Au Journal of Management

Assumption University

Published by:

Assumption University
Hua Mak, Bangkok 10240, Thailand.
Tel: 66 (0) 2300 4543-62
Fax: 66 (0) 2300 4563
URL: http://www.au.edu

ISSN: 1686-0039
Vol 12, No 1
January - June 2014

AU JOURNAL OF
MANAGEMENT

Vol. 12 No. 1 **January - June 2014**

The AU Journal of Management, an international publication, is published twice a year, in January and July and deals with current issues in business management. The Journal is owned by Assumption University and published on a non-profit basis. Inquiries or comments on material published or circulation may be addressed to the Managing Editor, ***AU Journal of Management***, Assumption University, Ram Khamhaeng Rd., Soi 24, Hua Mak, Bangkok 10240, Thailand. Tel. +66 (0) 2300-4543, +66 (0) 2300-4553, Fax. +66 (0) 2300-4511, +66 (0) 2300-4552, +66 (0) 2300-4563.

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Statement from the Managing Editor

The environment of business today is global, complex and ever changing. Given this, companies will need new business strategies and models in order to compete effectively. As in our previous issues, the current one provides a platform for researchers to publish their papers on both theoretical developments and business applications.

Nitiwanakul, in our first article, examines the differences between Thai and expatriate consumers in terms of perceived value and fine dining restaurant selection. Her findings provide important cues for restaurant owners/managers in developing marketing tools in order to retain current as well as attract new consumers to Thailand's restaurant scene. In our second article, Ahmmed and Noor provide a theoretical framework highlighting organizational antecedents and repeat orders based on key account management performance. Their paper presents readers with important managerial and theoretical implications. In our third article, Vergara and Han Noom conducted a descriptive study on acculturative stress and coping responses among female Burmese migrant workers in Thailand. Their findings will help employers and policy markers alleviate the stressors encountered by these workers as well as promote positive acculturative experiences for these workers. In our fourth article, Rungseanuvatgol investigated organization commitment and citizenship behavior of employees in Thailand's logistic industry. His findings showed that innovative organization culture has the strongest influence on employees' organization citizenship behavior. Our final article by Ngotngamwong examines the impact of frequent leadership change from the perspective of employees. The findings showed that although employees experienced both positive and negative impacts from such changes, they should be kept to the minimum.

I express my gratitude to all the contributors; any meaningful improvements in the Journal are dependent upon submissions. I urge those of you who previously have submitted manuscripts to the Au Journal of Management to continue to do so. I also invite new contributors to send the Journal your very best.

Patricia Arttachariya, Ph.D.
Managing Editor

Statement of Editorial Policy

AU Journal of Management is an interdisciplinary journal that welcomes submission from scholars in disciplines related to business and management (e.g. marketing, finance, economics, accounting) and from other related disciplines (e.g. education, IT). The journal is multidisciplinary in scope and interdisciplinary in contents and methodology.

AU Journal of Management accepts both research and academic papers. Quantitative and qualitative methodologies are both encouraged as long as the studies are methodologically rigorous. The journal does not publish manuscripts about teaching materials/methods, articles that merely criticize previous work, or those aimed solely at business practitioners. On the other hand, articles that discuss theoretical, empirical, practical or pedagogical issues are welcome.

AU Journal of Management is published twice a year, in January and June. Manuscripts are accepted on the understanding that they have not been, nor will be, published elsewhere. Based on the decision of the editors, manuscripts will be submitted to a double blind review. The final decision on publication rests with the Managing Editor.

A set of detailed guidelines for authors can be found on the back pages of the journal. All manuscripts on acceptance become the copyright of Assumption University.

Please send your submissions via email to patriciartt@au.edu. Submissions can also be made via our website **www.aujm.au.edu**.

Contents

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CUSTOMER PERCEIVED VALUE AS A DRIVER FOR FINE DINING RESTAURANT SELECTION: A CASE OF THAI CONSUMERS AND EXPATRIATES

Warangrat Nitiwanakul
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Abstract

Customer perceived value is important as a key factor to predict consumption behavior, to understand consumer insights, and to create competitive advantage and develop marketing strategies. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between customers' perceived value and its drivers which influence fine dining restaurant selection. This study proposes a framework and hypotheses by integrating the emotional model of Mehrabian-Russell (1974) and Zeithaml's customer perceived value theory (1988). The results indicated that perceived value and monetary cost were the key factors that influence consumers' intention to select a fine dining restaurant. Food quality, service quality, monetary cost and non monetary cost were found to be the essential factors which directly affect the overall customer perceived value of fine dining restaurants, in a positive way for quality and a negative way for cost. The perceptions of customer perceived value and restaurant selection for Thai consumers and expatriates were different. For Thai consumers, food quality, service quality and positive emotion directly influence value and restaurant selection was based mainly on perceived value and monetary cost. Expatriates, in contrast, emphasized the atmosphere and service quality, which enhance their positive emotion. Additionally, the positive emotion of the dining experience was a key factor for fine dining restaurant selection.

Keywords: Atmosphere, Food quality, Service quality, Emotional response, Monetary cost, Non-monetary cost, Customer perceived value, Behavioral intention

บทคัดย่อ

ธุรกิจร้านอาหารเป็นธุรกิจที่มีมูลค่าทางการตลาดมหาศาล มีการเจริญเติบโตและการแข่งขันสูงเนื่องจากพฤติกรรมของผู้บริโภคให้ความสำคัญในการรับประทานอาหารนอกบ้าน ประกอบกับแนวโน้มของผู้บริโภคมีรายได้เพิ่มขึ้น ให้ความสำคัญกับความสะดวกสบาย ความหรูหรา ความเพลิดเพลิน และประสบการณ์ที่น่าจดจำมากขึ้น ยิ่งไปกว่านั้นผู้บริโภคยังให้ความสำคัญกับอารมณ์ และความสุขที่ได้จากการรับประทานอาหารนอกบ้านโดยเฉพาะร้านอาหารระดับหรู ปัจจัยเหล่านี้ทำให้ร้านอาหารระดับหรูเป็นที่นิยมในกลุ่มผู้บริโภคเป็นอย่างยิ่งในปัจจุบัน บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาปัจจัยที่สำคัญในกระบวนการตัดสินใจเลือกร้านอาหารระดับหรูของลูกค้าคนไทยและต่างชาติ โดยเน้นที่การมองคุณค่าโดยรวมของบริการของร้านอาหารตามทฤษฎีของ Zeithaml (1988) และอารมณ์ความรู้สึกของผู้บริโภคที่เกิดขึ้นขณะรับบริการที่ร้านอาหารตามทฤษฎีของ Mehrabian-Russell (1974) ผลการศึกษาพบว่า คุณค่าโดยรวมของบริการและราคามีผลโดยตรงกับการเลือกร้านอาหาร ในขณะที่คุณภาพอาหาร คุณภาพการบริการ ราคาและค่าใช้จ่ายแฝงอื่น ๆ ส่งผลโดยตรงต่อการคุณค่าโดยรวมของบริการ นอกจากนั้นยังพบว่าคนไทย และต่างชาติมีกระบวนการเลือกร้านอาหารที่ต่างกัน ลูกค้าคนไทยเลือกร้านอาหารจากคุณค่าของบริการร้านอาหารและราคาเป็นหลัก ซึ่งคุณค่าของบริการร้านอาหารก็ขึ้นอยู่กับคุณภาพของอาหาร คุณภาพการบริการ และความรู้สึกทางบวกที่เกิดขึ้น ส่วนลูกค้าต่างชาติเลือกร้านอาหารจากความรู้สึกทางบวกที่เกิดขึ้นขณะรับบริการ ซึ่งความรู้สึกทางบวกเกิดขึ้นจากคุณภาพของ การบริการและบรรยากาศของร้านเป็นหลัก

คำสำคัญ: บรรยากาศร้าน, คุณภาพอาหาร, คุณภาพการบริการ, ความรู้สึกด้านอารมณ์, ต้นทุนทางการเงิน, ต้นทุนอื่น, คุณค่าโดยรวม, พฤติกรรมการตัดสินใจ

INTRODUCTION

The restaurant business is a global industry with fierce and intense competition (Harrington, Ottenbacher & Kendall, 2011) since it is one of the rapidly growing sectors. Nowadays, restaurant operators are more concerned about the customer dining experience, customer perceived value and customer emotions (Ha & Jang, 2012). In the highly competitive context of the restaurant industry, consumers have several choices. To survive and gain more competitive advantage in the industry, restaurant operators have to understand consumers' thoughts and feelings as well as their selection process. The concept of customer perceived value is interesting to both academics and practitioners and has been one of the cornerstones in business and marketing for years (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Knowledge about customer perceived value is important to develop effective marketing strategies since there is evidence from previous research that perceived value leads to restaurant selection.

Nowadays, customers tend to use more restaurant services and dine out with pleasure, entertainment and a memorable experience as the requirements of customer perceived value (Zayak, 2004; Spark, Bowen & Klag, 2003). The development of customer perceived value about a restaurant and the process of restaurant selection are complicated, and involve both cognitive and affective processes among customers. Emotional response is central to consumption, and various scholars have acknowledged its importance as one of the most powerful tools for marketing managers (Bagozzi et al., 1999; Taylor, 2000). Thus, this study emphasizes both the cognitive and affective processes in customer decision making by focusing on customer perceived value and emotional responses toward fine dining restaurant selection. The benefits that the customer would receive and the sacrifices the customer would make when selecting a fine dining restaurant are studied simultaneously based on the theories of customer perceived value theory by Zeithaml (1988) and the Mehrabian-Russell Model (1974). In the restaurant industry, the fine dining restaurant is chosen for various reasons. The fine dining restaurant is a growing high-potential market which contributes more than 10,000 million baht a year to the Thai economy (Department of Business Development of Thailand, 2002). The slow-down of consumption of fast food has shifted the market toward full service restaurants (Boyle, 2011); people are concerned about health, have a higher standard of living and are wealthier, and there has been a luxury spending boom (Zayak, 2004; Lee & Hwang, 2011). Emotional response is more important and is evident in full service restaurants in contrast to fast food restaurants (Jang & Namkung, 2009).

The full service restaurant offers fine dining with a variety of foods and beverages with table service (Tarib, Hashim, Chinna & Kumar, 2009). The fine dining restaurant is defined as a full service restaurant where customers pay a premium for fine food and impeccable service (Tarib et al., 2009), an upscale restaurant with highly skilled staff who are expert in personal service (Walker, 2002; Powers & Barrows, 1999), a well designed restaurant with luxurious furnishing, with a high food and service quality (Walker, 2002), with white table cloths and an elegant dining experience (Chon & Sparrowe, 2000).

The objective is to investigate and develop a conceptual framework about benefits and sacrifices as the key drivers of customer perceived value toward fine dining restaurant selection. This study focuses on the process of restaurant selection, which emphasizes the three benefits of atmosphere, food quality and service quality, and the two sacrifices of monetary and nonmonetary cost as key drivers of customer perceived value. Additionally, this study compared the selection processes of Thai consumers and expatriates. The reason for focusing on Thai consumers and expatriates is because they are potential customers of fine dining restaurants. Additionally, a number of studies have investigated customer perceived value among various groups of customers (Ha & Jang, 2012). However, there has been limited empirical study of the simultaneous effect of benefits and sacrifices as key drivers that affect customer perceived value. Moreover, the comparison of Thai and expatriates in a fine dining restaurant context has never been made. Nowadays, there are increasing numbers of expatriates who come to Thailand (DOE, 2009; DOE, 2011; Poonpool, 2011). Thailand is an attractive destination for expatriates (HSBC, 2012). The expatriate sector is important for the restaurant industry because of expatriates' recreational lifestyle, interest in frequently dining out and drinking and socializing at restaurants and bars (Trembath & Parker, 2011). This study defines expatriates as the citizens of one country who are working in another country, and home country nationals who are transferred or working abroad (Griffin & Pustay, 1996; Wild, Wild & Han, 2001; Hill, Wee & Udayasankar, 2012).

Additionally, this study is based on Zeithaml's Customer Perceived Value theory (1988), and Mehrabian and Russell's model (1974). The hypotheses are derived from the literature review and in-depth interviews. This article begins by briefly reviewing the theories of Zeithaml's Customer Perceived Value (1988), and Mehrabian and Russell's model (1974). The author then develops hypotheses about how the key drivers of customer perceived value affect fine dining restaurant selection.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Zeithaml's Perceived Value and Mehrabian-Russell's Emotional Response

Zeithaml (1988) proposed a framework of customer perceived value with a mean-end model while perceived quality and perceived price were identified as precursors of customer perceived value. Customer perceived value is a consumer's overall assessment of the product which is based on the perception of what is received and what is given, known as benefits and sacrifices. Customer perceived value is categorized into three levels i.e. the attribute level, the quality level and the value level. The attribute level is composed of intrinsic and extrinsic attributes. The quality level is the consumer judgment of the product which relates to superiority and excellence. For the value level, customer perceived value describes the concept of low price, whatever consumers want in a product and what customers get for what they give. Zeithaml's model (1988) described perceived sacrifices as monetary cost and nonmonetary cost, which influence customer perceived value. Monetary cost is the amount of money a consumer has sacrificed, or given up, to obtain a product. Nonmonetary cost includes time cost, search cost and psychic cost, which explicitly and implicitly form part of the fine dining restaurant customers' perception of products and services (Zeithaml, 1988).

The Mehrabian-Russell concept (1974) of emotional response is integrated with the cognitive construct of customer perceived value in the conceptual framework. The Mehrabian-Russell model (1974) describes the impact of physical and environmental stimuli on human emotional responses, which in turn affect the behavioral response, the three stages of the S-O-R paradigm, stimulus, organism and response. The Mehrabian-Russell model was developed in 1974 and describes the human interaction with the various environmental stimuli which generate emotional states in the human mind as organisms.

The role of emotion emphasizes customer perceived value development by integrating the Mehrabian-Russell model (1974) and is one of the most cited in marketing (Jang & Namkung, 2009; Liu & Jang, 2009). The strength of the S-O-R paradigm is as a parsimonious model which is widely used (Sweeney & Wyber, 2002), has a strong intervening variable and response (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982), and is popular in various industries. For emotional response, previous scholars proposed positive and negative emotions (Yoo, Park & MacInnis, 1998; Jang & Namkung, 2009). Positive emotions are pleasure, excitement, contentment, refreshment, interest, relaxation and attractiveness (Jang & Namkung, 2009; Jang, et al., 2011) whereas negative emotions are anger, disgust, boredom, regret, distress, contempt and displeasure (Yoo et al., 1998; Jang, et al., 2011).

Customer perceived value is a multi-dimensional construct (Babin, Darden & Griffin, 1994; Rintamaki, Kanto, Kuusela & Spence, 2006). The study of Babin et al. (1994) focused on the two dimensions of utilitarian and hedonic value in the shopping context. The total Customer Perceived Value theory of Rintamaki et al. (2006) focused of three dimensions of customer perceived value, which are the utilitarian, hedonic and social values. Utilitarian consumer behavior is based on perspectives of rational, task related, work aspects (Babin et al., 1994), and the functionality of products and utility characteristics (Babin et al., 1994, Rintamaki et al., 2006). Consumer judgments of hedonic value are based on affective and emotional states. The hedonic value is abstract and subjective (Holbrook & Hirshman, 1982; Rintamaki et al., 2006), and is considered as more affective than cognitive (Ryu, Han & Jang, 2010). Social values are reflected by beliefs among a group of people (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991), the benefits of status enhancement, self esteem and image enhancement (Rintamaki et al., 2006; Gill, Byslma & Ouschan, 2007). Consequently, this study reviews the literature in three groups: the relationship between customer perceived value and its drivers, the effect of the key drivers on emotional response and customer perceived value, and the relationship between the behavioral intention to select a restaurant and it influencing factors.

Customer Perceived Value and its Drivers of Benefits and Sacrifices

Previous studies have supported the relationship between customer perceived value and atmosphere (Liu & Jang, 2009), food quality (Joon & Kwun, 2011), and service quality (Edward & Sahadev, 2011; Joon and Kwan, 2011). Liu and Jang (2009) suggested that restaurant atmosphere has the effect of enhancing customer perceived value in restaurants. The atmosphere aspects of interior design and human elements were found to have a direct effect on customer perceived value.

The physical environment refers to the atmosphere, which is important in a restaurant (Ha & Jang, 2012). There is widespread use of the environment and a unique atmosphere to differentiate a restaurant from its competitors (Grayson & McNeill, 2009). For upscale restaurants, Namkung and Jang (2008) characterized the restaurant atmospherics in terms of spatial layout, interior design, color and music. Food quality was also accepted as a key driver of customer perceived value and the key element of product quality in restaurant contexts (Ryu, Lee & Kim, 2012). Food quality has been investigated from various aspects to evaluate quality, such as food presentation, taste, freshness, temperature, healthy options and food safety (Namkung & Jang, 2008; Liu & Jang, 2009). Food quality was found to be the quality of features associated with food that was acceptable to customers (Ha & Jang, 2010), food healthiness, fresh food, and good taste (Ozimek & Biemans, 2011). Previous scholars revealed a positive relationship between service quality and customer perceived value (Edward & Sahadev, 2011) in various contexts such as scenic restaurants (Chen, 2011), and in the coffee outlet industry (Chen & Hu, 2010). Thus, the first hypothesis can be proposed as:

H1: Atmosphere, food quality and service quality are positively related to customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants

Zeithaml (1988) suggested that sacrifices of perceived monetary cost and perceived non-monetary cost influence perceived value. Monetary cost was found to be a predictor of customer perceived value in the hospitality industry (Naylor & Frank, 2001). The higher the perceived cost for customers, the lower the product value perception (Baker et al., 2002). Monetary cost is the amount of money a consumer has sacrificed, or given up, to obtain a product, and is described as the perception of the lower-level attributes in the means-end model (Zeithaml, 1988). The monetary cost is a significant driver and a strong predictor of perceived merchandise value in a retail context (Baker et al., 2002).

Non-monetary cost is the trade-off between time cost, search cost and psychic cost which is explicit and implicit in the perception of products and services (Zeithaml, 1988). Lapierre (2000) proposed that time, effort and energy are important drivers which influence customer perceived value in industrial contexts. Gallarza and Saura (2006) revealed that tourist consumer behavior is based on the value of time cost and effort spent. Prior studies revealed that non-monetary cost has an effect on perceived value (Naylor & Frank, 2001; Gallarza & Saura, 2006). Thus:

H2: Monetary cost and non-monetary cost are negatively related to customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants

The Effect of the Key Drivers on Emotional Response and Customer Perceived Value

Jang, Liu and Namkung (2011) developed a model to test the effect of authentic atmosphere on behavioral intention through emotional response. The result revealed that restaurant atmosphere influenced positive and negative customer emotions and behavioral intention. The atmosphere has a positive effect on positive emotions (Jang & Namkung, 2009; Jang, Liu & Namkung, 2011) but negatively affects negative emotions (Jang et al., 2011).

Food quality is one of the highest rated attributes, playing an important role in restaurant selection (Upadhyay, Singh & Thomas, 2007), and is essential to engender customer emotional responses (Jang & Namkung, 2009). The quality factor also elicits and evokes customer emotional responses in online contexts (Hsu & Tsou, 2011). There was a significant relationship between quality and emotional response (Meirovich & Bahnan, 2008). An emotional response is the result of providing high service quality. A high level of service quality has a positive effect on emotions (Jang & Namkung, 2009), but a low level of service quality has a negative effect on emotions (Ladhari, Brun & Morales, 2008).

H3a: Atmosphere, food quality and service quality are positively related to positive emotion.

H3b: Atmosphere, food quality, service quality are negatively related to negative emotion.

Customer emotion represents the affective view of consumer decision making (Hansen, 2005). Some studies had conceptualized emotional response as a unidimensional construct (e.g. Lutz and Kakkar, 1975). However, Yoo et al. (1998) identified emotional response as positive feelings, i.e. pleasure, attractiveness, excitement, contentment, pride, satisfaction, and negative feelings, i.e. being ignored, anxiety, nullification, displeasure, and anger. Positive emotions have a positive effect on both hedonic and utilitarian values (Babin & Attaway, 2000). Negative emotions generate the desire to withdraw from an environment and are unfavorable negative influences on customer utilitarian and hedonic values (Babin & Attaway, 2000).

Emotional response is an important factor which leads directly to customer perceived value (Liu & Jang, 2009; Hyun, Kim & Lee, 2011). Liu and Jang (2009) revealed that key drivers of positive emotion have a positive effect while negative emotions have a negative effect on customer perceived value among Chinese restaurant customers. Hyun et al. (2011) indicated that advertising stimulates emotional responses and positively affect patrons' perceived customer value as hedonic and utilitarian values.

H4: Positive emotion is positively related to customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants while negative emotion is negatively related.

The Behavioral Intention to Select a Restaurant and its Influencing Factors

Understanding behavioral intention is a primary concern of marketing scholars (Ryu & Jang, 2008). Behavioral intention is important to predict consumer behavior and future consumption behavior (Jani & Han, 2011). The behavioral intention to select a restaurant is described as the anticipation of a restaurant customer's willingness to repeat patronage, recommend to others, to visit restaurant in the future, to provide positive word of mouth, to spend more than anticipated and to pay a premium price (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Ryu et al., 2010). Previous scholars indicated that perceived value directly influences restaurant selection (Harrington et al., 2011), the intention to visit restaurants (Arora & Singer, 2006), and behavioral intention (Liu & Jang, 2009). Previous studies revealed a significant relationship between perceived value and behavior intention in the retail context (Baker et al., 2002), the air line context (Huang, 2009), and the restaurant context (Liu & Jang, 2009).

Monetary cost refers to the perceived monetary price (Gallarza & Saura, 2006). Dodds, Monroe and Grewal (1991) suggested that price has a negative relationship with the willingness to buy. The perceived cost has a negative influence on intention in the mobile service industry (Quan, Hao & Jianxin, 2010). Marketing scholars have suggested a significant and negative direct relationship between non-monetary cost and store patronage intention (Baker et al., 2002). Time cost was a strong determinant of patronage intention in a retail context (Baker et al., 2002). In a restaurant context, Ashton et al. (2010) revealed that perceived sacrifice of non-monetary cost significantly influences the intention to purchase in hotel restaurant dining.

H5: Customer perceived value has a positive relationship with the behavioral intention to select a fine dining restaurant.

H6: Monetary cost and non-monetary cost have a negative relationship with the behavioral intention to select a fine dining restaurant

H7: Thai customers and expatriates have different fine dining restaurant selection processes

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to verify the key drivers of customer perceived value and fine dining restaurant selection, the literature review and exploratory research results were essential. An in depth interview was conducted with fine dining restaurant customers who had experience of dining in the previous three months. The participants revealed the key drivers of benefits and sacrifices which relate to atmosphere, food quality, service quality, monetary cost, nonmonetary cost, positive emotion and negative emotion. Thus, the hypothesized relationships are developed from the in-depth interview and literature review and are presented in Figure 1 as follows.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and exploratory research results. The nineteen in-depth interviews were conducted to gain consumer insight into the key drivers of customer perceived value. Eight main variables were included as the key drivers of benefit elements: atmosphere, food quality and service quality. Sacrifice includes monetary and non-monetary costs. The emotional responses are positive and negative emotions. Customer perceived value is composed of utilitarian, hedonic and social values.

POPULATION, SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION

The target population is fine dining restaurant customers who had experience at fine dining restaurants in the previous three months. The pretest was conducted with 50 respondents. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was satisfactory ranging from 0.72 to 0.971. The sample size was 600 respondents who were asked to complete the questionnaire. A total of 572 completed and usable questionnaires were obtained in this study.

This study conducted interviews with fine dining restaurant managers. Most of them stated that the number of expatriate customers in their restaurants did not exceed 30%. As such, a quota sampling of 70:30 was applied. 70% of the sample i.e. 420 samples were appointed to be Thai consumers while the other 30%, or about 180 samples, were expatriates. Quota sampling is employed because it is the best technique to obtain a representative sample at low cost, with the least time consumption, and with greater convenience for the interviewer selection of each quota element (Malholtra, 2007).

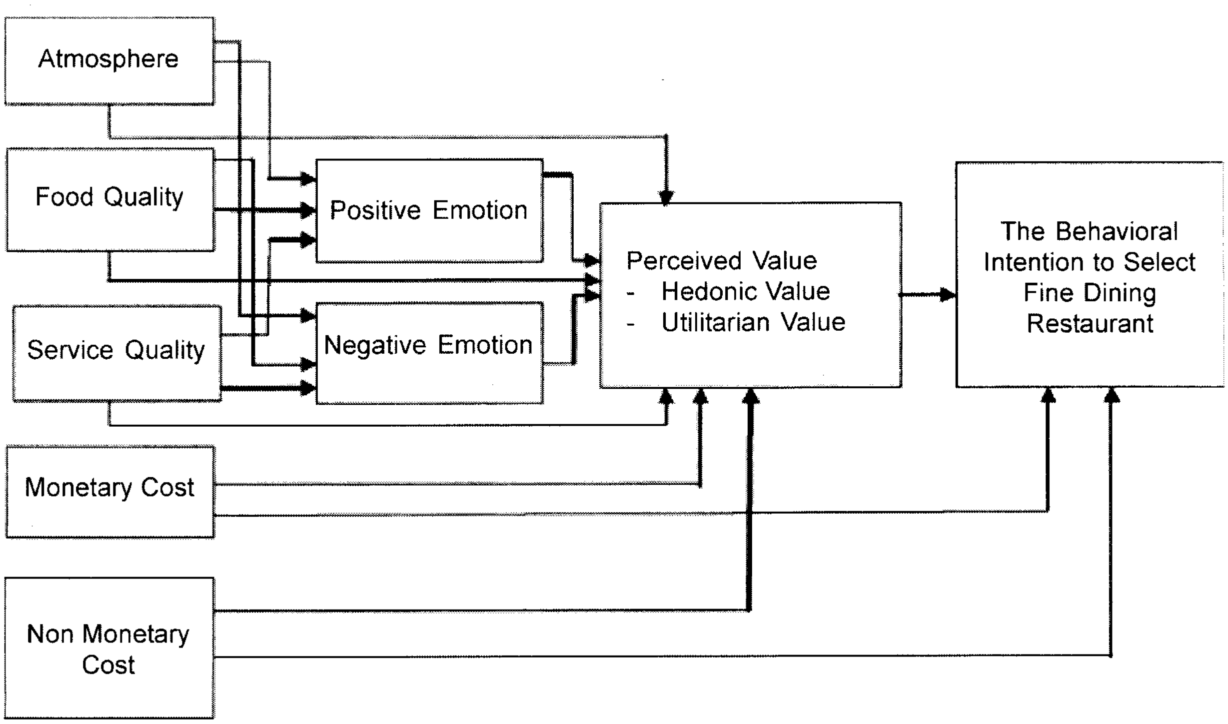

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The data were obtained from customers after a dining experience in fine dining restaurants. Five locations with several fine dining restaurants were selected based on the in-depth interview results as Sukumvit-Eakamai, Silom, Sathorn, Ramintra express way and Rama IV. Samples were 572 fine dining restaurant customers. Almost equal numbers of males (49.7%) and females (50.3%), and single (51.2%) and married (48.8%) were obtained. Most held above bachelor degree (58.9%) with monthly income ranging from 100,001-300,000 Baht (35.5%) and 50,001-100,000 Baht (27.8%); ages ranged from 31-40 years (58%), and the samples had occupations as private employees (54.9%), business owners (35%) and government officers (5.4%).

For the scale development, there was 83 measurement items which was developed from previous studies and in-depth interview as representative constructs of atmosphere and food quality (Jang & Namkung, 2009), service quality (Steven et al., 1995), monetary cost (Jen & Hu, 2003), nonmonetary cost (Lapierre, 2009), positive and negative emotion (Liu & Jang, 2009), customer perceived value (Ryu et al., 2010; Gill et al., 2007) and behavioral intention (Ryu et al., 2010). The pretest was conducted to ensure the reliability (ranging from 0.72 to 0.971), the construct validity and the quality of the questionnaire, and satisfactory results were obtained. The Cronbach's alpha and EFA were performed to ensure the reliability and validity of the measurements. Cronbach's alpha of all measurements were satisfactory while thirteen cross loaded items (out of the 83) illustrated in the EFA results were eliminated.

RESULTS

The CFA was performed initially to ensure the construct validity of the data and satisfactory results were obtained. Structural Equation Modeling was employed to test the hypotheses. Chi-square of the structural model of 280.24, $x^2/df=4.062$ with a significant p-value ($p<0.001$) suggested that the model did not fit well with the data. However, as the chi-square value is sensitive to a large sample size, the baseline comparison fit indices for measuring the SEM model fit are considered instead. The GFI=0.945; IFI=0.907; CFI=0.904 and RMSEA=0.073 exceeded the acceptable level of 0.90 recommended by Hair et al. (2006) and Ho (2006). The square multiple correlation (r^2) suggests the prediction of the hypothesized model, which accounted for 40% of the variances associated with customer perceived value and 24.3% associated with the behavioral intention to select fine dining restaurants. The results of the hypothesis tests are summarized in Table 1 while the multiple group comparisons between the Thai consumers and expatriates are shown in Table 2 as follows:

Table 1: Summary of Research Hypotheses and Structural Parameter Estimates

	Hypotheses and Paths in the Model regression weights	Standardized ratio (C.R.)	Critical	P-value	Results
H1	Atmosphere → Perceived value	041 (.073)	1.264	.206(NS)	Not supported
	Food quality → Perceived value	.066	2.489	.013*	Supported
	Service quality → Perceived value	.715 (.382)	3.153	.002**	Supported
H2	Monetary cost → Perceived value	-.139 (-.449)	-2.931	.003**	Supported
	Nonmonetary cost → Perceived value	-.040(-.109)	-2.22	.026*	Supported
H3a	Atmosphere → Positive emotion	.294(.294)	6.878	***	Supported
	Food quality → Positive emotion	.098(.108)	2.632	.008**	Supported
	Service quality → Positive emotion	.528(.159)	2.801	.005**	Supported
H3b	Atmosphere → Negative emotion	-.112(-.115)	-2.506	.012*	Supported
	Food quality → Negative emotion	.059(.067)	1.526	.127(NS)	Not supported
	Service quality → Negative emotion	-.207(-.064)	-1.108	.268(NS)	Not supported
H4	Positive emotion → Perceived value	.112 (.119)	3.695	***	Supported
	Negative emotion → Perceived value	-.019 (-.033)	-.720	.471(NS)	Not supported
H5	Perceived value → Intention to select	794 (.401)	5.111	***	Supported
H6	Monetary cost → Intention to select	-.276 (-.452)	-5.781	***	Supported
	Nonmonetary cost → Intention to select	-.039 (-.053)	-1.784	.074(NS)	Not supported

Note: Figures shown in each cell indicate the unstandardized coefficient. Figures in brackets indicate the standardized coefficient C.R. are significant at * $p<.05$,** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$

DISCUSSION

The benefits of food and service quality are important and influence customer perceived value for fine dining restaurant customers. These findings are consistent with and are supported by the study of Ryu, Lee and Kim (2012) which was conducted in authentic upscale Chinese restaurants. The findings also are supported by the study of Beneke, Flynn, Greig and Muka (2013) that a greater perceived product quality enhances overall customer perceived value. The findings indicate that service quality has a greater impact on perceived value than food quality, which is consistent with previous studies (Gallarza & Saura, 2006; Joon & Kwan, 2011; Chen, 2011). The findings are in line with Chen (2011) who conducted research in scenic restaurants, Chen and Hu (2011) who investigated the coffee outlet industry, and Gallarza and Saura (2006) who focused on tourism experiences.

In contrast, atmosphere was not a significant influence on customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants, which contradicts previous empirical studies (Liu & Jang, 2009; Chen & Hsieh, 2011). The non-significant influence of atmosphere on customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants may be because customers were more concerned about food quality and service quality as more important attributes than atmosphere. Additionally, customers expected the atmosphere of a fine dining restaurant to be luxurious with attractive decoration and elegant design. As the atmosphere of most fine dining restaurants already meets or exceeds the expectation of customers, they may not take it into account in the value perception of the restaurant.

For the sacrifices, the results indicated that monetary cost and nonmonetary cost were significantly and negatively related to customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants, which is consistent with empirical findings such as Oh (1999), Naylor and Frank (2001), Baker et al. (2002), Gallarza and Saura (2006). The higher the perceived cost for customers, the lower the product value perception (Baker et al., 2002). For nonmonetary cost, the result is also consistent with Gallarza and Saura (2006) who indicated that time cost and effort cost are negatively associated with customer perceived value in tourism experiences.

For the effect of key drivers on emotional response and customer perceived value, the findings indicate that atmosphere, food quality and service quality are significantly and positively related to positive emotion in fine dining experiences. Atmosphere was found to be significant for negative emotion, which is consistent with Jang, Liu and Namkung (2011), Liu and Jang (2009).

Food quality and service quality were not found to be significant drivers of negative emotion, which contradicts previous studies (Hsu & Tsou, 2011). However, an insignificant effect of service quality on negative emotion was found in a few studies, such as in mid scale restaurants (Jang & Namkung, 2009). The findings of this study provide a new insight into negative emotion in that it was found not to be generated by the drivers of food quality and service quality. Negative emotion was not provoked by any key drives such as food quality and service quality. It might be generated by the service providers who were determined to be a problem on an individual level, but not of the restaurant as a whole. Moreover, negative emotion could be reduced, or even disappear due to the presence of guests or friends, or might occur in the short-term and then vanish.

The findings indicated that positive emotion has a significant effect on customer perceived value while negative emotion was not significant. Negative emotion is represented as an emotion which does not generate a good memory, or an impressive dining experience, and does not have a longstanding effect on overall customer perceived value. The effect of positive emotion on customer perceived value may be because positive emotion is the pleasure and happiness which is generated by an impressive and memorable dining experience for fine dining restaurants customers who have a long-lasting experience, which enhances overall perceived value. The results support the relationship between customer perceived value and behavioral intention to select fine dining restaurants in Thailand. Monetary cost is related to behavioral intention to select fine dining restaurants. Nonmonetary cost did not directly predict the behavioral intention to select a fine dining restaurant, which contradicts prior studies (Ashton et al., 2010).

COMPARISON OF THAI CONSUMERS AND EXPATRIATES

There were differences between the sets of Thai and expatriate consumers. Thai consumers were concerned about two benefits, food quality and service quality, which affect overall customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants. The greater the quality of food and service, the greater the likelihood to enhance overall customer perceived value for Thai consumers. For expatriates, the key drivers of benefits and sacrifices did not affect overall customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants. The findings for Thai consumers were consistent with the study of Ryu, Lee and Kim (2012) who found that food quality was a significant predictor of perceived value in authentic upscale restaurants. Additionally, service quality was an important predictor in enhancing overall customer perceived value in the restaurant industry (Kang & Wang, 2009). For expatriates, the key drivers did not impact overall customer perceived value among expatriates. Expatriates did not evaluate the benefits and costs, the 'give and get' elements, as value drivers when they made a decision to select a fine dining restaurant. Expatriates did not employ a rational cognitive process in decision making. None of the key drivers influenced the cognitive process among expatriates; three benefit drivers and two sacrifices did not influence overall value. Thus, expatriates were found to be more concerned about the affective process in fine dining restaurant selection with positive, pleasurable emotions, such as memorable feelings of a fine dining experience. Expatriates are more concerned about only two benefits: the luxury atmosphere and service quality to enhance positive emotion, which in turn affects overall value perception and restaurant selection. The details can be seen in Table 2.

For Thai consumers and expatriates, atmosphere and service quality were the major determinants of positive emotion, which in turn enhances customer perceived value. Restaurateurs should focus on the atmosphere in the physical environment to enhance pleasurable emotions for customers in upscale restaurants (Ryu & Jang, 2008). The improvement of service quality has also been found to evoke positive emotion in full service restaurants (Jang & Namkung, 2009).

Additionally, customer perceived value and monetary cost were found to be essential factors that influence behavioral intention among Thai consumers. However, expatriates were concerned about customer perceived value as a lesser influence in fine dining restaurant selection. The reason why expatriates are not so concerned about the monetary cost in restaurant selection is because expatriates have higher income and greater purchasing power than Thai consumers. Thus, the monetary cost does not represent a great expense for expatriates, and therefore does not affect their selection. The reason why Thai consumers are concerned about overall value and monetary cost is because they perceive the expense of fine dining as a high cost. The findings are consistent with Ashton et al. (2010) who indicated that monetary cost is an important sacrifice affecting the intention to purchase in hotel restaurant dining. Expatriates are concerned about perceived value, which influences the willingness to buy (Koubaa, Ulvoas & Chew, 2011). The perceived value of expatriates must be influenced by other factors not in-

Table 2: Comparisons between Thai Consumers and Expatriates

	Hypotheses and Paths in the Model			Thai Consumers	C.R.	Expatriates	C.R.
H1	Atmosphere	→	Perceived value	.35 (.086)	1.19	.153(.23)	.787
	Food quality	→	Perceived value	.55 (.14) *	2.23	.632(.12)	.737
	Service quality	→	Perceived value	.44 (.42)**	3.23	.11(.67)	.691
H2	Monetary cost	→	Perceived value	-.067(-.30)	-1.84	.-.88(-.80)	-.61
	Nonmonetary cost	→	Perceived value	-.03(-.10)	-1.93	-.36(-.68)	-.731
H3a	Atmosphere	→	Positive emotion	.266 (.27)***	5.53	.415 (.391) ***	4.32
	Food quality	→	Positive emotion	.072 (.079)	1.65	.086 (.104)	1.14
	Service quality	→	Positive emotion	.503(.198)***	3.66	.503 (.187)***	3.66
H3b	Atmosphere	→	Negative emotion	-.119(-.116)*	-2.35	.047 (.16)	1.5
	Food quality	→	Negative emotion	.038 (.040)	.816	-.011(-.04)	-.438
	Service quality	→	Negative emotion	.071 (.027)	1.027	.071 (.095)	1.02
H4	Positive emotion	→	Perceived value	.071 (.169)*	2.55	.192 (.309)***	4.126
	Negative emotion	→	Perceived value	-.027 (-.068)	-1.12	-.15(-.687)	-.667
H5	Perceived value	→	Intention to select	.999(.367)***	6.1	.99 (.647)***	6.1
H6	Monetary cost	→	Intention to select	-.307(.512)***	-5.59	-.051 (.082)	-1.05
	Nonmonetary cost	→	Intention to select	-.045 (-.057)	-1.79	.045 (-.064)	-1.79

Note: Figures shown in each cell indicate the unstandardized coefficient. Figures in brackets indicate the standardized coefficient C.R. are significant at * p<.05,** p<.01, *** p<.001

cluded in the study. In this study, perceived value of expatriates was found only to be influenced by positive emotion.

Implications

This study contributes knowledge of a new research paradigm for academics by understanding customers' deep emotion in predicting the overall value of fine dining restaurants, and theoretical knowledge by integrating two theories: the customer perceived value theory of Zeithaml (1988) and the Mehrabian Russell Model (1974), which are applicable in the fine dining restaurant context. This study extends the knowledge of the S-O-R paradigm by emphasizing the role of emotional response as positive and negative emotions which predict perceived value in a fine dining restaurant context. Fine dining restaurant managers should consider both the benefits and sacrifices simultaneously to enhance the overall value of restaurants as a rational decision making process. Marketers and restaurateurs can use this study to improve their understanding of perceived value by considering two benefits: food quality and service quality, and the two sacrifices of monetary cost and nonmonetary cost. Emotional marketing strategies are additional marketing tools to create competitive advantage and to develop business strategies by enhancing positive emotion with a pleasant atmosphere, high food quality, and extraordinary service quality. Restaurant managers should emphasize the role of positive emotion toward perceived value development.

Marketers can use this study to understand consumers in both target groups. A new insight is gained into Thai consumers who are concerned about perceived value. With the improvement of food quality and the provision of extraordinary service quality, positive emotion can be engendered. Restaurateurs should employ emotional strategies to enhance positive emotion among Thai consumers by providing a pleasurable atmosphere and high service quality. The three benefits of atmosphere, food and service quality are important for Thai consumers. In addition, customer perceived value and monetary cost play an important role toward fine dining restaurants selection for Thai consumers. For expatriates, the restaurant manager should engender positive emotion in the form of emotional marketing strategies with the benefits of an attractive atmosphere and extraordinary service quality. Finally, positive emotion influences the cognitive process by improving the perceived value among expatriates, which in turn affects fine dining restaurant selection. Expatriates were not concerned about sacrifices of monetary and nonmonetary cost toward overall customer perceived value development and restaurant selection. Additionally, value adding and emotional marketing strategies are the primary tools which contribute benefits to various industries, such as the restaurant, hospitality and tourism industries.

Limitations and Future Research

This study focuses on customer perceived value in fine dining restaurants and restaurant selection based on only the Bangkok area. The sample size is quite limited and covers only a limited area in only one region of Thailand. For future research, emotional response should be investigated for the development of perceived value in different industries. More research should be conducted in the hospitality and tourism industries to extend and broaden the scope of this study by employing replication. Multiple group analysis should be replicated for different demographic characteristics such as age, gender, income and frequency of dining out.

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MODELING THE LINK BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCE OF KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE IN BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS CONTEXT

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Abstract

Key account management, a supplier company initiated approach, targeted at the most important customers to solve their complex requirements with special treatment that eventually ensures both parties' financial and nonfinancial objectives, is regarded as a vital concern of many companies' sales efforts in business-to-business context. Based on the extant literatures, we introduce a theoretical framework highlighting organizational antecedents and repeat order as the consequence of key account management performance. We theorize the conditions under which organizational factors, including top management emphasis and team effort influence the performance of key account management approach. In addition, moderating effect of length of relationship on the relationship between key account management performance and repeat order is also presented. Theoretical and managerial implications are provided along with several future research directions.

Keywords: Key account management, Team effort, Repeat order

บทคัดย่อ

การจัดการลูกค้าหลักคือ แนวทางการให้บริการพิเศษให้กับลูกค้ากลุ่มที่สำคัญ เพื่อให้ทั้งบริษัทและลูกค้าได้บรรลุถึงวัตถุประสงค์ทั้งทางการเงิน และมิใช่ทางการเงิน ในการขายแบบธุรกิจสู่ธุรกิจ ผู้วิจัยวิเคราะห์กรอบทฤษฎีเกี่ยวกับปัจจัยสำคัญ และการซื้อซ้ำที่เป็นผลมาจากการจัดการลูกค้าหลัก ผู้วิจัยเสนอว่าปัจจัยทางด้านองค์กร ซึ่งรวมถึงการย้ำเตือนโดยผู้บริหารและทีมงาน ส่งผลต่อการจัดการลูกค้าหลัก นอกเหนือจากนั้น ระยะเวลาที่ติดต่องานกันมาเป็นปัจจัยที่ส่งผลต่อความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการจัดการลูกค้าหลัก และการซื้อซ้ำ ผู้วิจัยนำเสนอการประยุกต์ใช้ทางทฤษฎีและการจัดการ ตลอดจนถึงทิศทางในการวิจัยต่อไปในอนาคต

คำสำคัญ: การจัดการลูกค้าหลัก, ความร่วมมือเป็นทีม, การสั่งซื้อซ้ำ

INTRODUCTION

Efficient customer management is vital for the organization in today's volatile business environment. Proper management of customers with endless efforts makes the marketer's position enduring in the marketplace, creates its position impregnable and ensures a sustained competitive advantage. The situation is more critical when customers have strategic importance for the organizations. These customers are key for the organization and managing them properly is a must for the organization as they account for a major part of the supplier's sales and revenues (Pardo, 1997). Hakansson and Snehota (1995) mention that "most industrial companies have only a few customers and suppliers that account for a major part of their total sales and purchases. These and relationships to third parties are decisive for the performance of the company whatever various measures of performance one might use".

According to the Pareto principle, it is a immutable business fact that 80% of revenue comes from 20% of a marketer's customers (Bunkley, 2008). This notion creates the basis for key account management approach where this strategy acts as the best way of ensuring repeat purchase, additional purchases and referral to other customers like them. McDonald (2000) terms the key account management approach as the natural extension and newer discipline of relationship marketing that focuses on fulfilling customer requirements in the business-to-business contexts. Yip and Madsen (1996) explain it as the new frontier in the field of relationship marketing.

It is recognized in the key account management literatures that commitment from senior management is a precondition that facilitates the implementation of key account management processes (Guesalaga & Johnston, 2010). In practice top management involvement should be "multifaceted" (Capon, 2001) and "decision-making is but one of several roles assumed by senior leaders" (Carpenter, Geletkanycz, & Sanders, 2004). Thus, to advance our understanding on the field of senior managers' involvement with key account customer management, significant opportunities are presented (Guesalaga & Johnston, 2010).

Wagner (2011) mentions that the nature of buyer-seller relationship is dynamic where stages of relationship might moderate the relationship between seller development and firm performance. Sharma (2006) opines that key accounts success undergoes change depending upon the stage of the relationship. Wotruba and Castleberry (1993) explore that the length of time the NAM (national account management) program has been in existence appears to impact performance with older programs showing the best performance. Workman, Homburg and Jensen (2003) suggest that future studies should take into account the influence of moderators between key account management performance and its outcomes.

Furthermore, most of the previous studies conducted tend to focus on the impact of key account management success on various outcomes (Ellram, 1991; Harvey, Myers, & Novicevic, 2003; McDonald, 2000; Senn, 2006; Workman et al., 2003) but as long as the key customer behavioral performance such as repeat order is related, no clear understanding exists on the impact of key account management performance on the key customer repeat order behavior. Repeat orders from key account customers impacts profoundly on the survival of industries and greater level of success in businesses. As a western marketing strategy the studies relating to KAM omit the covering of different cultures and environment and provide limited of perspectives of key account management (Al-Husan & Brennan, 2009; Tsai & Chen, 2008). Wengler, Ehret and Saab (2006) mention that progress in the research of key account management is less significant due to the regional focus and its strong connection to the personal selling literature.

These gaps limit our understanding on how organizational variables like top management emphasis and team effort on key account management performance and its resulting impact on repeat order and how the length of relationship moderate this relationship which is the core subjective matter of the study.

The remaining parts of this paper are organized as follows. In the following sections literature review is provided that discusses the theoretical background, followed by theoretical framework. These follow the proposition for the study. Finally, contributions and future research directions are provided under the umbrella of discussion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Background

In general, performance means an efficient completion of something that comes up with expected outcomes. In marketing performance is determined by the sales volume, profit margin and return on investment made by the marketer (Ofek & Sarvary, 2003). For our study we have taken performance in key account management strategy as the attainment of goals for both key buyer and seller over a long-period of time in the key account relationship.

Pegram (1972 in Zupansis, 2008) first introduced the term national account in the conference board meeting and explored its importance through relating part-time or full time jobs with it. Some of the common terms used to describe the management of these customer are global account management (Capon & Senn, 2010; Montgomery & Yip, 2000), strategic account management (Al-Husan & Brennan, 2009), national account management (Dishman & Nitse, 1998; Shapiro & Moriarty, 1982; Stevenson & Page, 1979), international key account management (Zupancic & Mullner, 2008), key clients management (Pels, 1992), major account management (Coletti & Tubrity, 1987), key customers management (Homburg, Workman, & Jensen, 2002) and key account management (Abratt & Kelly, 2002; Guesalaga & Johnston, 2010; Ojasalo, 2001; Pardo, 1999; Sharma, 1997).

Account management directed towards key customers in the business markets can be perceived as a useful execution of durable buyer/seller relationships (Gosselin & Heene, 2005) where perennial interaction takes place between seller and key account. Managing and serving the key customers are critical as they demand special attention and require organized efforts from the suppliers. Workman et al. (2003) define key account management as the execution of added functions and/or designation of special executives aimed at the organization's most significant customers. Zupancic (2008) calls it as systematic choice, examination and management of the most important present and future customers of the company with the set up and maintenance of needed infrastructure. Brehmer and Rehme (2009) define key account management as the organization that provides for the management and the building of the relationship in a more or less formal arrangement. As among academics, the definition of key account management differs significantly on various dimensions and issues, hence researchers for this study have come up with the following multidimensional definition of key account management approach where it is defined as a supplier company initiated approach targeted at the most important customers to solve their complex requirements with special treatment that eventually ensures both parties' financial and nonfinancial objectives (Ahmmed & Noor, 2012).

In the business-to-business context, at the organizational level, various organizational factors like decision making, managerial issues, account manger's behavior, managerial competences and key account manager role to create values, all affect sales team's ability to recognize key customers needs and requirements properly and serve them successfully (Georges & Eggert, 2003; Guenzi, Georges, & Pardo, 2009; Harvey et al., 2003; Jacobides, 2007; Mahlamäki & Uusitalo, 2009; Weeks & Stevens, 1997). However, theoretical study that exposes the organizational drivers of key account management performance in buyer-supplier relational context is still scant. Abrat and Kelly (2002) suggest that some key account programs are not effective. In describing the necessity of examining the top management role in multiple ways, Guesalaga and Johnston (2010) state that it is necessary to delineate the ways through which senior management will involve with the key account management program for its performance.

Napolitano (1997) mentions that in the key account management program both top management sponsorship and involvement are critical for its performance. Additionally, although key account management performance generates various dyadic outcomes, existing literatures have no clear direction in this regard. As long as repeat order outcome is involved, to the best of knowledge, no research has considered it as the consequence of key account management performance. Wagner (2011) mentions that the nature of buyer-seller relationship is dynamic where stages of relationship might moderate the relationship between seller development and firm performance in the buyer and seller relationship dyad. The existing literatures do not take length of relationship as a moderating variable between key account management performance and customer repeat order behavior. Therefore, the specific organizational variables that impact on key account management performance and how key account management performance influences key customer repeat order behavior in the presence of moderating variable of length of relationship are not delineated yet. The purpose of this study is to fill these gaps and advance our understanding on this field.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

On the basis of extant literature on key account management, a framework is developed to incorporate the influence of organizational factors on key account management performance and its resulting impact on key account repeat order behavior. In addition, length of relationship is incorporated in the model to show its moderating effect on the relationship between key account management performance and repeat order.

The basic idea of the proposed framework is that some organizational independent factors act as drivers for key account management performance and at the same time key account management performance is proposed to have a considerable positive impact on the key account's repeat purchase behavior. And length of relationship enhances the key account management performance-repeat order relationship. Figure 1 depicts these relationships and following section provides a brief discussion.

The framework is based on the social exchange theory that views the exchange relationship between key account customers and supplying companies as "actions contingent on rewarding reactions from others" (Blau, 1964). For example, in the context of key account management relationships, a company makes a contribution to its key account through internal coordination, top management supports and team efforts. In turn, an expectation forms for the return of a contribution at a later time which may include profits, enhanced relationship or development of trust. The key account receiving a valued contribution develops a sense of obligation and reciprocates with appropriate attitudinal and behavioral responses in the form of repeat order or maintaining lengthy relationship.

RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

Consequence of Key Account Management Performance

In our study we introduce repeat order as the consequence of key account management performance. Repeat order refers to the continuation of purchasing goods and services from an organization (Molinari, Abratt, & Dion, 2008) by key account customers. Through the performance of key account management approach, suppliers can be more aware about the customer's requirements and able to meet those requirements with more customized attention that eventually ensures repeat purchase. To date, the primary emphasis of studies have targeted the impact of key account management performance from the standpoint of organization and customers and these studies find several positive outcomes such as higher revenue, customer referrals, expectation of continuity, transfer of market knowledge and know-how to the suppliers, competitive advantage, shareholder value creation and joint action or cooperation (Gosselin

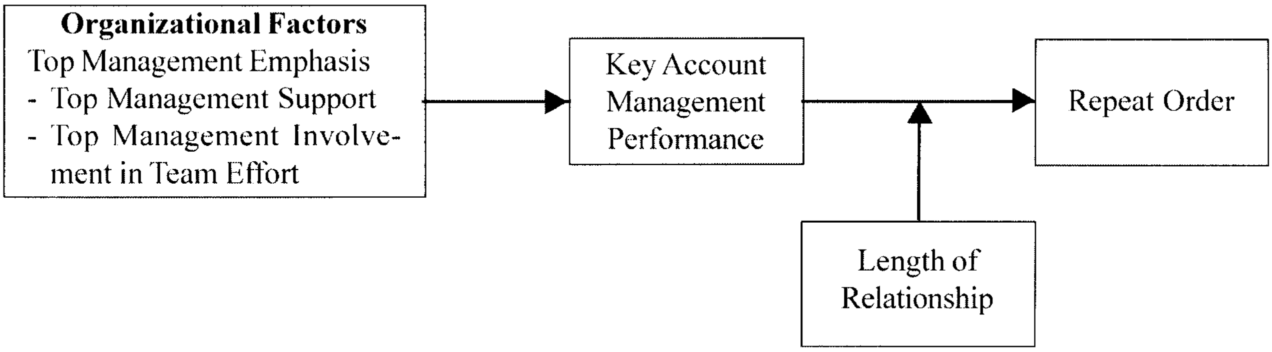

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

& Bauwen, 2006; Montgomery, Yip, & Villalonga, 1999; Pardo, Henneberg, Mouzas, & Naude, 2006; Selnes & Sallis, 1999; Workman et al., 2003).

The theory of reasoned action proposes that when buyers get better services, more attention from sales person to meet their requirements with customized fashion and realize better price dealings, they will show positive behavior to continue doing business with that seller (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). It implies that key account management performance impacts on the customer satisfaction levels that are expressed in the form of repeat order from the suppliers and makes the relationship linger, because anticipated levels of performance is expected to have a vital outcome on the remaining or exit decision (Jackson, 1985; Levitt, 1981). Noordewier, John and Nevin (1990) mention that as transactions become more relational, there is a greater expectation of repeat business with the exchange partner.

From the above discussion, it can be summarized that companies can benefit a lot from both financial and relational business outcome perspectives if they can show higher degree of key account management performance. This means that key account management approach leads to higher key account's satisfaction which in turn ensures business continuation in the form of repeat orders. On the other hand, key account customers have no difficulties about switching to other competing countries if they are dissatisfied. Therefore, the study proposes that:

P1: Key account management performance is positively related to repeat order.

Organizational Drivers of Key Account Management Performance

Organizational factors provide key account manager with actionable guidance on how to develop and maintain winning relationship with key account customers. This study focuses on two organizational factors namely top management emphasis in the key account management program and team effort as antecedents of key account management performance.

Top Management Emphasis

In a key account management program, top management emphasis is defined as the degree to which top management participate in the key account management approach (Homburg et al., 2002). Salojarvi, Sainio and Tarkiainen (2010) mention that in the context of key account management the importance of top management involvement has been extended across functional limits. Top management emphasis is required to authorize the managers adequately and also to reinforce the commitment across the organizational to the program (McDonald, Rogers, & Woodburn, 2003; Workman et al., 2003).

In describing the significance of top management emphasis in a key account management program, the study of Workman et al. (2003) explores that strategies relating to the organization are proposed to replicate the characteristics and interest of senior managers. In the analysis of upper echelons of organization, Hambrick and Mason (1984) explain that organizational results, whether strategic choices or performance levels, are partially anticipated by the characteristics of managerial background and organizations are a manifestation of their senior managers. They also mention that top managers in the organization play a critical role in shaping an organization's values and orientation. Jaworski and Kohli (1993) state that top management's reinforcement encourages the individual in the organization to track changes in the market place, share market information with other internal people, help to be reactive to customer requirements and thus positively impact on the key account management performance.

Thoma (2007) mention that senior management should involve in customer strategy meeting, development of business plan and support the key account managers to access the top executives. Similarly, Francis (2004) describes that top management have a crucial function to perform in the successful key customer management program, not just in reviewing sales account activities, but also in playing an dynamic part inside the team for managing key accounts. In describing the multi functional role of senior management, Capon (2001) suggests that top management involvement should be "multifaceted" and among the multifaceted functions "decision-making" is one of them (Carpenter et al., 2004). Napolitano (1997) mentions that top management sponsorship and their participation are the most vital sign of the performance of key account management program. Therefore, the study proposes the following:

P2a: Top management support is positively related to key account management performance

P2b: Top management involvement is positively related to key account management performance.

Team Effort

Another organizational variable that exerts influence on key account management performance is team effort. Team effort is defined as the extent to which teams are formed to organize the functions needed to serve the key customers (Workman et al., 2003). Team selling happens in the case of (i) buying complex product for the first time; (ii) greater information is required; (iii) unique attention is needed for key account customer; (iv) collective decision is made for buying the product; (v) sales volume is large for the supplier firm; (vi) nature of the product is new in the portfolio of key account manager's product line and (vii) portfolio of market offering in the supplier firm is complex and exceeds the boundary of individual sales person's cognitive threshold (Jackson, Widmier, Giacobbe, & Keith, 1999).

As customers are becoming more complex and heterogeneous and expect increasing levels of service (Moon & Armstrong, 1994; Workman et al., 2003), it is necessary for the marketer to have some mechanism that includes the needed specialization to serve their increased demands which refers to the team selling situation. Perry, Pearce and Sims (1999) argue that when the selling task is moderately or highly complex, the necessity of having effective sales team is vital. In the industrial buyers and sellers' perspective under certain conditions, Spekman and Johnston (1986) observed that buyer and seller dealings involve a large number of related personnel on both sides of the dyad. A similar view is observed in the study of Cardozo and Shipp (1987) relating to national account management point of view. They assert that a team often exists when large size customers are needed to be served, because it is necessary for the supplier company to make a match with the specific personnel in an account's organization by diversified members of the selling team.

In the personal selling circumstance, team selling situation is natural because the essential point of a key account management strategy to personal selling is that big, multifaceted key accounts are serviced by several individuals whose activities need to be coordinated to gain success as a preferred supplier (Moon & Armstrong, 1994). Cardozo, Shipp and Roering (1987) characterize national account management as a team approach that unites sales with service or technical individuals to service large customers with complex needs. Marshall, Moncrief and Lassk (1999) note that team work is a new concept in managing accounts where salespeople are working in a team format much more today than in the past. Cespedes, Doyle, and Freedman (1989) even argue that selling is no longer an individual activity but rather a coordinated team effort.

In general, the above studies suggest that in the context of business-to-business relationship organizations realize greater performance when they serve their key customers through team effort in a concerted manner. Therefore, this research proposes that:

P3: Team effort is positively related to key account management performance.

Moderating Role of Length of Relationship

Length of relationship means the duration that a relationship exists between buyer and supplier (Palmatier, Dant, Grewal, & Evans, 2006) as well as how the parties regard each other as they pass through various phases (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987). Shi, White, Zou and Cavusgil (2010) describe relationship duration as the focal seller's confidence that the relationship with the key account buyer will extend for a lengthy period. In the key account management relationship, Wotruba and Castleberry (1993) argue that the length of time the national account management program has been in existence appears to impact on performance with older programs showing the best performance, because long-term relationship lets them know each other and facilitates both parties interaction frequently on various issues like knowledge exchange, making adjustment as necessary for mutual benefits, and so on.

Social psychology literature clarifies that individual in early periods of a relationship have been found to have minimum reliance in their evaluation of their partners than in later stages of that relationship (Swann & Gill, 1997). This is because at the subsequent stages of relationships the impact of such assessment on behavior increases (Verhoef, Franses & Hoekstral, 2001). In this regard, Bolton (1998) and Rust, Inman, Jia, and

Zahorik (1999) argue that this similar procedure might also hold for customers' reliance in their assessment of satisfaction as an outcome of key account management performance. Gill, Swann and Silvera (1998) noted that parties in the lengthy relationships have higher reliance in their appraisals of their exchange parties in spite of whether or not those confidences are correct. Therefore, even though buyers with long-lasting relationships may have incorrect assessments of the seller, they are likely to be more dependent about these estimations and in the introductory phases of the relationship buyers have minimum reliance in their assessment of the seller (Verhoef, Franses, & Hoekstra, 2002). Therefore, in a lengthy relationship, customer knowledge from exchanges with seller act as more powerful drivers for relationship consequences (Jap, 1999).

Verhoef et al. (2002) mention that duration of relationship is an interesting area of study in the field of relationship marketing that has attracted the attention of many academics over the years. They mention that current researches have taken the age of relationship as moderating variable that impact on the relationship between commitment, trust, satisfaction and consequences of relationship. Wagner (2011) mentions that the nature of buyer-seller relationship is dynamic where stages of relationship might moderate the relationship between seller development and firm performance in the buyer and seller relationship dyad. Verhoef et al. (2002) considered the length of relationship as a moderating variable and examined its effect. Workman et al. (2003) mention that there may be interactions between key account management performance and moderators and subsequent studies should take into account the influence of moderator between key account management performance and its outcomes.

Eventually, this study proposes that:

P4: Length of relationship moderates (enhances) the relationship between key account management performance and repeat order.

DISCUSSION

This study examines the underlying organizational factors that influence key account management performance. Regarding this issue, we see that two organizational factors, namely top management emphasis and team effort influence the company's key account management performance. These factors provide key account managers with guidance on how to develop and maintain successful relationship with key account customers.

Contributions

From this theoretical framework, several implications can be forwarded the theoretical framework of this study creates a platform for future empirical study. Secondly, the isolation of organizational antecedent variables and discussion on their individual influence on key account management performance and introduction of repeat order as the outcome of key account management performance, increase our knowledge on variables which influence key account management success and show. Thirdly, the introduction of moderating effect of length of relationship on the key account management performance-repeat order relationship provides us a new horizon of thinking in the field of key account management strategy. Fourthly, this study also sheds light on the application of social exchange theory (SET) in the context of key account management approach. As non-governance mechanism is taken as relationship governing means, we have taken 'relationship' as a governing norm in key account management relationship (Anderson & Narus, 1990; Dwyer et al., 1987).

Apart from the above theoretical contribution, this study provides us with several managerial implications. Firstly, in applying the key account management approach at the organizational level, management should have knowledge about which factors influence this approach. From the discussion provided here, they can get a clear understanding about the impact of various organizational factors. Although these factors are not all inclusive, management should be vigilant in applying and depending on these variables, because the context in which they are working is different from case to case.

Future Research Direction

Based on the theoretical framework, several future research directions can be advanced. Firstly, it is not known which variables exert more influence than other. Thus, future empirical research can throw light on this phenomenon and provide evidence for influencing variable which are critical for management decision making. Secondly, a particular phenomenon is influenced by many forces and factors. In our study we were unable to incorporate all probable variables that influence the level of key account management success. So, future research should include more antecedent variables to test their impact on the key account management performance.

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ACCULTURATIVE STRESS AND COPING AMONG BURMESE WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS IN THAILAND

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Abstract

This study examined the psychological acculturation experience of Burmese women migrant workers in Thailand by looking into their acculturative stressors, levels of acculturative stress, and coping responses, and identifying the predictors of acculturative stress. The descriptive-correlational design was employed. Fifty-seven participants completed measures of culture shock, coping responses, and a checklist on acculturative stressors. Situational and personal-relational stressors were found to be positively correlated with high levels of acculturative stress. Avoidance coping responses such as acceptance and emotional discharge were negatively correlated with acculturative stress. Situational and personal-relational stressors, acceptance, and emotional discharge were significant predictors of acculturative stress. Suggestions for promoting positive acculturative experiences of migrant workers and future research directions are discussed.

Keywords: migrant workers, coping responses, Burmese, Thai, culture shock

บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ ศึกษาสภาวะทางจิตวิทยาของลูกจ้างชาวพม่าเพศหญิงที่มาทำงานในประเทศไทย โดยศึกษาปัจจัยที่ก่อให้เกิดความเครียดในการปรับตัวให้เข้ากับสังคมไทย ระดับความเครียด และการปรับตัว นอกจากนี้ยังตรวจสอบปัจจัยที่ก่อให้เกิดความเครียดในการปรับตัว การวิจัยนี้ใช้สถิติแบบสหสัมพันธ์กลุ่มตัวอย่างจำนวน 57 คน ตอบแบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับการประสบสิ่งที่ไม่คาดคิดทางวัฒนธรรม การปรับตัว และรายการที่ก่อให้เกิดความเครียด ผลการวิจัยพบว่าความเครียดจากสถานการณ์ และเรื่องส่วนบุคคลมีความสัมพันธ์ทางบวกกับความเครียด กลยุทธ์ที่ใช้จัดการกับความเครียดโดยหลีกเลี่ยง เช่น การยอมรับสภาพและหาที่ปลดปล่อยอารมณ์มีความสัมพันธ์ทางลบกับความเครียดในการปรับตัว ปัจจัยทางด้านสถานการณ์และเรื่องส่วนตัว การยอมรับสภาพ และการปลดปล่อยอารมณ์ เป็นปัจจัยที่สามารถทำนายระดับความเครียได้อย่างมีนัยสำคัญ ผู้วิจัยเสนอให้จัดสภาดแวดล้อมให้เกิดประสบการณ์การปรับตัวให้เข้ากับสังคมแบบในทางบวกให้กับลูกค้า

คำสำคัญ: ผู้อพยพ, การปรับตัวเข้ากับสังคม, พม่า, ไทย, การรับมือกับความเครียด

INTRODUCTION

Migration has become an increasingly common experience for many people throughout the world. In fact, an estimated 214 million individuals worldwide are considered to be international migrants (International Organization for Migration, 2013). Migrants voluntarily or involuntarily leave their home countries to settle in their new host countries and are typically classified into subgroups such as immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and sojourners (Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010). Migrant workers are subsumed under sojourners because the length of their stay in host countries is limited by their employment contracts (Schwartz et al., 2010). Economic deprivation along with displacement due to armed conflicts, persecution, or natural disasters are reasons which compel Asian migrant workers to seek greener pasture abroad (Amnesty International, 2005). In mainland Southeast Asia, Thailand's economic growth has made it a major destination among workers from neighboring countries (International Organization for Migration, 2013). Workers from Myanmar (Burma), Laos, and Cambodia comprised 1.3 million of two million migrant workers in Thailand (Fujita, Endo, Okamoto, Nakanishi, & Yamada, 2010). Of the migrant workers from Thailand's neighboring countries, 82% were Burmese who worked in the agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing, construction, domestic, restaurants, and hotel sectors of the Thai industry (Fujita et al., 2010). These statistics on Burmese migrant workers in Thailand show that this subgroup of migrants merits attention because of their increasing numbers, the circumstances surrounding their migration, and the challenges that define their acculturation experiences (United Nations Department of Public Information, 2010).

Migrants, regardless of subgroup classification, go through the process of acculturation which involves psychological and cultural changes that result from their intercultural encounters (Berry, 1997). Contemporary theories on acculturation have deemed the process to be inherently stressful because migrants are expected to cope immediately and effectively with new and unfamiliar intercultural experiences (Zhou, Snape, Topping, & Todman, 2008). They are under tremendous stress from having to struggle with adequately adjusting to a new culture, a new pace of life, and a new language while trying to sustain satisfactory performance to keep their jobs (Rudmin, 2009). While stress and coping are natural and inevitable aspects of acculturation, stressors which have been unsuccessfully dealt with produce high levels of acculturative stress which in turn impacts negatively on the health and wellbeing of migrants (Berry, 1997, 2005, 2006; Winkelman, 1994).

These theoretical assertions on the process and outcome of acculturation have strong empirical support from the existing body of research that yielded a vast array of variables related to stressors, acculturative stress, and coping responses. The distressing life events brought about by intercultural interactions are considered to be stressors (Berry, 2005). These stressors have been categorized in various ways with reference to their nature and sources such as environmental, social, familial, and attitudinal stressors (Fuertes & Westbrook, 1996) and to the circumstances surrounding migration such as conflicts that prompted migration which are labelled as pre-migration stressors and conflicts related to relocation, communication/language, mental and physical health which are considered as post-migration stressors (Yakushko et al., 2008). Moreover, migrants who have experienced prolonged and repeated exposures to numerous acculturative stressors reported high levels of acculturative stress which is defined as negative cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions to cultural experiences in the host countries (Berry, 2006). High levels of acculturative stress have been found to produce debilitating outcomes in various dimensions of adjustment such as emotional and psychological (Paukert, Pettit, Perez, & Walker, 2006; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1998; Wei et al., 2007), relational and social (Duru & Poyrazli, 2007; Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004), and physiological wellbeing (Greenland & Brown, 2005; Williams & Berry, 1991; Ye, 2005). Furthermore, migrants' efforts to manage acculturative stress have likewise been the focus of empirical attention which has consistently placed under favorable light approach coping responses (e.g., problem-solving) as buffer against the debilitating impact of acculturative stress (e.g., Heberle, 2010; Jibeen & Khalid, 2010; Rohde, 2010; Torres, 2010) when compared with avoidance coping responses which have been known to sustain and even escalate the levels of acculturative stress (e.g., Berry, 2005; Crockett et al., 2007; Torres & Rollock, 2004; Wong, 2006).

This present review has brought to light a conspicuous emphasis that recent studies on acculturation have placed on immigrants and international students. The bulk of studies examined in this review mainly focused on the experiences of Asian, Latino, and Scandinavian immigrants to North America and Europe (e.g., Aragona et al., 2013; Bhugra, 2004; Faur, 2008; Mui & Kang, 2006) as well as international students (e.g., Abbasian & Shakiri, 2013; Crockett et al., 2007; Horn, 2008; Kim & Omizo, 2005; Mejia & McCarthy, 2010). Apart from Magaña and Hovey's (2003) study on Mexican seasonal farmworkers in the U.S. and Rohde's (2010) study on low-income Latino workers, very little attention has been directed to migrant workers which are identified as a special population due to the difficult life circumstances that they face in their host countries (Fujita et al., 2010; United Nations Department of Public Information, 2010). Such is the case of Burmese migrant workers in Thailand which several status reports have disclosed to be contending with harsh working conditions, low income, heavy indebtedness, substandard living conditions, susceptibility to illness, very limited access to health care, and high risk of being victims of human trafficking (Amnesty International, 2005; Fujita et al., 2010; Karen Human Rights Group, 2010; Pichai, 2010; United Nations Department of Public Information, 2010). In addition to these overwhelming stressors, Burmese women migrant workers are forced to make do with lower wages and longer working hours than their male counterparts (Fuji et al., 2010).

Moreover, there is a need to steer research directions toward various types of migrants because the quality of their acculturation experiences vary according to the circumstances surrounding their migration (Schwartz et al., 2010) and that migrants who contribute to the economy and culture of the host country are more likely to experience acceptance as compared to refugees who are considered a drain to the host country's resources may suffer from perceived discrimination and rejection (Steiner, 2009). Exploring the acculturative experiences of people within their unique context of migration as well as their ability to deal with problems of daily life can provide valuable insights toward the understanding of psychological acculturation (Berry, 1997; Zhou, 2014).

Therefore, this study represents an attempt to expand empirical focus to include Burmese women migrant workers whose unique migration circumstances complicate their acculturation experience and place them at a high risk of serious maladjustment. This study seeks to cast light on the acculturation experiences of Burmese women migrant workers by (a) examining their acculturation-related stressors, levels of acculturative stress, coping responses; and (b) identifying predictors of acculturative stress. By exploring the psychological acculturation process of Burmese women migrant workers as they attempt to deal with the multiple demands of living and working in a foreign country, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of empirical literature on acculturative stress, and to identify potentially fruitful avenues for future research. Finally, this study hopes to furnish professionals in the health and welfare disciplines, socio-civic organizations, and government institutions with valuable insights into the plight of Burmese women migrant workers in Thailand so that developmental, remedial, and rehabilitative efforts can be directed toward this valuable segment of the society whose commitment of lives and energies push the frontiers of economic development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A more detailed review of relevant literature and studies on acculturation is presented in this section and organized according to topics such as stressors from acculturation, acculturative stress, and coping responses.

Stressors from Acculturation

Migration is a major life event that requires people to engage in stressful cultural adjustment (Berry, 1997). The process of psychological and cultural changes that migrants go through as a result of contact with culturally dissimilar people and social influences is known as acculturation (Berry, 2005). Migrants are people from one country who settle in a host or receiving country and are typically categorized as (a) immigrants who leave their homelands by choice for economic opportunities, marriage, or to join family members who have previously immigrated; (b) refugees who are displaced by natural or manmade disasters, (c) asylum seekers who escape persecution and violence, and (d) sojourners whose residence in the host country is purpose-bound and time-limited such as international students, seasonal workers, and corporate executives whose organizations send them overseas for career development (Berry, 2006; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010).

Studies have shown that the process of acculturation results in distressing life events which migrants have reported as sources of stress (stressors). Notwithstanding the varied ways by which acculturation researchers have classified stressors, this review elects to use the terms situational and personal-relational as two general categories which appear to be broad enough to encompass the wide array of acculturation-related stressors. To clarify these general categories, situational stressors refer to disturbing life events that occur in the physical environment such as living and working conditions, and socio-political and economic climate of the host country whereas personal-relational stressors refer to distressing events that occur within the personal and interpersonal aspects of functioning of migrants in the context of cross-cultural encounters. Studies have focused on situational stressors such as rigid working conditions that are characterized by difficult physical labor, long hours, low wages, and very limited access to health care which force migrant workers to make do with substandard living conditions, and place them at a high risk of illness and of being victims of human trafficking (Fujita et al., 2010; Magana & Hovey, 2003; Pichai, 2010). On the other hand, studies on personal stressors have pointed to negative emotions and psychological disturbances such as culture shock (Aragona, Pucci, Mazzetti, Maisano, & Geraci, 2013; Mumford, 1998), homesickness (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Sedikides, Wildschut, Routledge, Arndt, & Zhou, 2009), anxiety and worry about status as migrants (Mejia & McCarthy, 2010; Sonderegger, Barrett, & Creed, 2004), depression (Cavazos-Rehg & De Lucia-Waack, 2009; Choi, Miller, & Wilbur, 2009; Park 2009), suicidal ideation (Hovey & Magana, 2003; Kiang, Grzywacz, Marin, Arcury, & Quandt, 2010; Mui & Kang, 2006), and psychosis (Bhugra, 2004; Devlyder et al., 2013). Other studies on acculturation have examined relational stressors such as communication problems related to lack of fluency in the language of the host country (Abbasian & Sharifi, 2013; Neto, 2002), difficulties in social adaptation (Duru & Poyrazli, 2007; Kim & Omizo, 2005), perceived discrimination (Horn, 2008; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994), and harassment by police and immigration officers (Karen Human Rights Group, 2010; Pichai, 2010), and marital concerns (Choi, Miller, & Wilbur, 2009; Heberle, 2010). This review on acculturation-related stressors suggests that studies have given a lop-sided focus on stressors that are commonly reported by immigrants and international students, and have given meager attention to stressors that are significant predictors of acculturative stress in migrant workers.

Acculturative Stress

Culture shock is the accumulated effects of unfamiliar encounters that are experienced by migrants in their host or receiving countries (Zhou, 2014). Shock as a term suggests that acculturation is a stressful process that is characterized by the following aspects: (a) Strain due to effort required to make necessary psychological adaptation; (b) A sense of loss and feelings of deprivation in regard to friends, status, profession, and possession; (c) Being rejected by and/or rejecting the members of the new culture; (d) Confusion in role, role expectations, values, feelings, and self-identity; (e) Surprise, anxiety, disgust, and indignation after becoming aware of cultural differences; and (f) Feelings of impotence due to not being able to cope with the new environment (Taft, 1977).

Over the years, the growing body of literature on acculturation has seen the emergence of the term "acculturative stress" as synonymous to culture shock (Zhou, 2014). Closely linked to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) psychological model of stress as a response to environmental stressors, acculturative stress is defined as a reaction to life events (stressors) that are brought about by the experience of acculturation (Berry, 1997). Acculturative stress is anchored on the premise that this kind of stress is likely to exist at low levels and produce positive effects when acculturative stressors are successfully dealt with. Studies on acculturative stress have explored its effects of various dimensions of adjustment of migrants. High levels of acculturative stress have been shown to have mild to moderate debilitating effects on the emotional and psychological (Paukert, Pettit, Perez, & Walker, 2006; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1998; Wei et al., 2007), relational and social (Duru & Poyrazli, 2007; Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004), and physiological dimensions of adjustment (Greenland & Brown, 2005; Williams & Berry, 1991; Ye, 2005). Low levels of acculturative stress have also been associated with self-efficacy (Kim & Omizo, 2006), language (English) proficiency (Duru & Poyrazli, 2007), competence in intercultural interactions (Torres & Rollock, 2004), and meaning in life (Pan, Wong, Chan, & Joubert, 2008). This review on acculturative stress has shown consistent findings that equate this variable with negative outcomes and echoes the invitation by theorists in the field for researches to explore specific migration circumstances that can bring out the potential of acculturative stress to become a positive, life-enhancing experience among migrants.

Coping Responses to Acculturative Stress

Coping refers to "the cognitive and behavioral efforts to master, reduce, or tolerate the internal and external demands that are created by the stressful transaction" (Folkman, 1984, p. 840). Moos (1993) made an effort to present a multidimensional model of coping responses that emphasizes the focus and the method of coping. The focus of coping refers to the individual's orientation towards the problem (approach versus avoidance). Under the focus perspective, people can make active efforts to resolve the problems and adapt themselves to stressors (approach coping) or try to avoid the problem and concentrate efforts on managing the emotion generated by the conflict (avoidance coping). The method of coping refers to cognitive and behavioral efforts that are individual makes in order to master or resolve stressors. Under the method perspective, people can employ cognitive or behavioral efforts to approach or avoid the stressor. The combination of two types of focus of coping (approach versus avoidance) and two types of method of coping (cognitive versus behavioral) forms eight coping response strategies. Approach Coping includes: (a) Logical Analysis which involves gaining insight on a stressor; (b) Positive Reappraisal which requires positively reframing perception of a stressor; (c) Seeking Guidance which entails obtaining support from significant others and advice from professionals; and (d) Problem Solving which pertains to goal-setting and implementing plans to solve the problem. Avoidance Coping, on the other hand, subsumes the responses: (a) Cognitive Avoidance which refers to avoiding thinking about the stressor; (b) Acceptance or Resignation which involves accepting that one has no control over the situation; (c) Seeking Alternative Rewards which is engaging in alternative pleasurable activities; and (d) Emotional Discharge which involves letting off steam by shouting or taking it out on people. Moos's (1993) model of coping which includes all eight specific strategies scales formed the framework of a standardized instrument that have been widely used to assess coping responses to a variety of stressful situations (Chinaveh, 2013; Eyles & Bates, 2005; Kirchner, Forn, Munoz, & Pereda, 2003).

In the face of significant levels of acculturative stress, migrants are forced to recognize that they are experiencing problems from their cross-cultural interactions and are compelled to engage in strategies that attempt to deal with these acculturative stressors (Berry, 1997; 2005; 2006). Studies have shown that approach coping responses (e.g., problem solving) have been found to serve as a protective measure against occupational burnout (Rohde, 2010) and depression (Torres, 2010) among low-wage earning Latino immigrants, and psychosomatic illnesses among Asian American immigrants (Jeong, 2009). Approach coping responses have also been shown to promote adaptive adjustment among Pakistani immigrants in Canada (Jibeen & Khalid, 2010) and resiliency and cultural identity among Japanese women migrants in America (Heberle, 2010).

On the other hand, avoidance coping responses are found to be ineffective in mitigating the effects of stress (Torres & Rollock, 2004) as these responses have been shown to be related to high levels of acculturative stress and low levels of adjustment when compared to active coping responses (Berry, 1997; Crockett et al., 2007; Wong, 2006). However, several studies have shown contrasting findings that point to the effectiveness of avoidance coping responses in minimizing the levels of frustrations from stressful situations that cannot be managed by approach coping responses (e.g., Akram, 2006; Carver, 1989; Jiben & Khalid, 2010), and the adequacy of cognitive avoidance as self-protective measure against recall of stressful, intrusive memory (Lemogne et al., 2009). Furthermore, some studies highlighted the value of flexibility in utilizing approach and avoidance coping responses as an indicator effective adaptation among persons who manage severe and pervasive stressors (Kholmann, 1993; Moos, 1993). Avoidance coping responses (i.e., acceptance/resignation, cognitive avoidance, emotional discharge) when used in conjunction with approach coping responses (i.e., logical analysis, seeking guidance) have been linked with effective management of acculturative stress among international university students (Vergara, Smith, & Keele, 2010). This review on coping responses to acculturation has reinforced the effectiveness of approach coping responses and has brought to light an open avenue of research into the usefulness of avoidance coping alone or in combination with approach coping for the effective management of acculturative stress.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

This study relies on Berry's (1997) model of stress, coping, and acculturation which emphasizes the psychological acculturation and adaptation as its framework for explaining the hypothesized relationships of acculturative stress (dependent variable) with situational and personal-relational stressors, and coping responses (independent variables) and to potential of latter variables as predictors of acculturative stress among migrant workers. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study.

According to Berry (1997), psychological acculturation refers to the adjustment that happens within the individual as a result of interactions with aspects of the new culture (Berry, 1997). The acculturation experiences of migrant workers create life events that place considerable demands on them. These life events may be situational stressors (e.g., harsh working conditions, substandard living conditions) or personal-relational stressors (e.g., problems with homesickness, communication/language, and perceived discrimination). These stressors can either seriously undermine their chances of a successful acculturation or become life – enhancing opportunities. The impact of these stressors is determined by the individual's accurate appraisal of the degree of difficulty of these stressors and the effectiveness of their coping responses. Moreover, migrant workers who judge their acculturative stressors as manageable are likely to have low levels of acculturative stress, employ approach coping responses effectively, and experience acculturation as a life – enhancing opportunity. Migrant workers may be successful at their attempts at gaining insight about their stressful situation (logical analysis) or positively reframing their perception of their stressful situation (positive reappraisal). In addition, they may be effective in implementing useful plans to man-

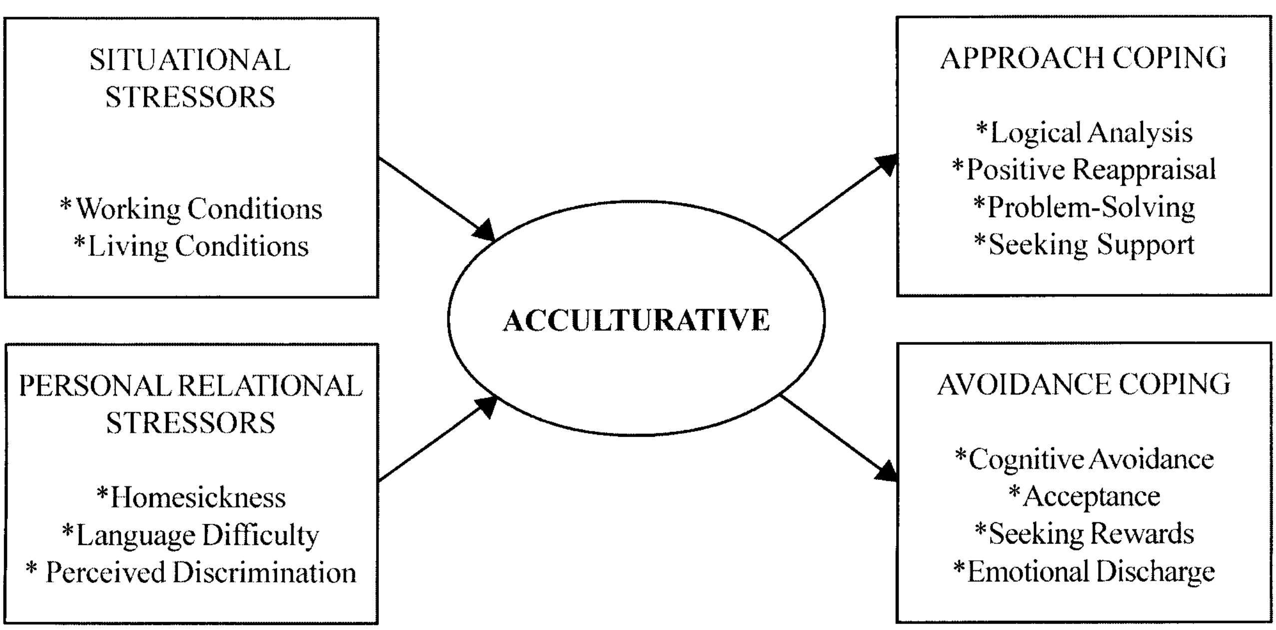

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

age their problems or in obtaining helpful advice from significant others and professionals. On the other hand, migrant workers who appraise their stressors as overwhelming are likely to suffer from moderate to high levels of acculturative stress, employ avoidance coping responses that are ineffective in minimizing stress, and experience acculturation as detrimental to their health and wellbeing. Migrant workers may resort by avoiding thinking about the stressful situation (cognitive avoidance) and accepting their powerless over the situation (acceptance or resignation). Migrant workers may likewise vent their emotions by yelling or shouting (emotional discharge) or seeking alternative sources of pleasure (seeking alternative rewards).

Based on this framework, the following hypotheses are made:

H1: High frequency of situational stressors predicts high levels of acculturative stress. When migrant workers have more situational stressors, their levels of acculturative stress are high.

H2: High frequency of personal-relational stressors predicts high levels of acculturative stress. When migrant workers have more personal-relational stressors, their acculturative stress levels are high.

H3: Approach coping responses predict low levels of acculturative stress. When migrant workers use approach coping responses, their acculturative stress levels are low.

H4: Avoidance coping responses predict high levels of acculturative stress. When migrant workers use avoidance coping responses, their acculturative stress levels are high.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-correlational design to determine (a) acculturation-related stressors, (b) levels of acculturative stress, (c) coping responses, and (d) predictors of acculturative stress among Burmese women migrant workers in Thailand.

Participants

There were 57 Burmese women migrant workers with the following demographic characteristics: (a) living in Thailand at the time of study; (b) from 18 to 38 years old ($\underline{M}$=28.8, $\underline{SD}$=4.4); (c) single or unmarried; (d) working as domestic helper (72%) or in a clothing or plastic factory (28%); and (d) documented workers possessing valid work permit and other required legal documents. The participants were limited to (a) female Burmese workers because studies (e.g., Fujita et al., 2010) noted that there may be gender-based differences in the living and working conditions of migrant workers; and (b) single or unmarried women workers because family support has been demonstrated to be associated with acculturative stress and depression (Jon, 1998). Considering the lack of information concerning accurate population size and the subsequent lack of opportunity to conduct probability sampling, the participants should be considered as the population of Burmese women migrant workers and caution should be exercised in the interpretation and generalization of findings.

Instruments

The measures used were the Culture Shock Questionnaire (Mumford, 1998), Coping Responses Inventory (Moos, 1993), and a checklist to identify acculturative stressors and to gather demographic information from participants. All these measures were translated into Burmese and then back translated into its original English form by two college graduates with comparable competency in English and Burmese languages.

Acculturative stressors were identified using a checklist of situational and personal-relational stressors. Situational stressors include problems with working and living conditions. Personal-relational stressors are problems with homesickness, language or communication, and perceived discrimination. Inclusion of these stressors in the checklist is based on studies which identified such factors as resulting from cross-cultural encounters (e.g., Fuji et al., 2010; Snodgrass, 2007). Participants were asked to tick under the yes column if they are presently experiencing a given stressor. Participants were likewise encouraged to provide a brief explanation of their daily life situation where the stressor was felt by including this in the instruction and providing space in the checklist to write down their explanation. The total frequency of yes answers reflects the acculturative stressors experienced by participants.

Acculturative stress was measured using the Culture Shock Questionnaire (Mumford, 1998) which is a 7-item Likert scale. The items of the questionnaire were derived directly from the six aspects of culture shock as delineated by Taft (1977) which are as follows: (a) Strain due to effort required to make necessary psychological adaptation; (b) A sense of loss and feelings of deprivation in regard to friends, status, profession, and possession; (c) Being rejected by and/or rejecting the members of the new culture; (d) Confusion in role, role expectations, values, feelings, and self-identity; (e) Surprise, anxiety, disgust, and indignation after becoming aware of cultural differences; and (f) Feelings of impotence due to not being able to cope with the new environment. Each item is worded in question form (e.g., "Do you feel generally accepted by the local people?") and rated using a 3-point response format that ranges from "0 = not at all" to "2=most of the time". Total scores range from 0 to 14. High total scores suggest high levels of culture shock. Specifically, scores from 0 to 4 suggest low levels, scores from 5 to 9 suggest moderate levels, and scores from 10 to 14 suggest high levels of culture shock. The instrument is a valid measure of acculturative stress as it accurately differentiated the degrees of culture shock across persons experiencing acculturation as shown by significant correlation between Culture Distance Index which was .50 with core culture shock items and .58 with interpersonal stress items. The Cronbach's alpha for the sample used in this study is .71.

Coping responses were measured using the Coping Resources Inventory - Adult Form (Moos, 1993) which is a 48-item Likert measure of eight different types of coping responses to stressful life circumstances based on focus (approach versus avoidance) and method (cognitive and behavioral). Approach Coping is defined by: (a) Logical Analysis which involves gaining insight on a stressor; (b) Positive Reappraisal which requires positively reframing perception of a stressor; (c) Seeking Guidance which entails obtaining support from significant others and advice from professionals, and (d) Problem Solving which pertains to goal-setting and implementing plans to solve the problem. The second set of four scales measures Cognitive Avoidance Coping which include responses such as Cognitive Avoidance which refers to avoiding thinking about the stressor and Acceptance or Resignation which involves accepting that one has no control over the stressor. The Behavioral Avoidance Coping is composed of responses such as Seeking Alternative Rewards which is engaging in alternative pleasurable activities and Emotional Discharge which involves letting off steam by shouting or taking it out on people. Each item is worded in a sentence form (e.g., I think of different ways to deal with the problem) and scored using a 4-point response format which ranges from "0=not at all" to "3=fairly often". Raw scores are converted to standard scores where scores of 45 and below are interpreted as below average use of coping response, and scores of 55 and above as above average. The eight indices of coping responses are moderately and positively correlated (average rs=.29 for men and .25 for women) and are stable over time among both men and women (average rs= .45, and .43, respectively for the eight indices). The Cronbach's alpha for the sample used in this study is .78.

Procedures

Owing to the difficulty of gathering Burmese women migrant workers, some of whom disclosed their caution in interpersonal interactions as such may inadvertently lead to legal problems and subsequent deportation, it was not possible to conduct systematic sampling. Thus, it was deemed essential to solicit the assistance of two individuals who were known to the researchers and were likely to be perceived as trustworthy by migrant workers. These two individuals who served as research assistants for recruiting participants were (a) a Burmese female long-time resident of Thailand by virtue of marriage to a Thai national and who had been working as an aide for processing legal documents of Burmese migrant workers; and (b) a well-esteemed Buddhist monk at a temple in Bangkok who generously volunteered his help. In order to gather research participants, the monk who was fluent in Burmese stayed for 8 hours at the temple on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) when migrant workers typically come to the temple to worship. An orientation was provided to the research assistants to ensure understanding of the purpose of the study and the measures used, and uniformity of instructions to solicit research participation. Participants were gathered by purposive sampling of persons whom the two research assistants came in contact within the duration of the three-month data gathering period which ran from September to November, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Analysis of data on acculturative stressors was done by recording the frequency of the stressors that were endorsed by participants. It should be noted that some participants indicated more than one stressor. Scores for acculturative stress and coping responses scores were obtained following the scoring and interpretation requirements of their corresponding measures. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were obtained and used to describe the levels of acculturative stress and self-esteem, and to identify the degree of reliance on specific coping responses. Multiple Regression was used to determine whether stressors and coping responses are significant predictors of acculturative stress. Hypotheses on prediction were tested using .05 level of confidence. Statistical analyses were accomplished using the Statistical Package in Social Sciences (SPSS, version 17).

RESULTS

Burmese women migrant workers reported both situational and personal stressors which they associated with their acculturation experience in Thailand. As shown in Table 1, harsh working conditions (33.3%) were the most frequently reported stressors whereas perceived discrimination (15.3%) and harassment by police and immigration officers (15.3%) were the least reported stressors. Overall, Burmese women migrant workers reported more situational stressors (52.7%) than personal-situational stressors.

As shown in Table 2, both situational (r=.36, p. <.01) and personal-relational (r=.50, p. <.01) stressors have a significant positive relationship with high levels of acculturative stress (M=11.4, SD=1.76). These findings show that high frequency of reported situational and personal-relational stressors significantly contributes to high levels of acculturative stress among Burmese women migrant workers.

To evaluate whether both situational and personal-relational stressors were necessary to predict acculturative stress, a stepwise multiple regression was conducted with the results shown in Table 3. At step 1 of the analysis, personal-relational stressor entered into the regression equation and was significantly related to acculturative stress (F [1, 55] = 18.51, p. < .01). The multiple correlation coefficient was .50, indicating that 25% of the variance of acculturative stress could be accounted for by personal-relational stressor. At step 2, situational stressor entered into the equation and was significantly related to acculturative stress (F [1, 54] = 16.97, p. < .01). The multiple correlation coefficient was .65, indicating that situational stressor further explained 17% of the total 43% variance of acculturative stress that could be accounted for by personal-relational and situational stressors taken together. These results provide support for Hypotheses 1 and 2 that situational and personal-relational stressors are significant predictors of acculturative stress.

As shown in Table 2, Burmese women migrant workers reported above average use of approach coping responses such as logical analysis (M=56.49, SD=8.45), positive reappraisal (M=62.04, SD=5.46), seeking guidance (M=62.77, SD=8.56), and problem solving (M=61.11, SD=10.68). They also reported above average use of avoidance coping responses such as cognitive avoidance (M=59.74, SD=8.99) and seeking alternative rewards (M=60.81, SD=7.17), and below average use of acceptance/resignation (M=35.70, SD=5.34) and emotional discharge (M=35.72, SD=5.24).

Acceptance/resignation (r=.78, p. <.01) and emotional discharge (r=.63, p. <.01) which are avoidance coping responses have a significant negative relationship with high levels of acculturative stress (M=11.4, SD=1.76) as shown in Table 1. These results indicate that below average use of the avoidance coping responses of acceptance/resignation and emotional discharge contributes to high levels of acculturative stress.

To evaluate whether both acceptance/resignation and emotional discharge were necessary to predict acculturative stress, a stepwise multiple regression was conducted with the results shown in Table 4. At step 1 of the analysis, acceptance/resignation entered into the regression equation and was significantly related to acculturative stress (F [1, 55] = 84.14, p. < .01). The multiple correlation coefficient was .78, indicating that 61% of the variance of acculturative stress could be accounted for by the avoidance coping response of acceptance/resignation. At step 2, emotional discharge entered into the equation and was significantly related to acculturative stress (F [1, 54] = 8.24, p. < .01).

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Stressors Reported by Participants

Stressors	Description	f	%
Situational	Harsh working conditions	24	33.3
	Difficult living conditions	14	19.4
Personal-Relational	Communication/language problems	12	16.7
	Perceived discrimination	11	15.3
	Harassment by police and immigration officers	11	15.3

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation with Acculturative Stress

Variable	M[a]	SD	r
Situational Stressors	0.67	0.48	.36*
Personal-Relational Stressors	0.60	0.49	.50*
Acculturative Stress	11.19	1.76	1.0
Approach Coping - Logical Analysis	56.49	8.45	.18
Approach Coping - Positive Reappraisal	62.04	5.46	.15
Approach Coping - Seeking Guidance	62.77	8.56	.07
Approach Coping - Problem-Solving	61.11	10.68	.08
Avoidance Coping - Cognitive Avoidance	59.74	8.99	.01
Avoidance Coping - Acceptance	35.70	5.34	-.78*
Avoidance Coping - Emotional Discharge	35.72	5.24	-.63*
Avoidance Coping - Seeking Alternative Rewards	60.81	7.17	.14

Note: Stressor scores of 0=stressor is not present, 1=stressor is present. Acculturative Stress scores of 0-4=low, 5-9=moderate, 10-4=high. Coping scores of 44-54=average use of coping response.

an=57.

*p < .01.

Table 3: Stepwise Multiple Regression of Stressors as Significant Predictors of Acculturative Stress

Predictor/Stressors	R	R^2	F	Ba	SEb	t
Personal-Relational	.50	.25	18.51*	1.97	.37	5.36*
Situational	.65	.43	16.97*	1.58	.38	4.12*

a value of constant for regression equation =8.96.

*p. < .01.

The multiple correlation coefficient was .81, indicating that emotional discharge further explained 4% of the total 65% variance of acculturative stress that could be accounted for by acceptance/resignation and emotional discharge taken together. These results provide support for Hypothesis 4 that avoidance coping responses predict high levels of acculturative stress. Hypothesis 3, however, is not supported by the findings which showed that approach coping responses are not significant predictors of acculturative stress.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study has shed light on the acculturation experience of Burmese women migrant workers in Thailand. These women migrant workers who were employed as factory workers and domestic helpers described their situational and personal-relational stressors which contributed significantly to and predicted their high levels of acculturative stress. Moreover, they reported above average use of approach coping responses such as logical analysis, positive reappraisal, seeking guidance, and problem-solving in their unsuccessful attempts to minimize their acculturative stress levels. They also reported above average use of avoidance coping responses such as cognitive avoidance and seeking alternative rewards which also did not reduce their acculturative stress levels. However, their below average use of the avoidance coping responses of acceptance/resignation and emotional discharged significantly predicted their high levels of stress.

Burmese women migrant workers described the situational stressors they were experiencing as harsh working conditions characterized by long hours, low wage, and no provision for sick days, holidays, and health care. Substandard living conditions which were marked by crowded and dirty living spaces with inadequate ventilation, frequent illness with very little access to adequate health care, lack of resources (time and money) for socialization and for visit to temples for worship. Personal-relational stressors were identified as homesickness, communication problems from lack of proficiency in the Thai language, perceived discrimination (e.g., subjective feeling that one is looked down upon for doing work that may be considered dirty, dangerous, or demeaning) and harassment from police and immigration officers (e.g., having to pay large sums of money when confronted about living in Thailand despite having legal work documents). These findings resonate with observations from previous studies that migrant workers have to endure poor working and living conditions as they strive to adapt to their new culture (Fujita et al., 2010; Neto, 2002) and to meet the host country's requirements for individuals with migrant worker status (Karen Human Rights Group, 2010; Mejia & McCarthy, 2010). Perceived discrimination which was a commonly reported stressor among Burmese women migrant workers was likewise reported in previous studies (Faur, 2008; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994) on the exacerbating influence of this stressor on migration experience. It is most unfortunate that these women migrant workers who contribute to the economy and culture of the host country have suffered from perceived discrimination which negates previous findings that migrants are more likely to feel acceptance as compared to refugees who may suffer from perceived discrimination and rejection because of the tendency of people from their host country to see them a drain to the country's resources (Steiner, 2009; Williams & Berry, 199). Other stressors related health and socialization needs can be attributed to various subjective experiences of culture shock (Berry, 1997; Organista, Organista, & Kurasaki, 2003).

The findings further demonstrated that Burmese women migrant workers suffered from high levels of acculturative stress. They described their condition as characterized by feelings of shock or disgust with aspects of the host culture (Kim &

Table 4: Stepwise Multiple Regression of Coping Responses as Significant Predictors of Acculturative Stress

Predictor/Coping	R	R2	F	Ba	SEb	t
Acceptance/Resignation	.78	.61	84.14*	-.203	.032	-6.34*
Emotional Discharge	.81	.65	8.24*	-.094	.033	-2.87*

avalue of constant for regression equation = 21.79.

*p. < .01.

Omizo, 2005); feelings of lack of acceptance from others (Faur, 2008; Horn, 2008; Kiang et al., 2010); homesickness (Choi, Miller, & Wilbur, 2009; Mui & Kang, 2006; Sedikides et al., 2009), helplessness, and wish to escape from the current situation (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994); strain from the pressing demands to adjust quickly and adequately to the new situation, and subsequent confusion about roles and identity (Heberle, 2010). It is worth mentioning that although the self-reported culture shock experience of the Burmese women migrant workers were accompanied by symptoms of maladjustment, acculturative stress is considered a normal human response to an alien cultural environment, which can be disabling in some individuals (Berry, 2006; Mumford, 1998; Rudmin, 2009). In the absence of information on the length of stay in the host country which is an obvious limitation of this study, the high levels of acculturative stress that were reported by Burmese women migrant workers may be related to the length of time that they had been exposed to acculturative stressors. Given that acculturative stress is conceptualized in literature as following the "U" curve in the classic description of positive adaptation in relation time (Berry, 1997), this could mean that low levels of acculturative stress may be experienced in the early phase of adaptation which is followed by an escalation of stress in the middle phase, and finally culminating in more positive long-term adaptation. It could be that these women migrant workers are currently in the middle phase of the "U" curve of positive adaptation so distress from high levels of acculturative stress is an expected experience which would eventually lead to effective coping and positive long-term adaptation.

Efforts to cope with the experience of acculturative stress have been demonstrated by Burmese women migrant workers who used both approach and avoidance coping responses to manage acculturative stress. In their attempts to buffer the distress from acculturation, Burmese women used approach coping responses where they tried to use reason to understand their stressors (logical analysis), reframe their perception about the stressors (positive reappraisal), seek guidance from others (seeking guidance), and carried out plans to solve their problems (problem-solving). However, their above average reliance on approach coping responses did not affect their high levels of acculturative stress. This finding contradicts existing literature on the effectiveness of approach coping in managing stress (e.g., Jeong, 2009; Rohde, 2010; Torres, 2010) and suggests that this type of coping may not be suitable for the situational and personal-relational stressors that these migrant workers were trying to manage. Akram (2013) noted that avoidance coping was preferred by women patients who were experiencing stress from serious health issues over approach coping. Serious health concerns as a stressor created frustration and powerlessness among women patients so that keeping their minds off the problem and venting out negative emotions to friends, family, and health specialists provided them with the much needed desired break worries over their illness. This may be true in the present study in that Burmese migrant workers may not have experienced relief from stress despite their active use of approach coping responses. Furthermore, some women migrant workers in this study mentioned the lack of opportunity for socialization and prayer or worship as personal-social stressors. This may suggest when these needs are met, they could serve as resource-based and culture-sensitive coping strategies that are based on social support (Poyrazli, 2004; Torres & Rollock, 2004) and creative, meaning-focused, and existential (Wong, 2006).

Above average dependence on avoidance coping responses were also expressed by Burmese women migrant workers. They attempted to manage their stressors by avoiding thinking about their problematic situation (cognitive avoidance) and found ways to distract themselves with pleasurable activities (seeking alternative rewards) but these avoidance coping responses had no effect on the high levels of acculturative stress that they experienced. However, below average use of avoidance coping response of acceptance/resignation and emotional discharge contributed to maintaining their high levels of acculturative stress. Burmese women migrant workers rarely resorted to recognizing that they stressors were overwhelming and accepting that they were powerless over their situation (acceptance/resignation). They also rarely engaged expressing their emotions in the face of situations that triggered their anger and frustration (emotional discharge). Below average reliance on avoidance coping responses has sustained the high levels of stress and strain that Burmese women migrant workers suffer from as a result of having to adjust to the culture of their host country. Conversely, when these avoidance coping responses are more often resorted to wholeheartedly by accepting difficult situations and expressing frustrations, then acculturative stress can be managed adequately. This finding clearly shows the usefulness of avoidance coping responses in managing acculturative stress which affirms previous studies that pointed to their self-protective function (Akram, 2006; Carver, 1989; Jiben & Khalid, 2010; Lemogne et al., 2009). A closer look at how the approach and avoidance coping responses have influenced the levels of acculturative stress of women migrant workers in this study could likewise imply that a dynamic combination of these approaches in managing this type of stress may be potentially useful as shown in previous studies (Crocket et al., 2007; Folkman, 1997; Jeong, 2009; Jibeen & Khalid, 2010; Torres & Rollock, 2004; Vergara et al., 2010; Yuen, 2008).

Although the findings of this study contributed to the understanding of the acculturation experience of Burmese female migrant workers in Thailand, there are several limitations which suggest that these findings should be viewed with caution. The small number of participants considerably restricted the generalizability of the results. Moreover, the wide age range of participants suggests a lack of homogeneity in the experiences and demands of daily living. Reliance on measures of variables that were developed for non-Asian participants coupled with the use of English-Burmese translation may have reduced the accuracy of reporting of the experiences of participants. Finally, the absence of pretest measures of length of stay in the host country, pre-existing stress, anxiety, depression, and other alarming life events (e.g., illness or death of a loved one) may have compounded the participants' experience of acculturative stress.

Future research can consider exploring factors that may serve as competing hypotheses in explaining the acculturation experience of migrant workers. Factors such as the migrant workers' pre-migration circumstances, attitude toward and length of stay in host country, education, ethnicity, gender, marital status, and status of mental health can contribute to establishing a clear and accurate representation of the acculturation experience of migrant workers. The conduct of qualitative studies to allow for an in-depth exploration of the phenomenological experiences of this special population can yield valuable information for establishing constructs, building theories, and developing instruments that can authentically capture the reality of migrant workers. Longitudinal studies can demonstrate the pattern of acculturation and adaptation among migrant workers, and identify the development and function of a range of coping responses over time. Counseling process and outcome studies to examine suitable therapeutic approaches for managing acculturation can equip mental health professionals with effective techniques for empowering migrant workers with a wide repertoire of appropriate and efficacious coping responses. Finally, the results of this study can encourage governments and socio-civic organizations to galvanize their efforts in establishing and implementing regulations and mechanisms that can effectively protect the rights, welfare, and wellbeing of migrant workers. Migrant workers' persevering commitment of talents, strength, and life make them valuable contributors to the economic development of their host countries.

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EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND THEIR CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIORS: A STUDY ON LOGISTIC LAND HAULAGE PROVIDERS IN THE EASTERN SEABOARD INDUSTRIAL ESTATES, THAILAND

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Abstract

Given the vulnerabilities of present businesses, logistic solutions have to be crafted and aimed at, in order to get excellent service quality. As a labor intensive sector, the performance of logistic organizations lies in the hands of employees. The research aimed to investigate whether organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) were positively influenced by four variables: the organizational commitment, the transformational leadership behavior, the organizational culture and the goal setting. Only the innovative (B-value = 0.333, p <0.001) and the bureaucratic organizational cultures (B-value = 0.170, p <0.001), the employees' normative commitment (NC) (B-value = 0.290, p <0.001), and the employees' continuance commitment (CC) (B-value = -0.059, p <0.05) entered the equation. The data were gathered from the logistic land haulage providers servicing the Eastern Seaboard Industrial Estate (ESIE), one of Thailand biggest automotive industrial estates, through distributions of questionnaires.
Keywords: Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), organizational commitment (OC), organizational culture, goal setting and transformational leadership behavior.

บทคัดย่อ

ด้วยสถานการณ์ปัจจุบันที่เต็มไปด้วยการแข่งขัน, การให้บริการของโลจิสติกส์จะต้องถูกปรับปรุงให้มีคุณภาพที่ดีเยี่ยม การให้บริการที่ดีในโลจิสติกส์จึงต้องพึ่งคุณภาพ, ฝีมือและความชำนาญของบุคลากร จุดมุ่งหมายของบทวิเคราะห์นี้ก็เพื่อพิสูจน์ว่าพฤติกรรมของพนักงานในองค์กรจะรับอิทธิพลด้านบวกจากสี่ปัจจัยคือ: ความทุ่มเทและจิตสำนึกของพนักงานที่มีต่อองค์กร, พฤติกรรมของผู้นำแบบทรานฟรอมเมชั่นเนล, วัฒนธรรมขององค์กรและการตั้งจุดมุ่งหมายขององค์กร มีเพียงความคิดริเริ่มในองค์กร(B-value = 0.333, p <0.001) และวัฒนธรรมความมีระเบียบวินัยขององค์กร (B-value = 0.170, p <0.001), ความทุ่มเทและจิตสำนึกในบุญคุณที่พนักงานมีต่อองค์กร (B-value = 0.290, p <0.001) และผลประโยชน์อันพึงได้ของพนักงาน (B-value = -0.059, p <0.05) เท่านั้นที่มีอิทธิพลต่อพฤติกรรมของพนักงาน ข้อมูลของการศึกษานี้ได้เก็บมาจากการเก็บข้อมูลจากแบบสอบถามที่แจกให้กับบริษัทโลจิสติกส์ที่ให้บริการกับบริษัทต่าง ๆ ในและรอบนิคมอุตสาหกรรมอีสเทิร์นซีบอร์ด, ซึ่งเป็นหนึ่งในนิคมอุสาหกรรมยานยนตร์ที่ใหญ่ที่สุดในประเทศไทย
คำสำคัญ: พฤติกรรมประชากรขององค์กร, การอุทิศตนให้แก่องค์กร, วัฒนธรรมขององค์กร, การตั้งจุดมุ่งหมาย และ พฤติกรรมของผู้นำแบบทรานฟรอมเมชั่นเนล

INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment (OC), according to Allen, & Meyer (1990), consists of three components: the affective commitment (AC), the continuance commitment (CC) and the normative commitment (NC). These commitments have been proven to cause the organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002) and make the implementation of the organizational goal effective (Soriano, 2008; Vigoda-Gadot, & Angert, 2007; Wrigth, George, Famsworth & McMahan, 1993). For organizations to achieve their goal, the management has to take into consideration the employees' involvement, influence and the levels of impacts that employees face in their performances (Latif, & Abdullah, 2003; Lupton, 1991). Kuo, Chag, Hung and Lin, (2009) also confirmed that employees who could think strategically, are trained and equipped with appropriate tools would be self-motivated and generate quality performances. This study aimed to examine the influences of the three OCs, the organizational culture, the goal setting and transformational leadership behaviors towards the OCB of the logistic employees in ESIE, Thailand.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Organizational Commitment (OC)

OC refers to the levels of interest, connection (Huang, You, &Tsai, 2012) and involvement that employees willingly contribute to their organizations (Moshref Javadi, & Yavarian, 2011; Curry, Wakefield, Price, & Mueller, 1986) so as to share the organization's goal and value, maintain their membership, exert their effort, commit to their organization and show their loyalty (Meyer, & Allen, 1991; Bateman, & Strasser, 1984). As management cannot control qualities of services to customers at the time of service provided, it is these degrees of commitment that will induce the employees' behavior (Malhotra, & Mukherjee, 2003). For an organization to achieve its objective under current business competition, analyzing and relating the causal factors of employees' OCs need to be continuously performed (Brimeyer, Perrucci, & MacDermid, 2010). It is undeniable that good employees' performances are desirable by organizations (Allameh, Amiri, & Asadi, 2011) and to achieve such standards, organizations need to consider proper interactions and match employees' personal desirable needs to the organizations' objectives (Meyer, Irving, & Allen, 1998). Even though many researchers have been conducted, the pathways of causes and effects which are linked among OCs and their cross-sectional factors are still unconfirmed (Kuruuzum, Çetin, & Irmak, 2009, Meyer, Irving, & Allen, 1998). It is agreed, however, that OC is a multi-dimensional construct (Meyer, Irving, and Allen, 1998; Bateman, & Strasser, 1984). In conclusion, the congruence between personal and situational variables influences the OCs (Meyer, Irving, & Allen, 1998). Meyer, Irving and Allen (1990) categorized OC into three distinguishable categories: the "want-to" commitment attitude of employees refers to the willingness and cooperation that employees render to the organization, Meyer, Irving,& Allen (1998) called this, the affective commitment (AC). The normative commitment (NC) is an "ought to" attitude, which could originate from various sources; the organization might have sponsored an individual in his or her education/ training and as such, the individual felt morally obligated to the organization and stayed to repay this debt. The "has-to" attitude referred to the continuance commitment (CC). It is a cost and benefit based commitment (Snape, & Redman, 2003) employees perceive that they earn their living, welfare and income from the employment and would face financial difficulties if they did not have the earnings (Kuehn, & Al-Busaidi, 1993). Research evidences had shown that OC is positively and significantly related to the OCB (Huang, You, & Tsai, 2012; Watrous-Rodriguez, 2010; Pohl, & Paille, 2011; Allameh, Amiri, &Asadi, 2011; Kuehn, & Al-Busaidi, 2002; Meyer et. al., 2002) and is the best predictor of the OCB (Pohl, & Paille, 2011), Huang, You and Tsai (2012) believed that employees who have the OC attitude have high tendencies in recognizing the organizations' objectives and goals. The study therefore posits that:

H1a: AC has influence upon the employees' OCB.

H1b: CC has influence upon the employees' OCB.

H1c: NC has influence upon the employees' OCB.

Goal Setting

A goal is a target of action that needs to be achieved with applications of proper skills and under a specific time frame (Locke & Latham, 2002). Locke and Latham (2002) conceptualized that a well-defined and hard to achieve goal would get higher results under constant feedback and scrutiny from management. Individual's consciousness was one of the key factors that determined the individual's actions, behaviors and performances (Latham & Yukl, 1986). With constant monitoring on the assigned goals, organizations can provide clear and proper direction that would minimize the deviations in performances (Lee, Bobko, Earley & Locke, 1991). Failures in goal setting would harm performances of the organization (Cochran, & Kleiner, 1993). Goal setting is one of the most important means of employees' motivation (Wright, George, Farnsworth, & McMahan, 1993; Erez, & Kanfer, 1983; Ronan, Latham, & Kinne III, 1973). Through studies of Ronan, Latham and Kinne III (1973), it was found that if employees have clear understanding and knew what the expectations are on the goals set for them, they would put in effort and try to achieve the goals. Results of the projects showed that goal setting could yield maximize results under supervision and encouragement by superiors. Locke and Latham (1975) stated that goal setting to employees would impact the behavior of employees only when they consciously accepted the assigned task. Naveh and Erez (2004) confirmed that a quality management goal impacted employees' goal achievement. Therefore,

H2: Goal setting has influence upon the employees' OCB.

Transformational Leadership Behaviors

Over time, leaders' behaviors had gained ample attention from researchers as one of the major generators for organizations' achievement (Larsson, & Vinberg, 2010; Daft, 1999). Despite numerous of discussions, there is still a lack of theoretical integration and consensus in leadership behavior theories (Derue, Nahrgang, Wellman & Humphrey, 2011; Daft, 1999). In consequence, scholars continuously exerted factors which contributed to aspects of leaders' behaviors (Larsson & Vinverg, 2010; Lee, & Bin Ahmad, 2009, Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002; Barrow, 1977). Transformational leaders have the ability to cope with changes in organizations (Lussier & Achua, 2001, Daft, 1999). They boost their followers' morale (Yukl, 1998), build up confidence and cater to the basic needs of their followers in order to reach the organizational set goals and objectives (Daft, 1999). Avolio, Bass and Jung (1999) concluded that components of transformational leaders were: 1) idealized influence (charismatic), 2) inspiration motivation, 4) intellectual stimulation and 5) individualized consideration. Jiao, Richards, and Zhang (2010) added that the inspirational should be through the followers' self-worthiness, self-efficacy and meaningful contributions generated by followers both from their works and lives. To gain intellectual stimulation, leaders need to constantly discuss with followers using two-way communication, encourage followers openly and constantly to share their initiatives, ideas and participate in problem solving. Individualized consideration was required as followers had their own needs and requirements and to fulfill the charismatic nature, leaders would have to see and understand such needs. Matching the followers' needs with the organizational goals can instill the followers' authentic interests toward the leaders and their organizations - a shift from personal goals to collective goals (Jiao, Richards & Zhang, 2010). The individualized consideration through recognitions of the followers' achievement that the leaders exert creates intrinsic rewards for the followers (Jiao, Richards & Zhang, 2010). Both Banki (2006) and Schelecter and Engelbrecht (2006) confirmed that transformational leadership behavior is one of the factors that enhances OCB.

H3: Transformational leadership behaviors have influence upon the employees' OCB.

Organizational Culture

Wallach (1983) had broadly defined culture as ways in which people in an organization do things in their context. It is a mutual perception that people in the organization share their values, beliefs and norms (Yukl, 1998; Wallach, 1983). Schein (1990) viewed that there was little agreement on how an organizational culture should be defined and that the difficulty of defining organizational culture was on the fact that the organization was ambiguous (Schein, 1990). Wallach (1983) categorized organizational culture into three stereotypical dimensions – bureaucracy, innovative and supportive. Bureaucratic culture refers to organizations that have well definedstructure, sound establishment and hierarchically clear divisions in the scalar chain of command (Wallach, 1983). Innovative culture was more in a fast, challenging and dynamic market context. Supportive culture is seen a work-place that had a "family" atmosphere (Wallach, 1983). Khan and Abdul Rashid (2012) indicated that organizational culture was positively related to OC and OCB. Lee and Bin Ahmad (2009) argued that organizational culture could influence employee performance. Therefore,

H4a: Bureaucratic organizational culture has influence upon the employees' OCB.

H4b: Supportive organizational culture has influence upon the employees' OCB.

H4c: Innovative organizational culture has influence upon the employees' OCB.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Organ (1990) defined OCB as behaviors that members of an organization discretely perform with such performances not in the scope of the organization's formal rewarding system but which aggregately promote efficiency (Organ, 1990; Farh, Zhong & Organ, 2004), and effectiveness of the organization's activities (Turnipseed & Murkison, 2000). Even though, OCB incorporated the phenomena that described the extra-role and out-role beyond job descriptions that members of organizations voluntarily performed (Graham, 1991), a consensus for the definition had not been reached (Turnipseed & Murkison, 2000). As one of the most referenced topics of employees' cooperative behavior (Koster & Sanders, 2006), several researches have examined OCB in depth (Huang, You & Tsai 2012; Bolino, Turnley & Bloodgood, 2002; Farh, Zhong & Organ, 2004), but these researches only brought in more terms and valences to the behavior (Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch, 1994). Hui, Law & Chen (1999) incorporated altruism, conscientiousness, interpersonal harmony, protection of company resources as dimensions of OCB, Yoon and Suh (2003) included sportsmanship, civic virtue and altruism while Yu and Chu (2007) – altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship and courtesy. Organ (1990) includes altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness/ compliance, courtesy and sportsmanship: Altruism refers to discretionary behavior and assistance that an individual renders to colleagues, civic virtue refers to appropriate participation in organization governance, conscientiousness referred to performances that an individual renders beyond the requirement standards, courtesy are marks of respect which an individual shows in consideration of others before taking action and sportsmanship is defined as tolerance that a person shows when faced with annoyances without complaints and/or appeal of such dissatisfaction (Organ, 1990).

The Conceptual Framework

The framework consists of the three OC components: AC, CC and NC, goal setting, the transformational leadership behavior and organizational culture: bureaucratic, innovative and supportive cultures, which were hypothesized to having significant influence on the employees' OCB. (Figure 1).

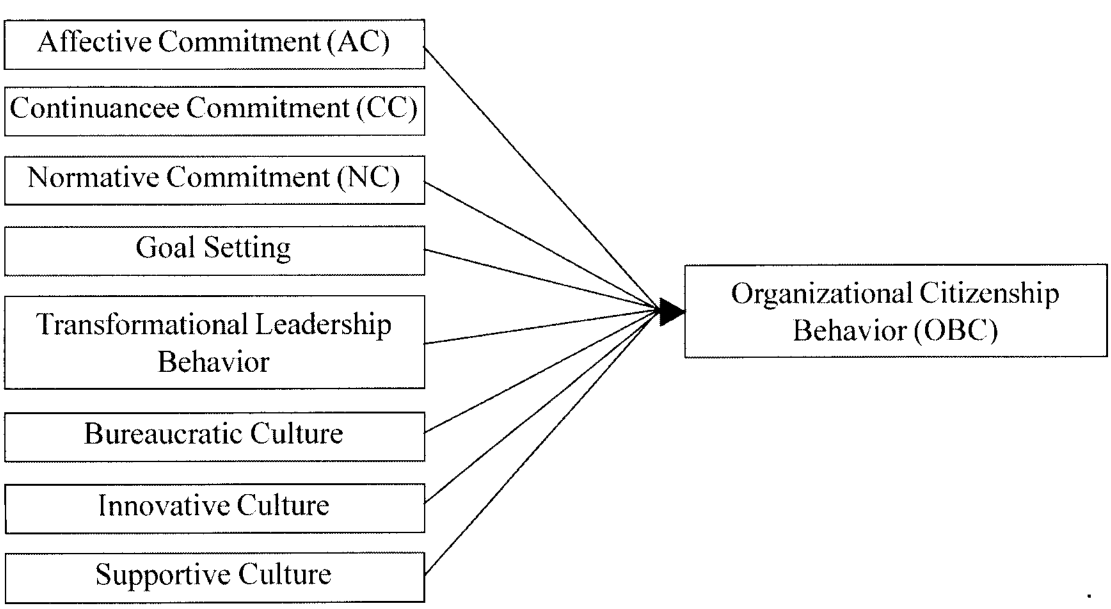

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Developed for this Study

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study postulated that the all independent variables (IVs) should influence the employees' OCB. The forward multiple regression method was applied as the analytical tools in this study, that is, the entrances of IVs into an equation are solely based on a set of statistical influences and the criteria that the IVs have with the dependent variable (DV) (Arttachariya, 2010; Ho, 2006; Pedhazur, 1982). Those variables that are not statistically shared and correlated with the DV will be excluded from the equation (Ho, 2006; Pedhazur, 1982).

RESPONDENTS, SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION

The 403 logistic organizations were drawn from a list of The Industrial Estates Authority of Thailand (IEAT), Rayong branch and the two monthly logistic directories: the Air-Sea Guide and Logistic Manager. The selected samples are categorized according to the validity of their ISO 9000 certification and their services in and out of ESIE. A total of 650 questionnaires were distributed, 466 samples were verified and used in the statistical analysis.

The questionnaire was based on four main questionnaires and one index: 1) OC Questionnaire (OCQ), 2) the Management Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), 3) the Organization Culture Index proposed by Wallach (1983), 4) the OCB questionnaire based on OCB antecedents proposed by Organ (1990) and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Questionnaire (OCBQ) was applied from McCook (2002) in his study - the Supervisory Survey Measures, 5) the goal setting questionnaire employed by Lee, Bobko, Earley and Locke (1991). Adaptations and modifications had been made to fit the Thailand logistic industry practices and Thai contexts.

The reliability and the validity were obtained. The Cronbach Alpha demonstrate the inter-correlation and internal consistency of the data items in a scale (Ho, 2006, Hair et. al., 2006). The rules of thumbs is that the means of the alpha should not be lower than 0.6 (Antachariya, 2010). The validity of data items refers to the correctness of items in measuring a phenomenon, that is, how well the items can define the phenomenon (Hair et. al., 2006). Even though, there are many forms of accepted validity concepts, there are no statistical processes used in the assessment of validities: all assessments are subjective and the final judgment of the validity rests on the researchers' assessments (Arttachariya, 2010, Hair et. al., 2006). The overall alpha of the item-measures was reported at 0.933: the highest was the transformational leadership behavior (0.955) and the lowest alpha was the goal setting, at 0.628.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Through the forward multiple regression statistical method, the paths of IVs toward the OCB showed four entrances: 1) the employees' innovative organizational culture, 2) the employees' CC, 3) the employees' NC, and 4) the bureaucratic organizational culture. The multiple correlations (R) between the IVs and the OCB are reported at 0.793 and the correlations of determination (R^2) of 0.629. This indicates that the IVs that entered the equation explain 63.0% of the OCB. The constant and the unstandardized correlation coefficients (B-values) are reported at constant = 1.151 and 0.333, $p < 0.001$ for the innovative organizational culture with the strongest influence with the OCB, 0.290, $p < 0.001$ for the NC, 0.170, $p < 0.001$ for the bureaucratic organizational culture and -0.059, $p < 0.05$ for the CC (See Figure 2).

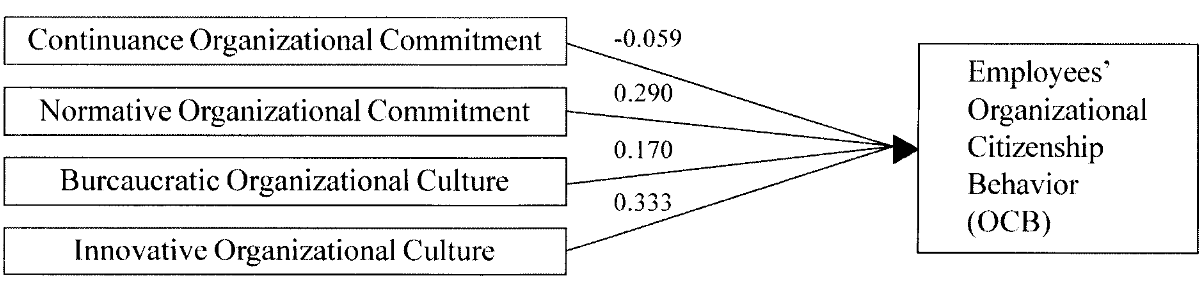

Figure 2: The Result of the Unstandardized Regression Coefficient (B-value) in Relation to the OCB

The variables that are excluded are: 1) the supportive organizational culture, 2) AC, 3) NC 4), the goal setting and the transformational leadership behaviors, i.e. the variables have no influences on OCB. One negative influence was found on the continuance organizational commitment and OCB. This indicates that the higher the levels of CC, the lower the employees' OCB. That is the higher the employees concern of their costs and benefits, the lesser they will sacrifice for their organizations beyond their assigned duties: at $F(4, 461) = 195.432$, $p < 0.001$, we reject the null hypotheses and there are influences between the IVs entered and the OCB. The summary of the research hypotheses could be concluded as per the table 1 below:-

Table 1: Summary of the Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis Statement	B-value	P-value
H1b: CC has influence upon the employee's OCB.	-0.059	<0.05
H1c: NC has influence upon the employees' OCB.	0.290	<0.001
H4a: Bureaucratic organizational Culture has influence upon the employees' OCB.	0.170	<0.001
H4c: Innovative organizational Culture has influence upon the employees' OCB.	0.333	<0.001

DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS

The findings showed that the innovative organizational culture has the strongest influence upon the employees' OCB: under the tight operational situations of the automotive industry and under the Just-In-Time environment, the employees need to constantly cope with rush and tight time-frames of work procedures, locate and pick the right inventories, ensure the arrival of the automotive manufacturers' facilities at the right place and on time. As the manufacturers operate their assembly lines 24/7, staff members on duty need to be trusted and empowered in making instant decisions. Blending the innovative culture with the bureaucratic organizational culture, it can be interpreted that a clearly defined chain of command is also needed to be set, announced and understood in order to gain employees' acknowledgement and acceptance. For example, who is going to be contacted if there is an operational and unforeseen event, which manager/leader shall have to be called, etc. An organizational culture is similar to human beings' personality, complex, illusive and dedicated, to achieve what needs to be achieved, leaders need to understand both the dominant and the sub-culture of the organization (Wallach, 1983).

The employee's Normative Commitment (NC) enters the equation with positive correlation and as one of the strong factors related to the employees' OCB. Meyer, Becker and Vandenberghe (2004) confirmed and proved through theoretical evidence that the employees' NC is associated with reciprocal attitude that the employees have for their organizations which influences the employees' OCB. Being a function of the organizational culture and socialization (Meyer, Becker & Vandenberghe, 2004), organizations can encourage employees' NC through both official and on-the-job trainings. Employees' realize that their career paths with the organizations are promising and subsequently, would develop the NC attitude (Meyer et. al., 2002). A negative influence was found from the employees' Continuance Commitment (CC) can be explained that if the employees have high concern for their investment, the costs and benefits that they invest into the organization, they will possess the lower employee's OCB, i.e. seldom or they will not exert extra-role efforts. Similar to the employees' NC, it was proved through the meta-analysis of Meyer et. al., (2002) that the employee's CC is one among the three components that influences and impacts the employees' OCB. Judging from the ratio of the job positions of the respondents (48.93% were general clerks, warehouse workers, drivers and porters, 33.69% were supervisors and 5.15% were others), the employees' costs and benefits generate substantial impacts on the employees' OCB. Similar comments were also from a human resource manager of a world-wide international logistic provider with approximately 1,000 employees who said that "roughly about 70% of the employees of the organization were with CC attitude, 20% were NC and 10% were AC". With a big proportion of the employees' CC and NC, it is likely that the AC is omitted from the statistical equation.

Goal setting and the transformational leadership behavior have no significant unfluence in this study. The rationale for this is if the organization have successfully planned and implemented clear chains of command, the employees will be able to carry out their operational work routines, cope with unforeseen circumstances hence, the organizational goal setting has no influence on the employees' OCB (minimum requirements to perform the extra-role activities). Similar to the transformational leadership behaviors, through a phone interview with a manager in ESIE, it was commented that "when organizations expand, clearly defined organizational charts and work processes are effectively, officially, jointly drawn and accepted, the operation manager in the facility is just a mere facilitator, many of my staff members know their details of the operations better than managers". For the rejection of supportive culture, an interview session was held with a group of long service staff members. These staff members commented on the virtue of family-like work-place socialization in that: "when the company was small and we had to work in a small shop-house, the boss worked with us and gave support, all of us sometimes, stayed and worked happily till midnight, came to work on holidays, just to finish the work on time. These conditions disappeared as the company grew bigger".

FUTURE RESEARCH

There are wide opportunities to explore Thailand's is logistic contexts and to improve the service quality so that practitioners and players in the logistic will be equipped with more tools to cope with the market demand. It is recommended that more thorough investigations are needed on the IVs that were rejected from the equation.

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IMPACTS OF FREQUENT LEADERSHIP CHANGES AS PERCEIVED BY EMPLOYEES

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Abstract

Whenever there is a change in leadership in any type of organization, it has an impact on employees. The purpose of this study was to find out the perception of employees towards the frequency of leadership changes, as well as the resulting impacts made on their individual lives and organizations. A total of 28 respondents participated in a semi-structured questionnaire that was administered electronically through the use of social network. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. The study indicated that although changes in leadership were acceptable, they should be kept to a minimum. Results also showed that the majority of the respondents were contented with changes, and up to 77.8% were satisfied with their leaders' styles of leadership, particularly democratic, and a combination of democratic and autocratic leadership styles. Positive impacts of well-managed leadership changes as perceived by employees resulted in a better working environment, higher profitability, individual growth, better organizations to work in, and new ideas. On the other hand, employees who had encountered negative impacts of leadership changes experienced stress, job and organizational instability, uncertainty, and reduced productivity.

Key Words: Frequent Leadership Changes, Employee Perception, Impacts of Change, Leadership Changes, Organization Change

บทคัดย่อ

เมื่อไรที่มีการเปลี่ยนแปลงตัวผู้นำในองค์การใด ๆ ก็ตาม จะเกิดผลกระทบต่อตัวพนักงานลูกจ้าง วัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษาครั้งนี้ก็เพื่อจะทราบความรู้สึกของพนักงานลูกจ้างที่มีต่อการเปลี่ยนแปลงดังกล่าว และผลกระทบที่มีต่อชีวิตส่วนตัวของลูกจ้างแต่ละคนและต่อองค์กรโดยรวม การศึกษาครั้งนี้ใช้แบบสอบถามกึ่งสำเร็จรูปผ่านทางอิเลคทรอนิกส์ด้วยสื่อเครือข่ายทางสังคมโดยมีผู้เข้าร่วมตอบ 28 ราย มีการประมวลผลข้อมูลทั้งเชิงปริมาณและเชิงคุณภาพ ผลการศึกษาแสดงให้เห็นว่าแม้การเปลี่ยนแปลงของตัวผู้นำองค์การจะเป็นที่ยอมรับให้เกิดขึ้นได้ แต่ควรจำกัดให้เกิดขึ้นน้อยที่สุด ผลการศึกษายังระบุอีกว่า ผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามส่วนใหญ่รู้สึกพอใจกับการมีการเปลี่ยน และมีจำนวนร้อยละ 77.8 ที่พอใจกับวิธีการบริหารของผู้นำองค์กร โดยเฉพาะวิธีบริหารแบบประชาธิปไตย และวิธีผสมกันระหว่างแบบประชาธิปไตยและรวบอำนาจ ความพอใจที่เกิดขึ้นจากการเปลี่ยนแปลงในตัวของผู้นำที่ทำอย่างมีระบบก่อให้เกิดบรรยากาศการทำงานที่ดีขึ้น ผลกำไรที่มากขึ้น การพัฒนาของพนักงาน องค์กรที่น่าทำงานด้วยมากขึ้น และแนวความคิดใหม่ ๆ ในทางกลับกัน พนักงานที่ได้รับผลกระทบในทางลบจากการเปลี่ยนแปลงผู้บริหารต้องประสบกับปัญหาเรื่องความกดดัน ความไม่มั่นคงในงานและในตัวองค์กร ความไม่แน่นอน และผลการทำงานที่ลดลง

คำสำคัญ: การเปลี่ยนผู้นำบ่อย ๆ, การรับรู้ของลูกจ้าง, ผลกระทบของการเปลี่ยนแปลง, การเปลี่ยนผู้นำ, การเปลี่ยนแปลงขององค์กร

INTRODUCTION

In response to increasing levels of challenges and pressures, existing leaders bring about inevitable changes in an organization in order to survive (Daft, 2010; deKlerk, 2007; Hansson, Vingard, Arnetz, & Anderzen, 2008; Noblet, Rodwell, & McWilliams, 2006; Phipps, Prieto, & Ndinguri, 2013; van Knippenberg, Martin, & Tyler, 2006) and to gain a competitive edge in response to "globalization, new technologies, demographic shifts, emerging markets, and new alliances" (Hughes, Ginnett, & Curphy, 2009; Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2008, p. 514; Phipps et al., 2013). Despite efforts made by leaders in bringing about changes to organizations, not all changes have been successful (Gilley, Dixon, & Gilley, 2008; Umble & Umble, 2014). Many research studies have been conducted on change leadership, but there is minimal research on the impacts of frequent changes in leadership on employees (Bernerth, Walker, & Harris, 2011). This article presents research that has been designed to study the perception of employees on frequent changes in organizational leadership, and how these changes have had an impact on them as individuals, and on their organizations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Organizational Change

When challenged with the need to survive, organizations find it compulsory to introduce consistent strategic changes (deKlerk, 2007; Lamberg, Tikkanen, Nokelainen, & Suur-Inkeroinen, 2009; Phipps et al., 2013) and the task of leading these changes has been cited as one of leaders' most significant and complicated leadership responsibilities despite the uncertainties, complexities, volatility, and ambiguity involved (Chisholm & Martell, 2013; Morrissey, 2013). A key element to successful organizational change is the effort made by leaders in understanding the thought processes of its organizational members; why changes are accepted or resisted, the change process, types of change, and using the relevant models in comprehending organizational problems (Koury, 2013; Stanleigh, 2013; Umble & Umble, 2014).

Frequency of Change

The speed at which change should be introduced has been widely debated. Should change be quickly implemented to avoid resistance to change, or should they be gradual? (Yukl, 2010). Although there is no distinct indication as to which is better, some evidence has favored the slow and gradual approach in the successful implementation of major organizational changes (Amis, Slack, & Hinings, 2004, as cited in Yukl, 2010). Although there is still limited research on the cumulative effects of intense and repeated organizational changes by employees, the common effects include burnout, job anxiety, lowered job satisfaction, increased frustration and stress levels, strain, signs of withdrawal, lower organizational commitment, higher turnover, demotivation, lowered employees' confidence in handling changes, and other potentially negative effects (Bryson, Barth, & Dale-Olsen, 2013; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006; Tvedt, Saksvik, & Nytro, 2009). When too many change initiatives are introduced, they are detrimental to not only individual employees, but also, ultimately to the organizations in which they are employed (Bernerth et al., 2011). On a much more positive side, organizational change, if implemented successfully, stand to benefit in numerous ways such as increases in employee morale, performance, and saves money for the organization (Stanleigh, 2013).

Effective Leadership

Effective leaders are needed to breed success, and a leader is also said to be effective when there is an appropriate match between the leader's leadership style to the organization's setting and his or her followers (Lussier & Achua, 2007; Malos, 2012; Northouse, 2010). Any successful organizational change effort is therefore heavily reliant on leaders who are not only ethical (Kelly, 2013), but practice a good combination of both leadership and management skills (Anca, & Dumitru, 2012; Hughes et al., 2009).

According to Malos (2012), "Leadership is less about your needs, and more about the needs of the people and the organization you are leading" (p. 421). Three main leadership styles briefly discussed in this literature review include the ones that have been included in the study: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles. Autocratic leaders, also known as authoritarian leaders are very strict and dominating leaders who believe in maintaining a tight rein over their lazy, unproductive, and incapable subordinates. The downsides of this leadership style result in low morale, fear, poor solutions for organizational problems, and job dissatisfaction (Malos, 2012; Taylor, 2006). Democratic leaders, on the other hand, have faith and trust in their subordinates' ability, and this is clearly reflected in the high subordinate involvement in decision making, the promotion of social equality, and employee encouragement. The positive impacts of this leadership style include high productivity, increased morale, better ideas and solutions to problems, and this leadership style is known as one of the most effective leadership styles (Malos, 2012; Taylor, 2006; Yukongdi, 2010). The laissez faire leadership style, also known as the "hands off" leadership style, involves almost complete task delegation to its followers without providing much or any direction. An abundant amount of freedom is granted, where followers have access to making their own decisions in work completion with a high degree of autonomy and self-rule. Research has also indicated that this is the least effective style of leadership (Malos, 2012).

The Challenges of Introducing Organizational Changes

Reported failures of organizational changes are as high as 60% to 70% because of complicated change implementations and initiatives, highly attributed to employees' resistance to change (Morrissey, 2013; Stanleigh, 2013; Trignano, 2010). Resistance to change is typical for individuals and organizations (Loesch, 2010; Mariana, Daniela, & Nadina, 2013; McShane & Von Glinow, 2010; Stanleigh, 2013) and is said to be complicated (Loesch, 2010; Umble, & Umble, 2014) despite the benefits to the recipient (Loesch, 2010; Stanleigh, 2013). As change agents, leaders "need to realize that resistance is a common and natural human response" (Mariana et al., 2013; McShane & Von Glinow, 2010, p.447; Trignano, 2010) and they need to move forward in overcoming it as change is a significant component for the organization's future (Leech & Fulton, 2008; Stanleigh, 2013; Zimmerman, 2006).

To successfully manage resistance to change, leaders need to understand the factors behind the resistance, and investigate the challenges and impacts that organizational changes have on their employees. Not only will these leaders gain the trust of their employees but it would also create an appreciation on the part of employees for the need for change (Carr, 2009; Daft, 2010; Pritchard, 2014).

A mistake made by most managers is the assumption that they have successfully implemented a change after delivering a change awareness speech during a one-time conference meeting. A plan should be made to create high employment involvement through their participation throughout the entire planning for change implementation in the form of effective communication, employee support prior to, during, and after the change, and training. This involvement breeds commitment and ownership to change implementation (Carr, 2009; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Lim & Daft, 2004; Pihlak, & Alas, 2012; Trignano, 2010; Wittig, 2012).

Looking from a different perspective, some change management experts stated that "resistance to change needs to be seen as a resource, rather than an impediment to change" (McShane & Glinow, 2010, p. 447). When rightly managed, this resistance can be manipulated by managers in turning it around to attain organizational goals (Jick, 1993; Maurer, 1996, as cited in Yukl, 2010; McShane & Glinow, 2010).

Managing Change

As change agents, managers need to understand the significance of open channels of communication between top management and employees. Change leaders also need to be educated, trained, and prepared to bring about change (Koury, 2013; Trignano, 2010), and as role models, they will also need to work on change on a daily basis in word and action (Keim, 2011; Schaffer, 2010). Changes communicated by top management should not only result in specific, realistic, and attainable expectations, but also involve those directly affected by it to make it successful (Schaffer, 2010). New management, in particular, "must stop, look, listen, and learn before acting" (Feuer, 2008, p. 30) and be very cautious in bringing about any changes that affect the organization's culture as they usually have the tendency to backfire and fail (Katzenback, Steffen, & Kronley, 2012). Educating employees about how changes would have an impact on them, and particularly how they would benefit from the changes, reduces resistance, uncertainty, and fear (Keim, 2011; Koury, 2013; Trignano, 2010). Another critical point is the necessity of ensuring some stability for employees in the midst of new changes to maintain a sense of understanding" (Huy, 1999 as cited in Bernerth et al., 2011, p.321) as it is part of human nature to possess the need for order and predictability (Hogan, 2007; Ullrich, Wieseke, & van Dick, 2005). A big mistake made by change leaders is the misconception that change is easily embraced by employees and that they are capable of moving forward rapidly with the flow of change. Organizational changes are usually accompanied by organizational traumas that are experienced by employees, and change agents need to pay attention to and help employees through this difficult emotional period (deKlerk, 2007).

Therefore, despite the norm of change policies, to grow, and to remain competitive, change agents need to carefully reflect on their change initiatives prior to initiating them as constant change is harmful to not only individuals but to the organization as well (Bernerth et al., 2011).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study (Figure 1) was developed based on a slight conceptual framework adaptation from de Poel, Stoker, & van der Zee (2012), the literature review, and on the results from the study. Starting out with the changes in leadership, that is broken down into the frequency in changes in leaders, the leadership style that is used by the change agent, and methodology in bringing about changes in the organization, these together, have an impact on individuals and organizations. The impacts can be either positive or negative, on job satisfaction, productivity, harmful potential conflicts, and on the future direction of the organization as a whole, and that of employees.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was accomplished by asking three of the following research questions:

1. What is the frequency of leadership changes in an organization?
2. How do employees feel about the frequency of leadership changes?
3. To what degree has the change of leadership impacted employees and the organization as a whole?

METHODOLOGY

The convenience sample was used in the selection of 28 participants and since this study was more exploratory and qualitative in nature, only a small number of subjects was required. Electronic mail was chosen as the preferred social network through which electronic questionnaires were administered to sample respondents (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010). A semi-structured questionnaire entitled *"Impacts of Frequent Leadership Changes: As Perceived by Employees"* was designed to serve the purpose of the study. Combining quantitative (closed-ended questions) and qualitative (open-ended questions) research designs, the questionnaire consisted of three sections and a total of 13 questions. The questions used in the pro-

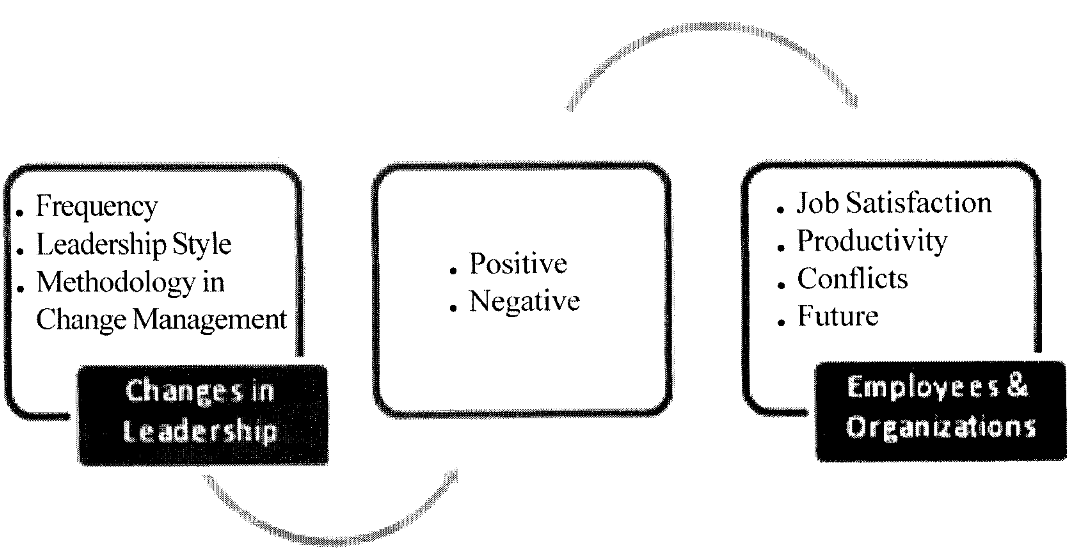

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

file were mainly obtained from the public school teachers' questionnaire called Schools and Staffing Survey (U.S. Department of Education, 2003) while qualitative questions were created by the researcher to answer the research questions. The questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability through an online focus group, recommendations were noted, and questionnaire revised prior to administration.

FINDINGS

Descriptive statistics were used in reporting the frequency findings for quantitative data, and when appropriate, cross-tabulation tables have been employed to address research questions. Qualitative data are presented in tables, in text form.

Respondents' Profile

Out of the total of 28 respondents who had participated in the study, the more dominant gender was female (64%), while only 36% represented the male gender. The results of the respondents' demographics in terms of age, ethnic background, and highest educational degree achieved, as illustrated in Table 1.

Professional Information

Figures and tables have been chosen to display the respondents' professional information: (a) the respondents' place of employment (Figure 2); (b)

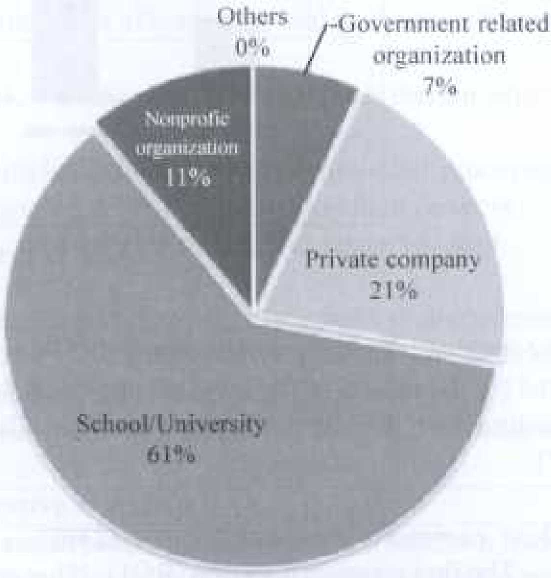

Figure 2: Place of Employment

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

Age	Total	Gender: Female	Gender: Male
29 or lower	7.1%	11.1%	0.0%
30-39	35.7%	3.3%	40.0%
40-49	32.1%	27.8%	40.0%
50-59	21.4%	22.2%	20.0%
60 or higher	3.6%	5.6%	0.0%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Ethnic Background	**Total**	**Female**	**Male**
Asian or Pacific Islander	25.0%	16.7%	40.0%
Caucasian	28.6%	22.2%	40.0%
Thai	35.7%	44.4%	20.0%
Others	10.7%	16.7%	0.0%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Degree	**Total**	**Female**	**Male**
Bachelor Degree	21.4%	33.3%	0.0%
Educational Specialist or Professional Diploma	7.1%	5.6%	10.0%
Master Degree	50.0%	33.3%	80.0%
Doctorate Degree	17.9%	22.2%	10.0%
Others	3.6%	5.6%	0.0%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

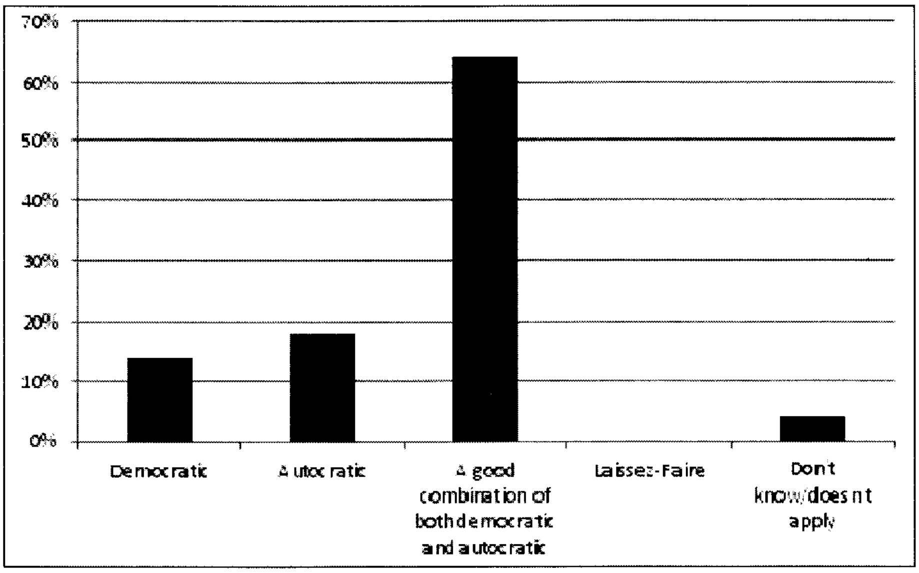

Figure 3: Practiced Leadership Style

the type of leadership style practiced (Figure 3); and (c) the results of the level of employee satisfaction with the various leadership styles (Table 2).

Data Analysis of Research Question One

The first research question (RQ1): *What is the frequency of leadership changes in an organization? was answered with the question, "In the years that I have worked in my organization, the number of changes in leadership has been"*, was a closed-ended item and Table 3 shows frequency of leadership changes by the organizations they represent, and the time period at the organization.

Data Analysis of Research Question Two

The second open-ended question: *What is your opinion regarding the frequency in the change in leadership? addressed RQ2: How do employees feel about the frequency of leadership changes?* As this question was qualitative and data in text format, the findings are classified into positive and negative opinions, and are outlined in Table 4.

Table 2: The Level of Employee Satisfaction with Various Leadership Styles

		Leadership Style				
Level of Satisfaction	**Total**	**A good combination of democratic & autocratic**	**Democratic**	**Autocratic**	**Laissez Faire**	**Don't know/ Doesn't apply**
Agree	67.9%	77.8%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Disagree	21.4%	16.7%	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Maybe	7.1%	5.6%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not sure	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Don't know/ Doesn't apply	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**0.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 3: The Number of Leadership Changes by Organization and Employment Period

		Current Organization				Employment period			
Number of changes	Total	Government related organization	Private com-pany	School or University tion	Nonprofit organiza-	Less than 2 10 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	More than
No change at all	21.4%	0%	17%	24%	33%	25.0%	33.3%	28.6%	0.0%
Two-three changes	25.0%	50%	33%	24%	0%	75.0%	33.3%	0.0%	12.5%
More than three changes	32.1%	50%	17%	35%	33%	0.0%	22.2%	28.6%	62.5%
Don't know/doesn't apply	21.4%	0%	33%	18%	33%	0.0%	11.1%	42.9%	25.0%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**0.0%**	**100.0%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Table 4: Opinions Regarding the Frequency in the Change in Leadership

Comment	Positive Opinions
1	It is good to have a change every five years.
2	We benefit in some ways (e.g. more convenient operations, and a nicer environment).
3	Healthy! It brings about new ideas.
4	There is a need to have change and frequency depending on the result as a whole.
5	Acceptable frequency should be after a few years.
6	Management by succession is the way forward for the organization to nurture and develop its leadership personnel.
7	My organization follows the policies of specific terms of leadership and that seems to work well.
8	Our NGO uses the Policy Governance model, with the checks and balances therein which are very effective.
9	I don't mind as long as it isn't abrupt and with little transition, otherwise other processes slow down. On the other hand, keeping leadership is the key to development network.
10	Good if it's not too often. It's good to set a certain period of time for leaders to lead.
11	I think our organization doesn't change much.
12	The changes are related to the company's benefit and the growth of the individuals because my company moves the leader to different teams to challenge him more and it would not be boring to be in the same place for a long time.
13	Stability is always good when it comes to leadership of a school, as long as the leader is leading the school in the right direction.

Comment	Negative Opinions
1	Change in leadership causes uncertainty and tentativeness in the followers. Therefore, leadership should not be changed too often because it tends to make subordinates feel uncertain about the future and uneasy about the leadership.
2	New leadership teams always implement a lot of changes initially but people have the tendency to resort to their old normal ways eventually.
3	Shouldn't be too frequent as the policy will change when leadership changes.
4	More changes, more learning curve, less productivity and increased stress for employees who have to coach bosses, particularly those who are slow learners
5	There is corruption from the top: the leader of the organization and his team. Whenever there is a change in the top of the organization, there is a change in the organizational leadership.
6	The change in leadership is indicative of the challenges the organization faces – good employees tend to leave after a few years, because they are increasingly frustrated by the autocratic, if not totalitarian "regime" coming from the company's headquarters.
7	It isn't good. No continuity and stability.
8	Change was necessary, but has caused lots of hard feelings this last time.
9	There are difficulties involved in learning to adjust when leadership changes frequently (I've been here for 4 1/2 years and have worked for 3 different bosses).
10	The leadership position should not be changed so often as it will curtail its progress and sustainability.
11	Change is inevitable, and even though I am used to it, there can be quite dramatic shifts in an organization's climate with the change of just one leader. It makes people nervous when changes take place.
12	The Board of Directors does not understand the importance of consistency and long-term work in leadership.
13	If there is a high turnover of leadership, it doesn't help with turnover of teachers; usually the two go hand in hand.

Data Analysis for Research Question Three

RQ3: *To what degree has the change of leadership impacted employees and the organization as a whole? was answered by two qualitative questions: (a) How has a change of leadership impacted you as an employee?* and *(b) Has a change in leadership been positive or negative on the organization?* Text comments for these two questions are found in Tables 5 and 6 respectively.

Table 5: Impacts of Leadership Changes On An Employee's Life

Comment	Positive Impacts
1	A change in leadership has made me what I am today and I am more confident in making decisions.
2	I have only worked under one leader at my current school and it's been great.
3	I have no problem working with any leader as long as that person does the right thing and has a good vision.
4	Not much impact on my personal life.
5	It has helped me grow and mature, it stretches me so I learn to keep myself flexible.
6	Just keep adjusting to a different management style or personality, but this is normal and has not been a problem.
7	I was reassigned to teaching different grade levels, which suited me just fine. It teaches me to adapt and to find out what they are expecting and adjust accordingly.
8	Being able to keep jobs.
9	Not impacted me except for a few changes which were adjustable.
10	Leadership change in the past was part of continuous growth and development that has helped me to grow and develop as an employee as I've seen the need for change.
11	Professional growth and challenge for the good.
12	There are minor changes that did not impact me.
Comment	**Negative Impacts**
1	New leadership saw me as a threat due to the connection I had with the previous leadership and was cut out of the loop on things (since I was not one of them).
2	Forced to make adjustments whether an individual was willing or not.
3	Stress and tension.
4	It is a bit unsettling if the transition is too sudden.
5	It has made my job more difficult and resulted in rising levels of stress, not only as an employee, but also in my life in general, as I have to mull things over at home, after work.
6	It makes me feel disheartened that reduces my efforts at work.
7	Failure to comply means the risk of losing my job.
8	I began work with little training, and was immediately asked to fill the highest position in my department with no workflow transition. I had to work overtime (and still do) to fix and maintain the leadership transition.

Table 6: The Impacts of Leadership Changes on an Organization

Comment	Positive Impacts
1	A new leader, who is good, has a positive impact on the organization.
2	New ideas to the team.
3	An adjustment to a senior leadership about a year ago has had positive results as the profitability of the company has improved significantly.
4	Overall, it has a positive impact in the organization to carry forward the mission and its objectives where new ideas and processes are needed to translate its goals into many action plans.
5	Most changes are positive as a whole
6	The change in leadership needed to be made because he/she was having a negative effect on the company as a whole.
7	Teachers tend to stay longer when there are fewer turnovers at the top.
8	Not much impact as this is a Japanese style organization.
9	Yes, it has been usually good, but there is always a transitional period that can be hard for everyone.
10	As a whole, positive.
Comment	**Negative Impacts**
1	Negative, new things are always taken with much negativity, and not much cooperation.
2	I'm afraid to say that the organization as a whole is run tightly by the company's CEO abroad, where criticism, or attempts to create a dialogue, has not been tolerated, let alone appreciated, leading to a general feeling of "fatalism" and demotivation.
3	According to what I have observed, the change in leadership in the present has built up a kind of distrust among the teachers, no openness among the teachers, and teachers can no longer express their own feelings to other colleagues for fear of severe consequences they may face in the case the complaint reaches the school's leadership team.
4	Yes, it has been usually good, but there is always a transitional period that can be hard for everyone.

DISCUSSION

The respondents of this study are well-educated, and highly represented by the female gender. The ethnic diversity provided a more well-rounded study as the focus was not just from a local point of view but from multi-racial perspectives. Moreover, as most are middle aged, they have behind them, many years of working experience.

Information pertaining to the respondents' professional profile sheds valuable light into their professional backgrounds and the organizations which they represent. It can be concluded that it is very much dominated by the education industry. The majority of the respondents have been in their organizations for a relatively long period of time. This has probably enabled them to witness the changes of leadership and experience the impacts that come along with leadership changes. Most of the organizations in which the respondents worked at, practiced good leadership by either being democratic or a combination of both democratic and autocratic styles.

More than half of the respondents experienced at least two changes of leadership in their current employment, and up to 32% have experienced more than three changes. They were accepting of infrequent leadership changes that brought benefits to the organization but changes made by new leaders should be gradual. It was suggested that management by succession would be a good option in nurturing and developing its new leaders. Other benefits gained through leadership changes included: (a) nicer working environment; (b) more convenient operations; (c) a better organization when a good leader is in place; (d) leading the organization in the right direction, (e) individual growth as employees are promoted, and (f) new ideas.

The drawbacks of frequent leadership changes, included uncertainty, instability, hard feelings, nervousness, the lack of continuity, tentativeness, uneasiness, and inconsistency, policy changes, less productivity, stress, and the departure of good employees.

The impacts of a change in leadership that were experienced by employees had more favorable comments than unfavorable ones. For the most part, employees have realized the need for change, and have made the adjustments to the changes that were necessary. Others felt that they had developed professionally, matured, became more confident, and were able to make better decisions. Those with positive experiences with changes in leadership felt that though the impacts were eminent, they were minor, and did not have a big impact on their lives. Others were not as fortunate as they experienced job insecurity, stress, coercion to adapt, tension, reduced productivity, and were disheartened. It can be deduced that despite the bad experiences by some employees, the majority were in favor of the positive impacts of changes in leadership.

The impacts of leadership changes were positive on organizations when a good leader brings to it, new ideas, increased profitability, positive changes, and when replacing a previously bad leader. Changes in leadership though accepted as being positive, also had drawbacks such as the difficult transitions by employees to the new leadership style, demotivation, and "fatalism". Frequent changes in leadership has also created distrust amongst employees within the organization, and seen as negative, with resistance to changes made by new leaders. It can be concluded that the type of leader determines the impacts he or she has on an organization, and special caution should be exercised when selecting a new leader.

CONCLUSION

The study provided invaluable insights from employees who had experienced, first-hand, the impacts of frequent leadership changes. Comments made by respondents not only confirmed what had been stated in the literature regarding changes brought about by leaders, but also act as new contributions to current literature. Infrequent leadership changes are acceptable and special care should be taken in minimizing changes in organizational leadership at all levels. New leaders should introduce change gradually, maintain some stability, be more sympathetic and understanding of those exposed to change, and remember to involve personnel from all levels in the change process. The results of the study indicated that positive impacts outweighed negative ones, possibility highly attributed to the low levels of autocratic leadership practiced in organizations in which the respondents were represented in.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

One limitation in this study was the minimal amount of information that was provided by respondents as the tendency was to make short comments, rather than longer, more detailed ones.

As there is scant literature available on the frequency in changes of leadership, it is recommended that further research be conducted on this topic to contribute to existing literature. The results obtained from this study can also be used as variables for further research on the topic in the form of a quantitative study.

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