, we have no choice but to dismiss him.

Eventually, this particular customer service attendant's service unit had no choice but to have him transferred to the training center where he was engaged in the development and design of official duties. Strange to say, the supply-side commitment demonstrated by this customer service attendant surprisingly corresponded to that required of this position. His work performance reached a stable condition, and for the past two years, he has been zealously working at the training center, and his supervisor is now very satisfied with him".

It becomes abundantly clear from this case study that organizational commitment is like a double-edged sword; it is necessary as an employee to abide by the duties of a position, because doing things to the extreme is as bad as not going far enough; this can bring much perplexity to the management authorities, and the organization may have no choice but to take certain adjustable and regulatory strategies.

Another customer service attendant in Company D has been working at the company for over ten years. He carries out his routine work from Monday to Friday, working from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and cares very little about how well he performs his duties, but instead, upon arriving at his office, he wears earphones at work whilst cosily eating his breakfast. He then turns on the computer in order to see any exciting or sensational news reports about celebrities in entertainment circles. He never turns off his MSN account so he can share gossip with his co-workers or online friends.

Once in a while, he engages in on-line group shopping, or discussing where to eat lunch. Coffee and snacks that are ordered from the coffee shop or the bakery beforehand appear at his desk at 3:00 pm sharp, for his afternoon 'break'. He would often speak ill of both his boss and his supervisor behind their backs, and it has become his practice to clear away his personal belongings at 4:50 p.m., ready to be leave work. Since he has a very high job seniority (over ten years), he is allowed to have a holiday on a fixed basis, and as a long-term Company D employee, he can also enjoy preferential rates at the company-run hotel. Sometimes he would join a cheap package tour; thus he can have the annual pleasure of going abroad for trips.

In the eyes of his supervisor, he is an employee who always abides by SOPs. He would never actively do anything that was not stipulated in his work schedule,

he simply carries out the job that he is obliged to. When encountering a customer who was difficult to deal with, he would directly transfer the customer call to his line manager. As he never showed concern for the rights and interests of his customers, they would sometimes file complaint cases against him; however, despite such customer complaints, he continued to survive in the company, with a potential reason being that the company did not consider him to be a trouble maker. The company's expectations of him were very low, and he seldom made any major or unforgivable blunder, such that there was no real gap between his performance and the expectations of him by the company. As a result, the company did not consider dismissing him.

As far as the customer sales attendant was concerned, he was totally aware that he was not a competent employee, but he was also somewhat overwhelmed with the burdens of a family, including a house loan, so he had never really considered quitting the job for over ten years, despite the fact that the company never offered him a promotion or pay raise. Clearly, neither the company nor the employee is keen to see any change to the situation, so they are happy to maintain the status quo.

Appendix 3 Impacts of Organisational Commitment

Table A3-1 Potential Impacts of Different Levels of Organisational Commitment

Affected Parties	Potential Impacts	
	Positive	Negative
Panel A: Low Level of Organisational Commitment		
Individual Employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual employees may be found to possess originality, innovation and creativity. 2. Individual employees may be found to utilise human resources more effectively. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual employees may encounter low career development and promotion prospects; in cases where they have a personal high-cost lifestyle, this may impose a significant burden upon them. 2. Individual employees may be fired or quit their job, or they may try to undermine the goals of the organisation.
	Organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divided employees who have no sense of cohesion, as well as those employees with low work performance may quit their job; this, in turn, may minimise the damage that such employees had been previously causing to the organisation, as a result of which, morale could be enhanced within the organisation. 2. Replenishment through new personnel could bring about advantageous outcomes.
Panel B: Medium Level of Organisational Commitment		
Individual Employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The loyalty, responsibility, sense of belonging, security and work performance of individual employees may be greatly enhanced. 2. Individualism may thus be created. 3. They may gain the support of the organisation as a result of proclaiming their status at the organisation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The career development of individual employees may be affected, as well as the opportunities for promotion. 2. In terms of department identity, there may be some difficulty in achieving an appropriate compromise.

Table A3-1 (Contd.)

Affected Parties	Potential Impacts	
	Positive	Negative
Panel B: (Contd.)		
Organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A medium level of organisational commitment may increase the length of time that an employee continues to be hired by the organization. 2. Lower turnover intentions, and an overall reduction in employees quitting their jobs. 3. Higher job satisfaction levels. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual employees may limit their extra-role behaviour performance, as well as their rights and obligations behaviour. 2. Employees with organisational commitment at medium levels may be faced with a dilemma between the demands of the organisation and non-official alliances. 3. Work performance within the organisation may be reduced.
Panel C: High Level of Organisational Commitment		
Individual Employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The career development of individual employees with a high level of organisational commitment may be greatly enhanced. 2. The behaviour of such employees may receive higher recognition and reward by the organisation. 3. Individual employees with a high level of organisational commitment may be offered occupations with considerable potential for growth. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The personal growth, originality and innovativeness of individual employees may be inhibited, along with any opportunity for the circulation of such traits amongst other employees. 2. Bureaucratic resistance to changes of any kind. 3. Pressure and tension between society and family may arise. 4. There may be an inherent lack of solidarity amongst co-workers. 5. Employees with organisational commitment at higher levels may find themselves limited in terms of participating in certain unofficial alliances since they may be under pressure, in terms of both time and energy.
Organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure and stable labour force. 2. The willingness of employees to accept the organisation's demand for higher levels of productivity. 3. High level of competitiveness and work performance. 4. Attainment of the goals of the organisation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ineffective utilisation of human resources. 2. The whole organisation may lack flexibility, innovation and adaptation. 3. Rigid adherence to past policies and procedures. 4. Overzealous employees may irritate other employees. 5. Illegal or immoral policies may be approved for the benefit of the organisation.

Source: Randall (1987: 460-471).

Appendix 4 Questionnaires

Dear Supervisor or HR Manager,

Prior to providing your responses to the statements presented in this questionnaire, could you please provide details of the following:

Your Position Title: _____

Gender: Male Female Tenure at current position: _____ years

Title of the position being assessed in this Questionnaire:

‘Organization’ in the questionnaires refers to your ‘sphere of jurisdiction’.

That is, if you are an executive within a unit, the term ‘organization’ refers to this unit; if you are in charge of an enterprise or a business, the term ‘organization’ refers to this enterprise or business.

PART ONE: Questionnaire Pertaining to Positions

1. The Degree of Authority of this Position

Please respond to the various statements based upon the ways in which the roles of this position should be carried out, as opposed to the ways in which they are carried out by the current position holder of the position being assessed.

Statements on the Degree of Authority	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. This position holder can determine which tasks to do and how to prioritize the tasks that he/she is required to do.							
2. This position holder is endowed with considerable power to adopt whatever means necessary to complete a job.							
3. This position holder has considerable influence with regard to setting his/her own job goals.							
4. This position holder has a wide range or latitude of freedom in terms of opportunities for decision making.							

2. The Degree of Complexity of this Position

Please respond to the various statements based upon the ways in which the roles of this position should be carried out, as opposed to the ways in which they are carried out by the current position holder of the position being assessed.

Statements on the Degree of Complexity	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are of considerable importance to other units or positions.							
2. This position holder has to be equipped with very complex and sophisticated skills and expertise which enable him/her to effectively complete various tasks.							
3. This position holder will often encounter problems of quite a diverse nature.							

3. The Degree of Variation of this Position

Please respond to the various statements based upon the ways in which the roles of this position should be carried out, as opposed to the ways in which they are carried out by the current position holder of the position being assessed.

Statements on the Degree of Variation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. This position holder often encounters problems that seldom occurred before.							
2. This position holder will often have to find answers to specific problems, and can often experience discrepancies between the solutions to the same problems.							
3. This position holder has to find solutions to many general problems, despite often being pressed for time to find solutions to the most difficult problems.							
4. This position holder is likely to regularly encounter problems which are extremely difficult to solve or which he/she has no prior experience of solving.							
5. No other person within the organisation is capable of providing assistance to this position holder when he/she encounters any difficult situation, as suggested in Statement 4.							

4. The Degree of Sensitivity of this Position

Please respond to the various statements based upon the ways in which the roles of this position should be carried out, as opposed to the ways in which they are carried out by the current position holder of the position being assessed.

Statements on the Degree of Sensitivity	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. This position holder is often given opportunities to deal with very important and confidential tasks.							
2. Most of the jobs of this position holder are imposed by various other units or positions.							
3. Most of the jobs carried out by this position holder are passed on to other units or position holders who then take over and continue handling the next stage of the jobs already completed by this position holder.							

5. The Degree of Formalisation of this Position

Please respond to the various statements based upon the ways in which the roles of this position should be carried out, as opposed to the ways in which they are carried out by the current position holder of the position being assessed.

Statements on the Degree of Formalisation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. This position holder should perform his/her job in strict accordance with the company's ground rules or 'standard operating procedures' (SOPs).							
2. This position holder should be provided with a copy of comprehensive integrated directions relating to how his/her role is to be carried out.							
3. There are clearly defined demarcation lines between the 'rights' and 'duties' of this position.							

6. The Exclusivity of Skills of this Position

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with each statement.

Statements on the Exclusivity of Skills	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. The work skills of this position holder are very difficult to describe in either written form or spoken language.							
2. It is difficult to separate the work skills required for this position from those of the 'specified individual'.							
3. It would be very difficult to attempt to analyze or stylize the work skills required for this position.							
4. The work skills required for this position cannot be acquired without experience.							
5. It is very difficult to find a competent position holder of this caliber in the HR market.							
6. Any holder of this position possessing such work skills, could easily change his/her occupation or engage in job-hopping to another company.							

PART TWO: Questionnaire on Organisational Demand-Side Commitment

The following statements aim to measure the level of commitment this position should have from an organisational perspective. It is the organisation which considers that whoever holds this position is supposed to provide the optimal degree of commitment to the organisation; this is unrelated to whether the degree of supply-side commitment provided by the current position holder of the position being assessed is high or low.

Expectations of the Position Holder	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a greater willingness to put in extra effort aimed at helping the organisation to achieve success.							
2. As compared to other position holders, this position holder tends to describe the organisation to friends/colleagues as a “good” organisation that is worthy of his/her continuing efforts.							
3. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is likely to have a higher degree of loyalty to the organisation.							
4. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is likely to be more willing to do whatever the organisation tasks him/her with in order to show his/her desire to remain.							
5. As compared to the personal goals of other position holders, the personal goals of this position holder are more likely to be very close to those of the organisation.							
6. As compared to other position holders, at the mention of the name of the organisation, this position holder is likely to be very proud to be a member.							
7. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is least likely to engage in job-hopping to another organization offering similar job opportunities.							
8. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a positive belief that he/she can bring his/her abilities into full play if he/she continues to work in this organisation.							

Expectations of the Position Holder	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. As compared to other position holders, this position holder would be least likely to decide to leave purely as a result of certain changes within the organisation.							
10. As compared to other position holders, this position holder would always regard themselves as being fortunate to work within this particular organisation, as opposed to any other.							
11. As compared to other position holders, this position holder has a strong belief that it is worthwhile to continue working for this organisation.							
12. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is more concerned about the future of the organisation.							
13. As compared to other position holders, this position holder always demonstrates a belief that the organisation is the best amongst all of the organisations for which he/she might potentially wish to work.							
14. As compared to other position holders, this position holder is of the opinion that it was absolutely right for him/her to decide to work for this organisation.							

This Questionnaire comes to an end here. I am sincerely grateful for your kind cooperation and assistance!

Yours sincerely,

Lee, Kuan-Fang
 Doctoral Graduate Student

Appendix 5 Letter to Potential Respondents

_____	(Name of Addressee)
_____	(Company Name)
_____	(Street)
_____	(Town, County)
_____	(Postcode)

To Whom it may Concern,

I am a part-time doctoral student at Sheffield University, England, undertaking research into the topic of 'Organisational Commitment'. I have been a member of the Association of Human Resources (ROC) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) since 1999, and have since lectured at the Ching Kuo Institute of Management in Taiwan. I am writing in the hope that you will give me the benefit of your experience in my current research.

As you may be aware, over recent decades, it has become quite a normal phenomenon for employees with both high and low levels of organisational commitment to simultaneously coexist in Taiwan-based organisations; however, most of the related research into organisational commitment has tended to focus on exploring such commitment from a one-sided perspective, 'employee supply-side commitment'. That is, research into organisational demand-side commitment (employer expectations) has been neglected.

It is, however, felt that an exploration into whether organisations will always nurture organisational commitment amongst their employees may be worthwhile, with particular emphasis on the exploration and research into some of the practical

issues pertaining to employee management. My study aims to examine the extent of the organisational commitment required by Taiwan-based enterprises from their employees, and whether this tends to vary amongst different positions, with the different position characteristics being derived from organisational design. We are all very much aware that this is an issue of extreme sensitivity, but it is an issue which is worthy of in-depth research.

I became aware of your company through the Association of Human Resource ROC, and I realize that you have extensive knowledge and abundant experience in the service industry sector; furthermore, your esteemed company is amongst the top 500 prestigious and renowned enterprises in Taiwan. I am now at the stage of collecting data relating to organisational commitment and I am, therefore, particularly keen to learn from your organisation. I have no doubt that I can benefit significantly from your practical experiences in organisational management.

I would be very much obliged if you could consent to becoming involved in my research project through a survey to be carried out amongst selected individuals in your organisation. I give you my solemn promise that any information obtained from your organisation will always be treated as confidential.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Lee, Kuan-Fang
Research Student
Sheffield Hallam University

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