

## **The Effect of Transformational Leadership on Follower's Affective Commitment to Change**

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*Modern organizations are increasingly dependent upon employees' supportive attitudes toward change for successful planned change. This is especially true as organizations are faced with endless organizational changes in order to survive in an increasing competitive global market. The aim of this study is to explore the mechanism through which transformational leadership influences employees' affective commitment to change. The results of this study indicate that transformational leadership not only directly affects employees' affective commitment to change, but also indirectly affects employees' affective commitment to change via perceived organizational support and affective commitment to the organization.*

### **1. Introduction**

Organizations are constantly changing in order to survive (Herold and Fedor, 2008), and problems associated with organizational change not only constitute a threat to an organization's effectiveness, but also impose a significant impact on employees' well-being (Herold and Fedor, 2008). Moreover, countless companies fail to implement organizational changes (Judge et al., 1999). Thus, it is important for researchers to provide insights into opportunities for improving the success of these changes (Parish et al., 2007) and understanding how changes are experienced and perceived by individual employees (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999).

In both theory and practice, employees' positive attitudes toward organizational change (e.g., commitment to change) are a "necessary, initial condition for successful planned change" (Miller et al., 1994, Parish et al., 2007). With respect to positive attitudes toward change, affective commitment is especially relevant when employees are expected to adjust to organizational change (Solinger et al., 2008). Specifically, previous studies have indicated that there is a positive relationship between affective commitment to change (ACC), affective commitment to the organization (AC) (Iverson, 1996, Yousef, 2000, Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002) and transformational leadership (Lowe et al., 1996).

With regard to the antecedents of AC, two such personal and organizational factors have been shown to be key determinants of organizational affective commitment, including leadership (Avolio et al., 2004, Mowday et al., 1982), and POS (Eisenberger et al., 1990, Settoon et al., 1996, Shore and Wayne, 1993, Wayne et al., 1997, Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe, 2003).

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Leadership is seen as one of the most important variables affecting the attitudinal dimension of organizational life (Jaskyte, 2003). The leadership literature has argued that transformational leadership promotes organizational change (Herold et al., 2008, Nemanich and Keller, 2007) by motivating individuals to perform beyond expectations (Sosik and Godshalk, 2000). Moreover, transformational leadership has also been found to be particularly effective in the context of organizational change (Nemanich and Keller, 2007, Caldwell et al., 2009, Herold and Fedor, 2008).

There is evidence that employees engage in an exchange relationship with both the organization as a whole and their immediate supervisor (Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe, 2003). In many respects, the supervisor is the most immediate and salient person in the context of an individual's work, as employees tend to view actions by agents of the organization as actions of the organization itself (Livinson, 1965). Therefore, a leader's behaviors might influence followers' perceptions of organizational support.

POS refers to an employee's global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and is concerned about their well-being (Loi, Ngo, & Foley, 2006; Eisenberger et al., 1986). It has been suggested that such perceptions enhance employees' AC (Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe, 2003) because they perceive that the organization is committed to them (Wayne et al., 1997).

To date, although transformational leadership has been conceptually and empirically linked to followers' affective commitment to organizations as well as to change, relatively little empirical research has focused on the process through which transformational leaders influence their followers' levels of affective commitment (Avolio et al., 2004). Moreover, such a vital area of research has not been adequately, in terms of proportion, addressed in non-Western settings.

In summary, the main purpose of this study is two-fold. The first is to develop a more complete understanding of the inner workings of both transformational leadership and organizational change by focusing on the mechanisms and process through which transformational leadership influences employees' AC and ACC. The second purpose is to test the generalizability of the existing body of research, which has mostly been done in Western settings rather than non-Western settings.

In addition to Section 1(introduction), this paper is organized as follows. In Section 2 overviews the relevant literature on transformation leadership, perceived organizational support, organizational affective commitment and affective commitment to change with hypotheses elaborated. Research methods are introduced in Section 3, followed by a delineation of the results (Section 4) and conclusions (Section 5) in which implications, limitations, contribution are discussed.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Transformational Leadership and ACC**

Basically, leaders provide direction to the people they lead. In terms of leadership style, Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) distinguished transformational leaders from

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transactional leaders. Further, Bass and Avolio (1994) identified four behaviors associated with transformational leaders: (1) idealized influence; (2) inspirational motivation; (3) intellectual stimulation; and (4) individual consideration. With these behaviors, transformational leaders make followers more aware of the importance and values of task outcomes, activate their higher-order needs, and induce them to transcend self-interest for the sake of the organization (Bass, 1985, Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001).

Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) defined ACC as a belief in a change's inherent benefit and the desire to provide support on its behalf. Specifically, employees' ACC is critical to the successful implementation of organizational change (Meyer et al., 2007). In general, the changes experienced by employees are best represented by the new demands affecting their jobs, which are governed by their immediate supervisors. Thus, the impact of a particular change on employees' commitment to such change is expected to be based on their daily interaction and experience with their immediate supervisors.

During the period of change, transformational leadership stimulates team spirit, reframes stressful events into developmental opportunities, and inspires others to perceive tough situations as meaningful challenges necessary for developing one's professional and personal skills (Sosik and Godshalk, 2000). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that such behaviors demonstrated by a transformational leader positively orientate their subordinates' perception towards change, in turn, enhancing their employees' ACC. Accordingly, hypothesis 1 is stated as:

**H1:** There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment to change.

### 2.2 Transformational Leadership and POS

POS refers to an employee's global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and is concerned about their well-being (Loi, Ngo, & Foley, 2006; Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to Loi, Ngo et al. (2006), POS is fostered by two important beliefs of employees: (1) the personification of the organization, and (2) rewards based on the organization's discretion. The personification of an organization by an employee represents the accumulation of treatments the employee has received from more powerful members of the organization (e.g. their immediate supervisor) (Wayne et al., 1997).

By personifying the organization, the immediate supervisor's behaviors are likely to be perceived by employees as representative of organizational decisions (Griffin et al., 2001). From this perspective, the daily interaction between a leader and his or her subordinate may influence POS as the employees' immediate supervisors are often seen as the source or distributor of discretionary rewards provided by an organization. For instance, favorable or unfavorable treatment by the employees' immediate supervisors is interpreted as the organization's benevolent or malevolent orientation towards them (Loi et al., 2006). As such, transformational leadership is effective in influencing subordinates' POS (Judge and Bono, 2000, Bycio et al., 1995), which, in turn, influences subordinates' perceptions of organizational support. Thus, hypothesis 2 is stated as:

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**H2:** Transformational leadership is positively related to perceived organizational support.

### 2.3 Transformational Leadership and AC

There has been considerable research in a variety of organizational settings and cultures suggesting that transformational leadership is positively associated with organizational commitment (Avolio et al., 2004, Glisson and Durick, 1988, Jaskyte, 2003, Judge and Bono, 2000). Specifically, AC has been found to be significantly associated with transformational leadership (Rhoades et al., 2001, Bycio et al., 1995).

Under transformational leadership, there is generally a sense of purpose and family; leaders and followers share mutual interests and a sense of shared fates and interdependence (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Further, empirical results have verified the impact of transformational leaders' behaviors on followers' work attitudes such as organizational commitment (Dumdum et al., 2002, Podsakoff et al., 1990).

It has been argued that the mechanism involved in creating the foundational mind-set of AC includes involvement, shared values and identification (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). In other words, AC develops when individuals become involved in, recognize the value relevance of or derive their identity according to an association with the entity or pursuit of a course of action (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). As such, transformational leaders are able to influence their followers' AC by promoting higher levels of intrinsic value associated with goal accomplishment, emphasizing the linkages between their followers' efforts and goal achievement, as well as by creating a higher level of personal affective commitment on the part of the leader and followers to their common vision, mission, and organizational goal (Avolio et al., 2004). Therefore, hypothesis 3 is stated as:

**H3:** There is a direct positive relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment to an organization.

### 2.4 POS and AC

Eisenberger et al. (1986) developed the concept of POS to explain the development of employee AC. As noted earlier, POS refers to an employee's global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and is concerned about their well-being (Loi, Ngo, & Foley, 2006; Eisenberger et al., 1986). Such beliefs underlie employees' inferences about an organizations' commitment to them, which in turn contributes to employees' commitment to their organization (Wayne et al., 1997).

According to the norm of reciprocity, employees will seek a balance in their interrelationship with an organization by holding attitudes and behaviors that are commensurate with the degree of their employer's commitment to them as individuals (Wayne et al., 1997). From this perspective, employees with high POS tend to express stronger feelings of affiliation and loyalty to their organization, and to perceive their organization's gains and losses as their own (Loi et al., 2006). In other words, high POS strengthens AC (Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe, 2003).

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Also, empirical studies have reported that POS and AC are strongly related (Eisenberger et al., 1990, Settoon et al., 1996, Shore and Wayne, 1993, Wayne et al., 1997, Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe, 2003, Buchanan, 1974, Steer, 1977). Additionally, Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe (2003) demonstrated that the effect of favorable and intrinsically satisfying job conditions (which are normally provided by a transformational leader) on AC are partially mediated by POS. Thus, with regards to the relationship between POS and AC, the relationship between transformational leadership and POS, and the relationship between transformational leadership and ACC, hypotheses 4, 5 and 6 are stated as:

**H4:** POS is positively related to the affective commitment to the organization.

**H5:** POS mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment to the organization.

**H6:** POS mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment to change.

### 2.5 POS and ACC

As noted earlier, POS refers to the employees' global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and their well-being. These global beliefs signify an assurance that the organization will support the employees when they face stressful situations, such as organizational change (Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe, 2003). From this perspective, employees, based on the norm of reciprocity, develop a generalized feeling obligation to care about the organization's welfare and help the organization achieve its objectives (Eisenberger et al., 2001).

Further, POS is associated with the trust that the organization will fulfill its obligations towards employees in caring for their well-being, particularly during times of change. As Novelli et al. (1995) noted, employees who, because of trust in the organization, have positive perceptions of the outcomes of organizational change tend to increase their commitment to change (Fedor et al., 2006). In other words, high POS employees tend to interpret an organization's gains and losses as their own (Loi et al., 2006) during a period of change, and tend to exert efforts to contribute to the change.

Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that an employee who perceives the organization's positive support of them tends to perceive the outcomes of organizational change positively, which, in turn, enhance affective commitment to change. Thus, hypothesis 7 is stated as:

**H7:** There is a direct positive relationship between perceived organizational support and affective commitment to change.

### 2.6 AC and ACC

Conceptually, an employee's perception that a change initiative is consistent with an organization's vision would enable them to commit to that change (Dvir et al., 2004), as an employee with high emotional attachment to the organization would strongly identify with the vision of the organization and the goals and values of change

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initiatives. Empirically, evidence from some Western scholars shows that affective commitment to an organization plays a vital role in employees' acceptance of change (Yousef, 2000, Iverson, 1996). Moreover, employees with strong AC are likely to do more than is required of them, even if it involves some degree of personal sacrifice (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). In short, employees with strong AC would be more likely to demonstrate ACC.

Accordingly, with regards to the relationship between AC and ACC, the relationship between POS and AC, and the relationship between POS and ACC, hypotheses 8, 9 and 10 are stated as:

**H8:** Affective commitment to the organization is positively related to affective commitment to change.

**H9:** Affective commitment to the organization mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment to change.

**H10:** Affective commitment to the organization mediates the relationship between POS and affective commitment to change.

### 3. The Methodology and Model

#### 3.1 Participants

Due to the pressure of competing in both external and internal markets, farmers' associations (FAs) in Taiwan have initiated organizational changes in order to improve effectiveness. In September of 2008, a total of 1350 questionnaires were sent to 15 farmers' Associations in Taiwan. Attached to each questionnaire was a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and a return envelope to ensure that participants were able to return the survey independent of their organizations. A total of 1103 questionnaires were returned (82% response rate), with 939 valid questionnaires after screening (70%). Descriptive statistics for the valid respondents are shown in Table 1.

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**Table 1: Descriptive profile of the respondents**

Gender	Male	40%
	Female	60%
Job Rank	Managerial position	18%
	Non-managerial position	82%
Age	Under 30	5
	31-40	25
	41-50	47
	Over 50	23
Seniority	Over 15 years	60%
	11-15 years	23%
	5-10 years	8%
	Under 5 years	9%
Education	Master	2%
	Bachelor	17%
	Diploma	31%
	High school	50%
Annual income (NT\$)	Over 800,000	24%
	600,001 – 800,000	31%
	400,001 – 600,000	31%
	Under 400,000	14%

## 3.2 Measures

### **Transformational Leadership (TL)**

Transformational leadership was assessed through four dimensions, including individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence, using the twelve items (3 items for each dimension) adapted from Sosik and Godshalk's (2000). Of these items, the subject "I" was replaced with "my immediate supervisor" (e.g. "My immediate supervisor expresses confidence that the goals will be achieved"). The responses were measured along a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" with respect to the respondents' certainty as to their immediate supervisor's leadership ability. The internal consistency of this 12-item scale was .96 in the current sample.

### **Perceived Organizational Support (POS)**

POS was assessed by three items developed by Yoon and Thye (2000) (e.g. "My company is willing to help me when I need a special favor"). The responses were measured along a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", with higher scores indicating higher POS. The internal consistency of this 3-item scale was .76 in the current sample.

### **Affective Commitment to Change (ACC)**

ACC was measured with six items developed by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) (e.g. "This change is a good strategy for the organization"). The responses were measured along a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", with higher scores indicating higher affective commitment to change. The internal consistency of this 6-item scale was .82 in the current sample.

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## Organizational Affective Commitment (AC)

AC was measured using 6 items developed by Meyer, Allen, & Smith (1993). Responses were measured along a 6-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, with higher scores indicating a higher affective commitment to the organization. The internal consistency of this 6-item scale was .83 in the current sample.

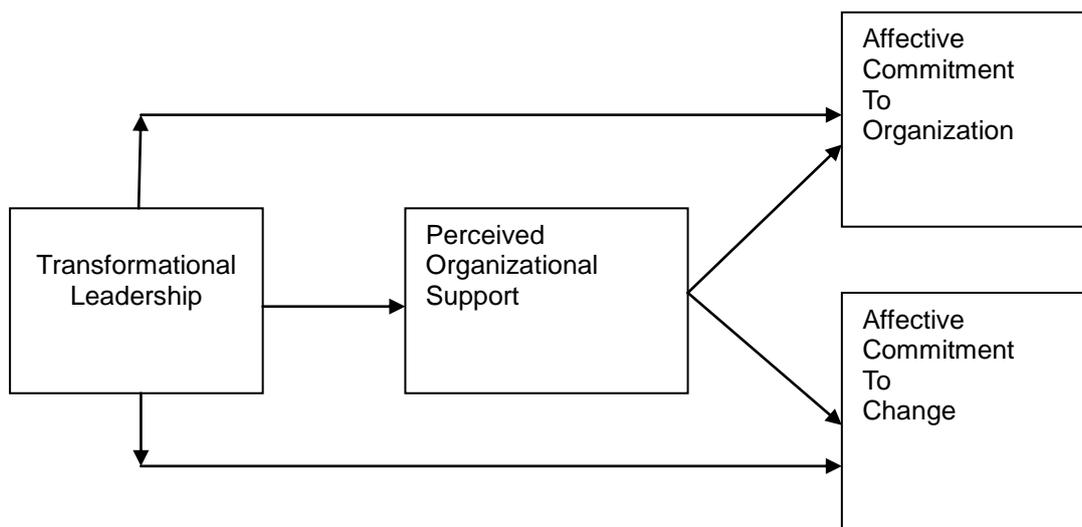
## Control Variables

To avoid the findings being biased by the potential effects of demographic variables, this study controlled for gender, job rank, seniority, education and income, some of which has been shown by previous findings to correlate significantly with transformational leadership, POS, organizational affective commitment and affective commitment to change.

## Model

The model presented in this study is shown in Figure 1

**Figure 1: The research framework**



## 4. Results

Before testing the study hypotheses, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted with AMOS software (Arbuckle, 2003) to examine the convergent and discriminant validity of the study measures. Following the approach recommended by Andersen and Gerbing (1988), convergent validity is demonstrated when the path loading ( $\beta$ ) from an item to its latent construct is significant. All path loadings ( $\beta$ ), except for one item of POS (0.41), are above 0.50. Convergent validity is also adequate when the constructs have an average variance extracted (AVE) of at least 0.50 (Hair, Andersen, Tatham and Black, 2006).

To assess the discriminant validity, the procedures outlined by Fornell and Larcker (1981) were employed to examine whether the square root of AVE for two constructs should exceed the correlation between the constructs. Overall, as shown in Table 2, tests of reliability and validity lead to the conclusion that the measures used in later

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statistical analyses fall within acceptable reliability and validity criteria.

In addition, to address the concern of common method variance in this study due to collecting data from single-source and self-report, the data were examined using a Harmon single factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results indicated that the first factor explained only 36% of the variance which suggests that common method bias is not a serious problem in these data.

Hierarchical regression analyses were used to test the study hypotheses. For this study, the predictors were added in four steps. Firstly, the five demographic control variables were regressed separately for POS, AC and ACC. Secondly, transformational leadership (TL) was then included in a second step for each of the 3 regressions, including the significant demographic control variables from step 1. Thirdly, POS was sequentially added to the 3 separate equations from the previous step. Finally, AC was added to the equations of the second step, while TL was regressed on ACC. All the changes in R squared were tested for significance.

The mean, standard deviations, and correlations between the research variables are shown in Table 2. As predicted, transformational leadership (TL) is positively correlated with POS (0.42,  $p < 0.01$ ), AC (0.29,  $p < 0.01$ ) and ACC (0.20,  $p < 0.01$ ); POS is positively correlated with AC (0.45,  $p < 0.01$ ) and ACC (0.42,  $p < 0.01$ ); and AC is positively correlated with ACC (0.49,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Among Study Variables**

Variable	Mean	SD	Cronbach $\alpha$	CR	Item loading ( $\lambda$ ) (min.-Max.)	1	2	3	4
1. TL	4.05	1.02	.96	.96	(.51 - .88)	<b>(.81)</b>			
2. POS	3.91	.93	.76	.79	(.41 - .90)	.421**	<b>(.75)</b>		
3. AC	4.58	.81	.83	.86	(.76 - .91)	.293**	.451**	<b>(.82)</b>	
4. ACC	4.46	.72	.82	.86	(.70 - .88)	.195**	.424**	.487**	<b>(.82)</b>

Note:

CR= composite reliability.

Item loading ( $\lambda$ ) is standardized.

Values along the diagonal represent the square root of average variance extracted (AVE).

More conclusive specific tests of these hypotheses were conducted using hierarchical multiple regression. The results of the present study provide strong support for the proposed effects of transformational leadership on POS, AC and ACC. As presented in Tables 3 and 4, transformational leadership significantly predicted POS (Model 2(a) of Table 3), AC (Model 2(b) of Table 3) and ACC (Model 2 of Table 4) respectively; POS significantly predicted AC (Model 4(b) of Table 3) and ACC (Model 3 of Table 4); and AC significantly predicted ACC (Model 4 of Table 4). Hence, hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 were supported.

As for testing hypotheses 5, 6, 9 and 10, Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-step process was employed to test the mediating effect of POS and AC between transformational leadership and ACC. The results presented in Tables 3 and 4 indicate that when POS was controlled, transformational leadership's effects on ACC disappeared, whereas transformational leadership's effects on AC remained significant albeit reduced (the  $\beta$  coefficient was reduced from .282 to .126). When AC was controlled, transformational leadership's effects on ACC remained significant

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albeit reduced (the  $\beta$  coefficient was reduced from .174 to .052), and POS's effects on ACC also remained significant but reduced (the  $\beta$  coefficient was reduced from .408 to .289).

In summary, POS fully mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and ACC and partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and AC. Similarly, AC only partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and ACC and the relationship between POS and ACC. Thus, hypothesis 6 is supported, whereas hypotheses 5, 9, and 10 are only partially supported.

**Table 3: Results of Regression Analysis for TL and POS on POS and AC**

	POS		AC			
	Model 1(a)	Model 2(a)	Model 1(b)	Model 2(b)	Model 3 (b)	Model 4(b)
Gender			-.066*	-.074*	-.081*	-.079**
Rank	.18***	.098**	.151***	.093**		.072*
Seniority					.116***	.073*
Education						
Income				.085*	.081*	.076*
TL		.40***		.282***	.126***	
POS					.389***	.439***
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.031	.184	.052	.129	.251	.186
$\Delta R^2$		.153		.077	.122	.134
F-value	7.022***	36.333***	10.295***	22.923***	44.651***	48.634***
(df)	(5,933)	(6,932)	(5,933)	(6,932)	(7,931)	(6,932)

\*Note: Model 4 (b) uses Model 1(b) as a base line for comparison.

**Table 4: Results of Regression Analysis for TL, POS and AC on ACC**

	ACC						
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Gender							
Rank	.166***	.130***	.092**	.095**	.091**	.071*	
Seniority							
Education							.061**
Income							
TL		.174***			(ns)	.052*	
POS			.408***		.403***		.289***
AC				.472***		.471***	.342***
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.036	.064	.197	.247	.196	.252	.310
$\Delta R^2$		.028	.161	.211	.132	.185	.083
F-value	7.962***	11.695***	39.238***	52.229***	33.624***	68.649***	91.386***
(df)	(5,933)	(6,932)	(6,932)	(6,932)	(7,931)	(7,1399)	(7,1399)

Note:

Model 2,3 & 4 use model 1 as a base line for comparison.

Model 5 uses Model 2 as a base line for comparison.

Model 6 uses Model 2 as a base line for comparison.

Model 7 uses Model 3 as a base line for comparison.

## 5. Conclusions

For decades accumulating evidence has been suggesting that transformational leadership is positively associated with work attitudes and behaviors at both an individual and organizational level (cf. Avolio et al., 2004). The results of this

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research demonstrate that the actions of a supervisor (i.e. transformation leadership style) are effective and compelling indicators of employees' POS, AC and ACC. This supports Dum Dum, et al., (2002) and Jaskyte's (2003) assertions that leadership is seen as one of the most important variables affecting work attitudes (organizational affective commitment and affective commitment to change, in this case) in organizational life. Indeed, supervisor-subordinate interaction has a significant bearing on employee attitudes (O'Driscoll and Beehr, 1994).

According to Masterson, et al.'s (2000) assertion, individuals in organizations are involved in two types of exchange relationships: with their immediate supervisor and with their organization. From this perspective, an employee's development of perceived organizational support relies on daily interaction with their immediate supervisor (Shore et al., 1995). This study, consistent with the prior research on POS (e.g., Rhoades et al., 2001; Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, 2003), revealed that POS is an important mediator of the effect of a favorable work experience in dealing with the immediate supervisor on organizational affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Specifically, a favorable intrinsically satisfying work experiences (which are generally provided by the transformational leader) generates the feeling of being cared for by the organization, which translates into higher levels of organizational affective commitment (Stinglhamber and Vandenberghe, 2003). The mediated effect of POS identified in this study supports the concept of the personification of an organization. This explains why leaders' behaviors are of such importance to the development of employees' attitudes towards the organization.

In regard of the relationship between AC and ACC, the results of this study are also consistent with Ford et al.'s (2006) assertion that ACC is conceptually and empirically distinct from AC. Moreover, the findings of this study are consistent with Inverson (1996) and Yousef's (2000) findings that there is a positive relationship between organizational affective commitment and affective commitment to change ( $r=.487$ ,  $p< .001$ , Table 2).

Like other studies, this study also has limitations. Firstly, the sample is confined to a limited number of FAs (15) in Taiwan, which might in turn limit the generalizability of its findings and conclusions either to other FAs or private enterprises. Secondly, despite the appropriateness of using subordinates' evaluations for transformational leadership, POS, AC and ACC measures, this approach introduces potential problems with common-method bias as the measures of research variables were gathered from the same source. Thirdly, one must be cautious in interpreting the findings of this study due to the possible constraint of non-response bias, such that non-respondents might hold different views with respect to the variables in question, leading to survey estimates that will be biased. Finally, this study suffers from the common limitations of cross-sectional field research, including the inability to make causal inferences.

Although there are limitations to this study, there are also a number of strengths. In particular, this study extended prior research by focusing on detecting a complex set of relations between and among transformational leadership, POS, AC and ACC. Given the critical role that commitment to change plays in the successful

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implementation of change (Parish et al., 2007), and the efficacy of transformational leadership in developing subordinate's work attitudes, improving the understanding of the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' reactions to organizational changes (e.g., affective commitment to change) has become increasingly important (Fedor et al., 2006).

It is both important and beneficial for practitioners as well as researchers to gain an understanding of the drivers of AC and ACC. From this perspective, this study provide additional insights into the mechanism through which transformational leadership influences AC and ACC.

Additionally, given that the vast majority of organizational change-related studies and leadership have been conducted in North American and other Western countries, the results of the present study demonstrate that the effects of transformational leadership on employees' POS, AC and ACC can also be extended and extrapolated to Asian populations.

With regards to the direction for future research, as employees also develop general views concerning the degree to which supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being (Kotte and Sharafinski, 1988) in addition to their perception of organizational support, future research is needed to examine the mediating role of perceived supervisory support (PSS) between transformational leadership and affective commitment to change. In addition, future research is needed to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and supportive behaviors to organizational change in order to develop a more complete understanding of the effect of transformational leadership on behaviors through work attitudes.

In summary, transformational leadership was found in this study to be positively related with organizational affective commitment and affective commitment to change. The existence of such linkages has implications for management and HR practitioners. They should focus their efforts on developing leadership talents with the intention of implementing organizational change successfully.

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