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## **The relationship between leader-member relations, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in international tourist hotels in Taiwan**

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The tourism industry is an indicator of the degree of internationalization and modernization of a country; and hotels are a key part in the tourism industry. According to studies on foreign tourists to Taiwan, expenses for international hotels make up the major portion of the tourists' total costs. Hence, international hotels play a significant role in the industry. The population for this study is 60 international hotels approved by the Taiwan Tourism Bureau. The sample is formed by 24 of these hotels. A questionnaire survey was conducted and 303 valid replies were received. The research analyzes cause and effect relationships among leader-member relations, as well as organizational commitment and job satisfaction utilizing structural equation modeling. The results show that job satisfaction is the mediating variable between organization commitment and leader-member relations.

**Keywords:** hotel industry; job satisfaction; leader-member relation; organizational commitment; structural equation model

### **Introduction**

In service industries, establishing and maintaining long-term relationships with customers is of paramount importance to success, and frontline employees play a critical role in maintaining long-term relationships with customers (Kusluvan 2003). Therefore, supervisors want to know how their employees feel at work and what employees need is important, especially in the hotel industry, which is a people-oriented business. The amount of effort that an employee expends toward accomplishing the hotel's goals depends on whether the employee believes that this effort will lead to the satisfaction of his or her own needs and desires. Accordingly, managers of service-oriented firms are increasingly concerned with improving service employee job outcomes such as performance, satisfaction, and role ambiguity (Kelley 1992; Kelley and Hoffman 1997; Reynolds and Beatty 1999).

Turnover is a major problem in the hotel industry because frontline employees are often under trained, underpaid, and overworked (Cheng and Brown 1998; Singh 2000). In addition, many studies have found that turnover is related to job satisfaction, and to the importance of job facets as perceived by the employees/managers in the tourism industry (Choy 1995; Li and Tse 1998; Lam, Zhang and Baum 2001). These issues impact on productivity, job satisfaction, and commitment; and the problem seems to be an inalienable feature of this industry worldwide (Woods 1992). Previous research revealed

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that overall satisfaction drops for employees of more than 6 months standing, and the greatest level of job turnover occurs during this period (Smith, Gregory and Cannon 1996). Smith et al. (1996) argue that high turnover may be due to a lack of job satisfaction among employees. In addition in recent hotel research, job satisfaction has been found to be negatively associated with intention to leave (Karatepe, Uludag, Menevis, Hadzimehmedagic and Baddar 2006).

On the other hand, commitment is another factor, which is characterized by the strong desire to maintain membership in an organization as well as positively influence general satisfaction with alliance performance, market share and profitability in small-and-medium travel firms (Mowday, Steers and Porter 1979; Pansiri 2008), and it plays a positive role in retention of members in the organization. Beside its potential contribution to retention, studies also have consistently reported a strong association between organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Blegen 1993; Al-Aameri 2000; Fang 2001). Thus, if a manager wants to reduce the turnover rate in a hotel industry, it is important that employees feel satisfied with their jobs and thereby improve commitment to the organization.

Hartline and Ferrell (1996) observe that research on service employee job outcomes has commonly focused on one of three areas: the employee–role interface, the employee–customer interface, or the supervisor–employee interface. Managers of service employees are less able to directly affect the employee–role interface or the employee–customer interface. However, through their interactions with employees, managers can directly affect employee job outcomes and indirectly the customer’s service experience. Therefore, the quality of leader-member relations has been reported to be related to task performance (Dansereau, Graen and Haga 1975; Hui, Law and Chen 1999), citizenship behavior (Hui et al. 1999; Wayne, Shore and Liden 1997), turnover (Graen, Liden and Hoel 1982), organizational commitment (Green, Anderson and Shivers 1996) and job satisfaction (Dansereau et al. 1975; Green et al. 1996). Against this background, leader-member relations, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are important factors for supervisors in the hotel industry. The present study develops and tests a research model that examines the effects of leader-member relations on frontline employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

The main purposes of this research are to investigate: (i) the effects of leader-member relation on job satisfaction; (ii) the effects of job satisfaction on organization commitment; and (iii) the mediation effects of job satisfaction on leader-member relation to organization commitment. The current study uses a sample of frontline employees in Taiwan international tourist hotels to test the aforementioned relationships. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: section 2 discusses the previous literature and proposes the research framework and hypotheses; section 3 presents the research methodology; section 4 illustrates the research results, while discussion; and future works are presented in the final section.

## **Literature**

### ***Leader-member relation and organizational commitment***

The concepts of social exchange have been used to explain why subordinates become obligated to their supervisors and organizations to perform in ways beyond the requirements of their formal employment contract (e.g., Sparrowe and Liden 1997). The supervisor provides benefits to subordinates and subordinates reciprocate with increased responsiveness, identification and loyalty toward the supervisors and the organization. Therefore, a subordinate who receives greater attention and resources would be likely to establish a high quality level of exchange with his or her supervisors.

Previous studies on leader-member relations suggest that members that have higher quality relations with their supervisors are more committed to the organization than are members in lower quality relations. Dansereau et al. (1975) suggest that to develop commitment, the superior cannot use his formal authority since 'commitment can only be volunteered by the members' (Dansereau et al. 1975). Therefore, to cultivate commitment, the superiors offer members wider liberty in their roles, more attention, greater support, and greater influence in the unit's operations. By doing so, superiors 'gain critical assistance from members committed to the unit's success' (Dansereau et al. 1975). Duchon, Green and Taber (1986) found that quality of exchange was positively related to the extent to which members were committed to the organization in an examination of antecedents and consequences of LMX in Junior Achievement companies. Yukl (2002) also points out that employees in higher quality dyads are more likely to be committed to task accomplishment and to carry out administrative duties for the leader. Similarly, Ansari, Hung and Aafaqi (2007) found that LMX has a positive relationship with organizational commitment. Specifically, relative to other dimensions (contribution and loyalty), affect was found to be related to all components of organizational commitment, but the impact was negative for continuance commitment. Lee (2005) also found affect is positively associated with followers' affective commitment. Therefore, this study proposes the first hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1:* leader-member relations have a positive effect on organizational commitment.

#### ***Leader-member relation and job satisfaction***

Fielder, Chemers and Mahar (1977) contended that the leader-member relation is a kind of friendship, acceptance and loyalty between supervisor and subordinates, and also entails a certain level of confidence, trust and respect. Fielder et al. (1977) also noted that supervisors who utilize leadership techniques with high quality leader-member relations to manage their employees are finding it easier than managing with low quality relations. According to social exchange theory, when members observe that they receive support, trust, and other tangible and intangible benefits from their leaders, they develop an obligation to reciprocate (Gouldner 1960).

Service quality in the hotel industry is based on how frontline employees interact with customers. Thus, satisfied employees provide a higher quality of service to guests. Prior studies have shown that in a high quality leader-member relation, leaders provide both intangible and tangible resources to members, which leads to higher job satisfaction (Gerstner and Day 1997; Robbins 2003; Aryee and Zhen 2006; Erdogan and Enders 2007). Aryee and Zhen (2006) found that empowerment fully mediated the relationship between leader-member relation and the work outcomes such as job satisfaction and task performance in China. Erdogan and Enders (2007) contended that employees with high quality leader-member relations were more satisfied, while those with low quality relations were least satisfied with their jobs when their supervisor had high perceived organizational support. Thus, we expected that high quality leader-member relations would be positively related to job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 2:* leader-member relations have a positive effect on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction and organization commitment.

Links between employees' commitment to their organizations and satisfaction with their jobs have been the subject of a large amount of empirical research, and still there seems

little agreement about the causal connections between these two important employee attitudes (Rayton 2006). Job satisfaction is one of the most researched phenomena in organizational behavior literature, and it is defined as the extent to which a worker feels positively about his or her job (Odom, Boy and Dunn 1990). In a service organization, frontline employees must interact directly with their customers. Because of the importance of customer contact in developing relationships with customers, employee job satisfaction is a primary concern for hospitality organizations that rely upon a loyal clientele. In general, job satisfaction leads to good employee performance, which, in turn makes them less likely to leave (Arnett, Laverie and McLane 2002).

Organizational commitment has received extensive research attention in Western countries since this construct was proposed by Porter, Steers, Mowday and their associates (e.g., Mowday et al. 1979; Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian 1974). Although there are several definitions of organizational commitment, a common theme in most is that committed individuals believe in and accept organizational goals and values, and are willing to remain within their organizations, and willing to provide considerable effort on their behalf (Mowday et al. 1979).

Empirical evidence suggests that job satisfaction is an antecedent to organizational commitment (Reichers 1985; Mathieu and Hamel 1989; Brown and Peterson 1994). In addition, a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment has been reported in several studies (Bartle, Dansby, Landis and McIntyre 2002; Redfern, Hannan and Norman 2002; Kim, Leong and Lee 2005). Redfern et al. (2002) reported a strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment in a study of the health care staff in a nursing home in the UK. Kim et al. (2005) also reported job satisfaction was positively related to organizational commitment in a casual dining restaurant chain. Overall, the literature tends to suggest a positive relationship between the two variables. Therefore, we propose the third hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 3:* job satisfaction has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

### ***Leader-member relation, job satisfaction and organization commitment***

The quality of leader-member relationships is assumed to reflect the extent to which the leader and subordinate exchange resources and support beyond the formal employment contract (Dansereau et al. 1975). Leader-member quality has been found to play an important role for individual performance (Gerstner and Day 1997), and other individual outcomes such as employee attitudes (Dansereau et al. 1975; Duchon et al. 1986), psychological withdrawal behavior and job satisfaction (Aryee and Zhen 2006). Therefore, the relationship between managers and employees has been considered critical for effective leadership, and such leadership may result in these subordinates experiencing meaningful work, self-determination and self-efficacy. Previous studies of managers also showed that supervisory support and positive working conditions have been found to be positively correlated with higher levels of job satisfaction (Jurik and Winn 1987; Van Voorhis, Cullen, Link and Wolfe 1991). Meanwhile, job satisfaction was proved to positively effect on organizational commitment (Bartle et al. 2002; Redfern et al. 2002; Kim et al. 2005). Kim et al. (2005) found that the more satisfaction employees feel, the higher their commitment to the organization. Accordingly, this study considers that job satisfaction plays a mediation role between leader-member relation and organization commitment.

*Hypothesis 4:* Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between leader-member relation and organization commitment.

In conclusion, this literature consulted developed the research map that directed our research and is shown in Figure 1. In this figure the black lines mark the main influences, and demonstrate the complex relationships between leader-member relations, job satisfaction, and organization commitment. Also, we found there are other factors affecting leader-member relation, job satisfaction, and organization commitment, which indicate to us other interesting directions for future research.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research framework***

This study investigates the interrelationships among leader-member relations, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Taiwan's international tourist hotels. Based on our literature review, the research framework and hypotheses are presented on Figure 2.

### ***Sample***

The sampling frame on this study was based on the 60 international tourist hotels in Taiwan listed by the Tourism Bureau Ministry of Transportation and Communication, Republic of China. This study used the room servicing department, food and beverage department and housekeeping department as data sources. This study tests this conceptual model using a sample of frontline employees in international tourist hotels. Frontline employees in tourist hotels, however, like employees in other human service occupations, face chronic work overload and stressful interactions with customers or client (Budd, Arvey and Lawless 1996; Grandey 2003). Therefore, supervisors have the difficult but critical role of keeping the frontline employee positively engaged during work. This data was collected by sending questionnaires to frontline employees and in order to increase the response rate, follow-up letters, emails and phone calls were used after 1 week. A total of 1147 questionnaires were mailed, and 303 valid questionnaires were returned that resulted in a valid response rate of 26.41%.

Participants were predominantly female (69%) and approximately 44.1% were below 25 years old and 38.8% were 25–34 years old, 55% of the participants had graduated from colleges or university. For 73% of the sample their term of tenure was greater than 6 months but less than 3 years. The food and beverage department accounted for 50% of the participants with 33% in the rooms division.

### ***Measures***

This study uses a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to answer all questions. The questionnaires were refined from a pilot study conducted with three senior managers who had related work experience in hotels. Finally, it was pre-tested with 30 frontline employees.

### ***Leader-member relations***

The scale for leader-member relations was based on a leader member relations point identified in Fielder et al. (1977). The original version had eight-items in the scale but this study uses six-item adaptation of the leader member relations measure. Due to two of items 'I do not get along with my colleagues' and 'My colleagues and I completed the project together' are used to measure the relations between coworkers, so this study uses

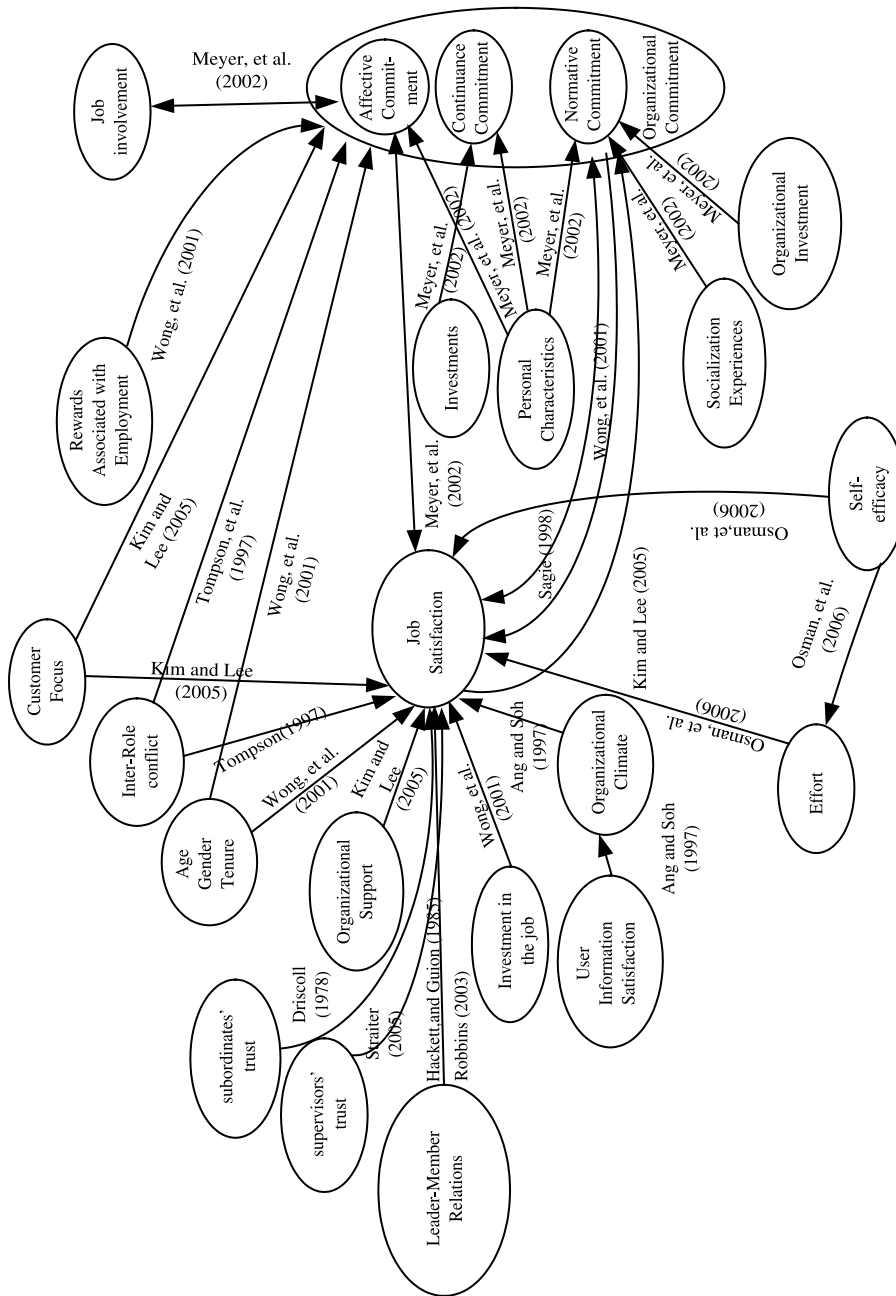


Figure 1. Research map.



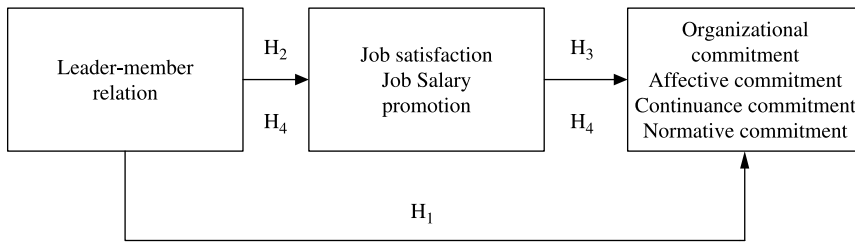


Figure 2. Research framework.

a six-item scale to measure leader member relations. A sample item is ‘My supervisor is reliable’. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .86.

### *Job satisfaction*

This variable was measured by the Job Descriptive Index (JDI), originally developed by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969). The scale used in the present study was revised from an updated version of the JDI developed by Gregson (1990). Gregson (1990) used a 30-item shortened version of the JDI based on choosing the six items that loaded the highest on each dimension in a factor analysis of the job satisfaction items (work, pay, promotions, supervision, and co-workers). Because two of dimensions ‘coworkers’ and ‘supervision’ are similar to leader-member relation, this study uses the other three dimensions of work, salary and promotion. There are five, four, and three items to measure the dimensions, respectively. The work dimension measures employees feeling about their position. Sample items are ‘I am satisfied with my work’ and ‘My work is important.’ The salary dimension measures satisfaction with salary and the gap between employee expectation and what they actually get. Sample items from the scale are: ‘My income is high’ and ‘My income adequate for normal expenses.’ The promotion dimension measures satisfaction with the promotion procedures. Sample items from this measure are: ‘My company offers good chances for promotion,’ and ‘My company offers fairly good chances for promotion.’ Cronbach’s alpha was .77 for work, .88 for promotion, and .82 for pay.

### *Organizational commitment*

Organizational commitment was measured with Allen and Meyer (1990) scales. The affective dimension refers to employees’: emotional attachment to; identification with; and involvement in, the organization. The continuance dimension refers to commitment based on the costs that employees associate with leaving the organization. Third, the normative dimension refers to employees’ feelings of obligation to remain with the organization. This study uses four items to measure affective dimension. Sample items from the measure are, ‘This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me,’ and ‘I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.’ The three-item scale was used to measure the continuance dimension. Sample items from the scale are: ‘It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to;’ and ‘I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up.’ A three-item scale was used to measure the normative dimension. Sample items from the measure are ‘Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers,’ and ‘If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right



to leave my organization.’ Cronbach’s alpha was .84 for the affective dimension, .69 for the continuance dimension, and .66 for the normative dimension.

**Demographics**

This study follows Osman, Orhan, Ismet, Lejla and Lulu (2006) to include some demographic variables The demographic information requested was: gender (male = 1, female = 2); age; education level; job position. We also added two more demographic variables for department and organizational tenure to match our research context.

**Treatment of common method variance**

In this study, authors follow the suggestion of Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee and Podsakoff’s (2003) to minimize common method biases. First, to decrease respondent evaluation apprehension, this study assures participants that there was no right or wrong answer to any of the measures in the survey. Second, this article reduces method biases through the careful construction of the items themselves by defining ambiguous or unfamiliar terms; avoiding vague concepts and providing examples when such concepts must be used; keeping questions simple, specific, and concise; decompose questions relating to more than one possibility into simpler, more focused questions; and avoiding complicated syntax. Third, authors design reversed questions in order to prevent participants from answering carelessly. Finally, this study uses the 10-item scale of Crowne and Marlowe’s (1964) original scale, developed by Strahan and Gerbasi (1972, cited in Fischer and Fick 1993). This version has been found to have high internal consistency. Controlling for the effects of a directly measured latent methods factor technique was used to detect whether social desirability is a possible source of common method variance. This approach was also used by Kline, Sulsky and Rever-Moriyama (2000), who illustrated the point at which the omission of social desirability as a theoretically relevance began to result in a poor fit of the structural model.

**Research results**

This study uses structure equation modeling (SEM) to examine our hypotheses. These latent variable models were specified in the LISREL 8.7 statistical package. Means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations for the study variables are reported in Table 1. Correlations reflecting several of the direct paths predicted by the hypotheses were significant and in the expected direction: Leader–member relations were positively

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations among variables.

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Leader-member relations	3.37	.55	(.86)						
Work	3.38	.64	.50**	(.77)					
Promotion	2.81	.80	.43**	.55**	(.88)				
Pay	2.21	.77	.17*	.28**	.54**	(.82)			
Affective	3.30	.64	.45**	.56**	.51**	.34**	(.84)		
Continuance	3.12	.75	.14*	.12*	.08	.14*	.28**	(.69)	
Normative	2.75	.69	.29**	.30**	.50**	.48**	.52**	.33**	(.66)

Note: 1.\* p < .05 \*\* p < .01 \*\*\* p < .001 2; N = 303;4. ( ) (Cronbach’s α).

related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment; job satisfaction was positively related to organizational commitment.

### *Measurement model*

In addition, this study performs confirmatory factor analysis on the three variables: leader-member relations; job satisfaction; and organizational commitment. The measurement model provided an acceptable fit to the data when considering fit statistics (see Table 2). All of the estimated parameters were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ), which indicates that the overall measurement model in our study has convergent validity. To assess discriminate validity, a series of  $\chi^2$  difference tests on the factor correlations among all the constructs (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). This was done for one pair of variables at a time by constraining the estimated correlation parameter between them to 1.0 and then performing a  $\chi^2$  difference test on the values obtained for the constrained and unconstrained models (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). The resulting significant difference in  $\chi^2$  indicates that the two constructs are not perfectly correlated and that discriminate validity is achieved (Bagozzi and Phillips 1982). Based on Table 3, all of the  $\chi^2$  differences in this study are greater than 3.84, which is good evidence for the dimensions' discriminate validity.

### *Hypothesis testing*

This study tests four hypotheses with the structural equation model. In the structure model, we used item parcels in leader-member relations rather than individual items as manifest indicators of the latent constructs since that allowed us to maintain an adequate sample size to parameter ratio (Bentler and Chou 1988; Russell, Kahn, Spoth and Altmaier 1998). The model provided an adequate fit to the data  $\chi^2 (24, N = 303) = 141.87, p < .01$ ; goodness of fit index (GFI) = .91; comparative fit index (CFI) = .93; non-normed fit index (NNFI) = .90 root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .13; Standardized RMR (SRMR) = .07).

Figure 3 shows the structural model with the standardized coefficients for the research sample. This study finds that leader-member relation has a positive effect on organizational commitment (Hypothesis 1) and leader-member relation would be positively associated with job satisfaction (Hypothesis 2) and that job satisfaction would be positively associated with organizational commitment (Hypothesis 3), and that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between leader-member relations and organizational commitment (Hypothesis 4). Results indicate that the relation between leader-member relation and organizational commitment was non-significant ( $\gamma_{21} = .06, p > .05$ ), and Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Regarding Hypothesis 2, the leader-member relation was positively associated with job satisfaction ( $\gamma_{11} = .62, p < .01$ ), thereby supporting Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 3 predicted that job satisfaction has a positive impact on organizational commitment ( $\beta_{21} = .79, p < .01$ ), and this was supported, Hypothesis 3.

### *Mediation model*

In order to investigate the mediation model, using the previously established measurement model, this study implements two approaches to test the possible structural model. First, authors use three models to estimate three nested structural models (Kelloway 1998): (a) a fully mediated model; (b) a partially mediated model in which there are additional paths between the mentoring variables and the outcome variables of organizational

Table 2. Fit statistics of the CFA model.

	<i>Leader-member relation</i>	<i>Job satisfaction</i>	<i>Organizational commitment</i>
GFI	.98	.95	.96
SRMR	.93	.93	.93
RMSEA	.026	.038	.044
NNFI	.085	.052	.058
CFI	.97	.98	.96
$\chi^2$	.98	.99	.97
(DF, Degrees of Freedom)	9	51	32
$\chi^2/df$	3.18	1.80	2.02

commitment; and (c) a non-mediated model that consists of the partially mediated model with the paths from the antecedents to the mediating variables removed.

The model fit of fully mediated model indicated that  $\chi^2 (25, N = 303) = 141.84$ ,  $p < .01$ ; GFI = .91; CFI = .93; and RMSEA = .12. Of the 2 estimated structural paths, all are significant. The partially mediated model fit the data well:  $\chi^2 (24, N = 303) = 141.87$ ,  $p < .01$ ; GFI = .91; CFI = .93; and RMSEA = .13. The path between leader-member relations and organizational commitment is not significant. A non-mediated model to the data is:  $\chi^2 (25, N = 303) = 203.05$ ,  $p < .01$ ; GFI = .87; CFI = .88; and RMSEA = .15. In comparing the fit of the three models, using GFI, CFI, and RMSEA, the results suggest the partially mediated model and fully mediated model provided substantially better fit to the data than the non-mediated model. Furthermore, the results of a chi square difference test demonstrated that the partially mediated model and fully mediated model was non-significantly ( $\chi^2 \text{ diff } (1, N = 303) = .03$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Therefore, the fully mediated model is the best model in this study.

Second, this study uses three analysis steps to demonstrate that the model is a fully mediated model. In the first step, we examine the relationship between leader-member relation and organizational commitment, the results are significant ( $\beta = .56$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Then, we consider the relation of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and the results are also significant ( $\beta = .82$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Finally, job satisfaction was added to the first model to test job satisfaction as a mediator. The results of the partially mediated model indicates that once job satisfaction was in the model as a mediator, the relationship between leader-member relation and organizational commitment changed to non-significant ( $\beta = .06$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The total effect

Table 3. Discriminate validity.

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Model</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>DF</i>	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$
Job Satisfaction	Unconstrained model	92.09	51		
	Work–Promotion	281.88	52	189.79*	1
	Work–Pay	450.03	52	357.94*	1
	Promotion–Pay	311.46	52	219.37*	1
Organizational commitment	Unconstrained model	260.38	87		1
	Affective–Continuance	447.47	88	187.09*	1
	Affective–Normative	307.01	88	46.63*	1
	Continuance–Normative	311.80	88	51.42*	1

\* $p < .05$ .

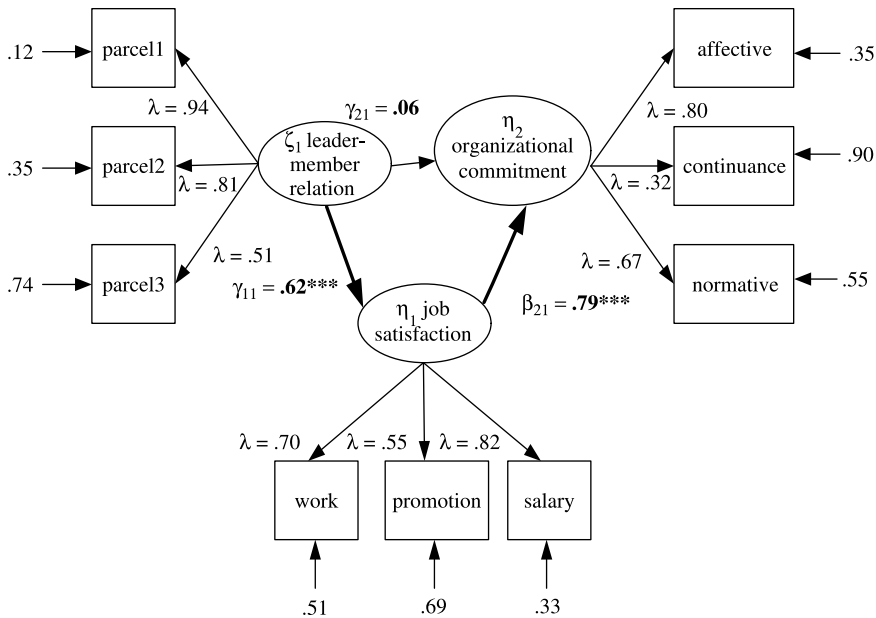


Figure 3. Fully mediated model.

originally between leader-member relation and organizational commitment was .56, generally equal to direct effect of .06 plus indirect effect of .49 between leader-member relation and organizational commitment. This means that the total effect between leader-member relations and organizational commitment is totally partial mediated by job satisfaction after it was added to the model. The results identify job satisfaction as a mediator in the model and the fully mediated model is the best. This results support Hypothesis 3.

### *Common method variance*

As with all self-reported data, there is the potential for the occurrence of method variance. To test for the extent of method variance in the current data the authors implemented the procedure recommended by Podsakoff et al. (2003) and use the technique of controlling for the effects of a directly measured latent methods factor. This study follows Kline et al.'s (2000) research to consider social desirability as a common factor in our framework.

Results from these analyses indicated that when the authors add a common factor—social desirability into the model, the model fit to the data  $\chi^2(49, N = 303) = 179.56$ ,  $p < .01$ ; GFI = .90; CFI = .93; and RMSEA = .10 is not much better than original model. Therefore, the results suggest that common method variance is not a pervasive problem in this study.

## **Discussion**

### *Discussion and implications*

The study investigates the relationships among leader-member relations, job satisfaction and organizational commitment by using a structure equation model. The major findings

and implications follow.

1. Research results indicate that leader-member relations have a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. In other words, subordinates in high-quality relationships with their supervisors had greater job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the research by Erdogan and Enders (2007), which indicated LMX and job satisfaction had a positive relation when the supervisor perceives organizational support, the relation between LMX and job satisfaction will be enhanced. In the Chinese context, *guanxi* (relationship) still strongly affects Chinese employees' work-related attitudes and behavior (Wong, Wong, Hui and Law 2001). In addition, most research in the literature is based on LMX theory to explore the relation between supervisors and subordinates but this study uses Fielder et al.'s (1977) theories to discuss the leader-member relations.
2. The relationship between job satisfaction and organization commitment has a positive effect. It is indicated that if the employees' job satisfaction improves, they would show greater organizational commitment. In the literature, the potential relationship between job satisfaction and organization commitment is plausible. Some researchers have hypothesized organizational commitment is only a mediator for job satisfaction turnover and intention relationship (Porter et al. 1974; Steers 1977; Stevens, Beyer and Trice 1978; Rusbult and Farrell 1983). That is, job satisfaction will affect organizational commitment, which in turn will affect turnover intention. Others argued that job satisfaction is a mediator between commitment and turnover intention (Bateman and Strasser 1984). Lastly, some researchers consider that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are reciprocal (Farkas and Tetrick 1989; Mathieu 1991). In this study, the authors clarify this plausible relation and demonstrate that job satisfaction has direct effects on organizational commitment. This finding is consistent with the study by Kim et al. (2005) who used an international casual dining restaurant in Seoul, Korea as a sample. They found that job satisfaction was positively associated with organizational commitment, but negatively associated with employees' intention of leaving. Although, we did not include turnover intention in this study, we went on to explain the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, future study may follow this line to investigate other outcome variables in employee behavior.
3. Research results also reveal that job satisfaction plays a mediating role in the relationship between leader-member relation and organizational commitment. A model with both a direct and an indirect path did not fit the data better than the model, and when authors add job satisfaction into the model, the path between leader-member relation and organization commitment is changed to non-significant. This result suggests that job satisfaction fully mediated the relationships between leader-member relation and organizational commitment. That is, if an organization wants to improve employee commitment, job satisfaction plays a key role. Supervisors must keep high quality relations with subordinates and let employees feel satisfaction in their job. As a result, the employees will have strong commitment to their company. Prior studies have indicated that job satisfaction has a positive effect on organizational commitment (Price and Mueller 1986; Mathieu 1988; Mathieu and Hamel 1989; Bartle et al. 2002). In this study, it was further found that leader-member relations are an antecedent and job satisfaction is a mediator between these two variables.

4. Namasivayam and Zhao (2007) examined the relationships in work–family conflict (WFC), organizational commitment (OC) and job satisfaction (JS) in a hotel setting. Both direct and moderating relationships of three sub dimensions of OC were investigated and it was found that the affective component of OC has stronger direct effects on JS than normative OC; and continuance commitment had no effect. Concluding above research findings and the results of this study, the authors infer that there are two possible mediating variables on job satisfaction and organizational commitment influenced in hotel employees' behavior. Thus, hotel supervisors should consider these two variables as critical factors to create a positive organizational climate/culture and encourage their employees.
5. Strategic human resource management (SHRM) was found to directly and positively influence individual performance, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Top managers implementing a SHRM system can, therefore, expect improved organizational performance and improved levels of individual performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment from the organization's human resource professionals (Green, Wu, Whitten and Medlin 2006). On the other hand, Taormina (1999) found that high correlations existed in the relationships of organizational socialization, job satisfaction, and commitment. Thus, hotel supervisors should consider job satisfaction and organizational commitment as strategic human resource management activities which would assist human resource professionals and improve organizational socialization results.

#### *Study limitations and future research*

The study has several limitations. First, all variables in this study were measured with self-reports and from the same source, so that the research findings might be influenced by common method variance, response consistency effects, or other methodological issues common to self-reporting methods. During questionnaire development techniques suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003) have been used to reduce this problem. This study carefully constructed the items themselves by defining ambiguous or unfamiliar terms and keeping questions simple, specific, and concise. Moreover, this study used 10-item social desirability scales to test whether a mode suffered from common method variance. The results indicate that without considering social desirability the model has a good fit. Therefore, the authors feel confident that the model was not seriously affected by common method variance. But despite precautions against the effects of common method bias, this study cannot rule out its influence completely. Thus, we suggest that future research should gather data from multiple sources (subordinates and supervisors) or use different measurement techniques. Moreover, this study measures leader-member relation only from an employee's perspective. In Erdogan and Enders' (2007) studies, they also use only employee's perspective to measure LMX because they argued that at the time there was no existing scale to separate measure of supervisor perceptions of LMX, and they wanted to minimize the cognitive load by keeping their surveys brief. Even though, Gerstner and Day (1997) suggested the leader-member relation should be measured from both perspectives.

Second, for the outcome variable authors focus only on organization commitment in this study. However, commitment is not a straightforward concept. The concept of multiple commitments includes specific objects of commitment such as organization, work group, occupation, and one's job (Blau, Paul and St. John 1993; Cohen 1993, 1999, 2003; Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran 2005). Therefore, this study suggests that future

studies can consider foci commitment to explore what kind of commitment will be improved when employees have good relations with their supervisors.

Third, statistical analysis methodology in this study considers supervisors and employees on the same level. Authors contend that the relationship between supervisor and employee is nested within the relationship between that of the supervisor and his or her boss. Within this dyadic network, it is likely that a supervisor's ability to affect the work of employees lower in the hierarchy is influenced by the quality of that supervisor's relationship with his or her boss. In addition, this study proposes a research issue that further study may use hierarchical liner modeling (HLM) to test possible cross-level relations when individual data are nested within groups (Bryk and Raudenbush 1992).

Finally, the problem of generality poses another potential limitation. This study argues that the frontline employees of the hotel industry perceive themselves as being less skilled workers and performing monotonous jobs. Therefore, the research findings may be misleading if we generalize from the hotel industry to other industries.

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