

# INFLUENCES OF PERCEPTIONS OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE SUPPORT ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF JAPANESE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR

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This paper describes the study of the relationship of Work-Life Balance (WLB) Support to Organizational Commitment (OC) in Japanese Construction Contractors in Singapore. Both quantitative and qualitative study has been conducted. The correlation between Organizational/Superior Support for WLB with OC are discussed and concluded.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Japanese Contractors was taking part in the earlier infrastructure development and many high-rise building constructions in Singapore since 1965. Due to long working hours and highly-paid overtime fee, Japanese contractors were very attractive. However, many research works have shown that long-working hours causes less productivity. It decreases OC and causes the increase of job turn-over rate. Ministry of Manpower (MOM), Singapore published “Work-Life Harmony Report” in 2005 emphasizing in the business competitiveness by implementing Work-Life Harmony and Policy. Only gradual change has been seen in construction industries due to initial constraint of work environments. The objectives of this research are to identify current status and problems during the implementation of Work-Life Balance (WLB) policies in Japanese Contractors in Singapore and to study the influence of perceived WLB management to OC.

OC is an important factor to employee's attitudes/behaviors which lead to employee's performance or turnover. In the organization which employees have high commitment, it tends to have better in-role and extra-role performance from employees. Meyer J. P. and Allen N. (1997) viewed OC as three dimensions namely, affective, continuance and normative commitments. OC characterizes organizational member's relationship with the organization.

## 2. RESEARCH CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

In construction industry, there is a demanding work environment in which a culture of long working hours prevails. Most construction sites in Singapore operate six-day or even if twenty four hours/seven day a week for infrastructure development project. Professionals and managers work heavily long hours without overtime payment. Construction schedule as well as safety creates to project stakeholders are also high. The emotional exhaustion (burnout), subjective overload and average working hours per week all positively predict employees' work-to-family conflict. Work-life conflict (WLC) is extensively reported to be problems for individuals, their families and organizations. Raisinghani M. and Goswami (2014) reviewed numerous papers and proposed WLB model focusing on WLC to the organizational outcomes. The author adopts this model and modify for using as the research conceptual framework as shown in Fig 1.

The author aims to study WLB status and policy in Japanese Contractors in Singapore. As the first stage, the quantitative research method is implemented and 59 numbers of questionnaire are responded. The data analysis by SPSS was conducted and the eight hypotheses were tested. The second part of the research is the qualitative research which investigate the in-depth information from 11 Key Informants (Fig 2).

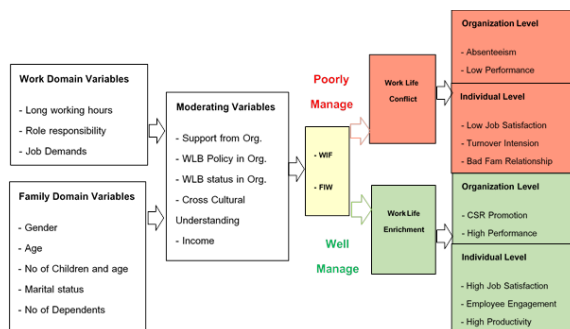


Fig 1 Research Conceptual Framework

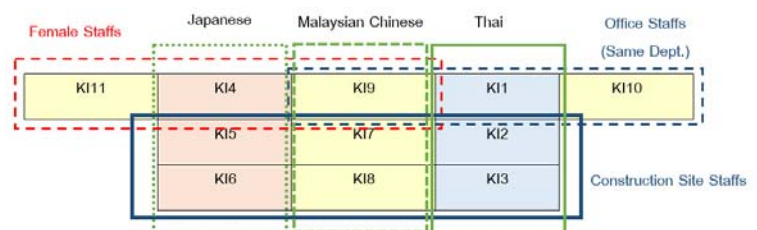


Fig 2 Key Informant Grouping (Triangulation)

## 3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Eight Hypothesis tests have been conducted in quantitative study part. The test results are explained as followings

HT 1 Income (INC) will not related to Work Satisfaction (WS) and Life Satisfaction (LS)

HT 2 There is no difference between Work Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction Level of Male and Female

HT3: Actual Working Hours (AWH) is negatively related to both Work Satisfaction (WS) and Life Satisfaction (LS).

HT4: Actual Working Hours (AWH) is positively related to WIF/FIW.

HT5: Actual Working Hours (AWH) will not related to Organizational Commitment.

HT6: Work Satisfaction (WS) is positively related to Organizational Commitment.

HT7: WIF and FIW is negatively related to Organizational Commitment (OC).

HT8: Organizational and Superior Support is positively related to Organizational Commitment (OC).

Keyword: WLB, Organizational Commitment, Work-Life Conflict, Japanese Construction Contractors,

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The relationship between variables can be written as shown in Fig 3. Table 1 indicated the demographic information of 11 Key Informants in qualitative part of the research. Research findings are discussed in these following three aspects.

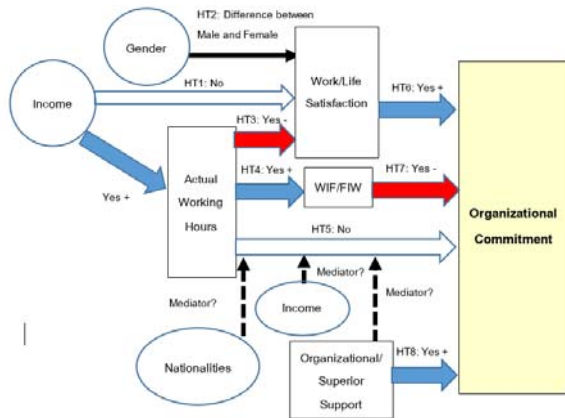


Fig 3 Summary Results from Qualitative Parts

Table 1 Summary of Demographic information of KIs

KI	Gender (Age)	Nationality	Language	Position (Workplace)	Family Structure	Contract Type
1	Male (38)	Thai	Thai	Manager/Office	Wife and 1 son	Japanese
2	Male (37)	Thai	Thai	Manager/Site	Wife, 1 son	Professional
3	Male (30)	Thai	Thai	Engineer/Site	Wife	Professional
4	Female (30)	Japanese	Japanese	Engineer/Site	Single	Japanese
5	Male (48)	Japanese	Japanese	PM/site	Wife, 3 sons	Japanese
6	Male (44)	Japanese	Japanese	PM/site	Wife, 2 sons	Japanese
7	Male (39)	Malaysian (Chinese)	English	Manager/Site	Wife, 2 dtrs and 1 son	International
8	Male (30)	Malaysian (Chinese)	English	Engineer/Site	Wife, 1 son	International
9	Female (43)	Malaysian (Chinese)	English	Manager/Office	Single	Local
10	Male (32)	Philippines	English	Engineer/Office	Wife, 1 dtr, 1 son	Local
11	Female (31)	Philippines	English	Manager/Site	Single	Professional

### Working hours and WIF/FIW

It is found that staffs in the Construction business have very long working hours. Especially, all Japanese staffs have overtime working hours nearly or more than the original contract working hours. Professional contract staffs have very long working hours as well. With similar working hours, Professional contract staffs has more work satisfaction than Japanese contract staffs. This is because for Professional contract staffs agree working hour and responsibility before signing contract. Significantly higher income and contract benefits can compensate the long working hours. While Japanese contract staffs who feel less satisfied because there are significant different in working hours between office staffs and construction site staffs but income and benefit under Japanese contract does not show any significant different.

### Organizational Commitment

Referring to Meyer J. P. and Allen N.'s three dimensional OC, the interview results implied that young engineers have stronger dimension of Affective Commitment and Normative Commitment while senior staffs have more in Continuance Commitment. In order to promote OC of young staffs, "Affective Commitment" is the key factor. The support from Superior on working environment, career path and fair evaluation contribute in increasing OC by emotional attachment. The organizational/superior supports also result in the responsibility or obligation based reason for staying and it will create another commitment called "Normative Commitment" to the young to middle-age staffs. For senior staffs, emotional attachment becomes less while, Continuance Commitment will play important role. "Salary and Benefit", "Comfort zone" and "Concerns about uprooting of family" are the key factors to stay in the Organization. The relationship between components of OC with ages are illustrated in Fig 4.



Fig 4 Organizational Commitment with Age

### Organizational/Superior Support and Organizational Commitment

All staffs agreed in strong relationship between Organizational/Superior support and OC. This complies with HT8 in the quantitative part that WLB Organization and Superior Support (OSS) is positively correlated to Organizational Commitment (OC). This means although staffs suffer from long working hours and have WIF/FIW, if employees perceive Organizational/Superior support to solve their problems, Organizational commitment still be able to maintain.

## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to promote OC, age or working years of staffs shall be considered. To young staffs, "Affective Commitment" is most significant; therefore, a superior shall plan for career path and support for good working environment. At the same time, Normative Commitment can be slowly built-up by the thrust between superior and staff. The feeling of obligation or the sense of debt owed to superior and organization will create Normative Commitment.

The limit of working hours shall contribute in work productivity and cause less problem of Work-Life Conflict. However, due to work environment of construction contractors (long working hours), employees may experience WIF/FIW. When WIF/FIW of employees is not managed well, it will cause employees to consider about Turn-over. Organization/Superior shall support employees to improve WLB environment as it can minimize negative to OC. The compensation such as better salary, or long compensation leave after project completion, can be utilized to maintain employees' OC.

No-Overtime day policy is highly effective for office staffs but site staffs who work longer hours cannot enjoy the benefit. This may result in negative impact of unfair feeling. Compensation due to site condition shall be implemented.

## References

- Meyer J. P. and Allen N. (1997). Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research and Application. Sage Publications.  
 Raisinghani M. and Goswami R. (2014). Model of Work Life Balance Explaining Relationship Constructs. International Journal of Application or Innovation in Engineering and Management. Vol 3. Issue 2.