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on the Provincial Waterworks Authority's Employees' Attitudes and Behaviors

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Abstract

This study examined the impacts of HR practices and leader-member exchange (LMX) on employee work attitudes and behaviors through perceived organizational support (POS). It was predicted that rewards, training and development, internal promotion, information provided by HR, working conditions and performance management would influence POS. For LMX, it was predicted that leaders or supervisors would act as representatives of the organization in implementing these HR practices, and thus would be a predictor of affective commitment and POS. Ultimately, the predicted POS would influence employees' attitudes and behaviors. The data were derived from questionnaires collected from 520 employees working for the Provincial Waterworks Authority in 74 provinces across Thailand. Structural equation modeling results revealed that HR practices including rewards, training and development, internal promotion, information provided by HR, and working conditions were found to have a direct impact on POS. LMX was found to have a direct impact on affective commitment and POS. Moreover, POS ultimately demonstrated its positive relationship to employee work attitudes and behaviors.

ผลกระทบของแนวปฏิบัติด้านการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์และการแลกเปลี่ยนระหว่างผู้นำกับสมาชิกที่มีต่อพฤติกรรมและทัศนคติในการปฏิบัติงานของพนักงานการประปาส่วนภูมิภาค

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษานี้มุ่งศึกษาผลกระทบของแนวปฏิบัติด้านการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์และการแลกเปลี่ยนระหว่างผู้นำกับสมาชิกที่มีต่อทัศนคติและพฤติกรรมในการปฏิบัติงานของพนักงาน โดยผ่านการรับรู้การสนับสนุนจากองค์การ แนวปฏิบัติด้านการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์ ซึ่งประกอบด้วย การให้รางวัล การฝึกอบรมและพัฒนา การเลื่อนชั้น เลื่อนตำแหน่ง การให้ข้อมูลต่าง ๆ โดยผู้ปฏิบัติงานด้านทรัพยากรมนุษย์ สภาพการทำงานและการบริหารผลการปฏิบัติงาน ถูกคาดว่าจะส่งผลทางบวกต่อการรับรู้การสนับสนุนจากองค์การ สำหรับการแลกเปลี่ยนระหว่างผู้นำกับสมาชิกถูกคาดว่า ผู้นำหรือหัวหน้างานจะแสดงบทบาทเป็นตัวแทนขององค์การในการนำแนวปฏิบัติด้านการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์เหล่านี้ไปปฏิบัติ และจะเป็นตัวทำนายความผูกพันทางใจต่อองค์การและการรับรู้การสนับสนุนจากองค์การ ท้ายที่สุด การรับรู้การสนับสนุนจากองค์การถูกคาดว่าจะส่งผลต่อทัศนคติและพฤติกรรมในการปฏิบัติงานของพนักงาน วิธีการศึกษาใช้เทคนิคการวิจัยเชิงปริมาณ โดยใช้แบบสอบถาม ซึ่งเก็บข้อมูลจากพนักงานของการประปาส่วนภูมิภาคที่ปฏิบัติงานอยู่ใน 74 จังหวัด ทั่วประเทศไทย จำนวนกลุ่มตัวอย่าง 520 คน ผลการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลผ่านโมเดลสมการโครงสร้างพบว่า การให้รางวัล การฝึกอบรมและพัฒนา การเลื่อนชั้น เลื่อนตำแหน่ง การให้ข้อมูลต่าง ๆ โดยผู้ปฏิบัติงานด้านทรัพยากรมนุษย์ สภาพการทำงานมีอิทธิพลทางตรงต่อการรับรู้การสนับสนุนจากองค์การ และผลการศึกษาพบว่า การแลกเปลี่ยนระหว่างผู้นำกับสมาชิกมีอิทธิพลทางตรงต่อความผูกพันทางใจต่อองค์การและการรับรู้การสนับสนุนจากองค์การ นอกจากนั้น การรับรู้การสนับสนุนจากองค์การยังมีอิทธิพลต่อทัศนคติและพฤติกรรมในการปฏิบัติงานของพนักงานด้วย

คำสำคัญ: แนวปฏิบัติด้านการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์ การแลกเปลี่ยนระหว่างผู้นำกับสมาชิก การรับรู้การสนับสนุนจากองค์การ ความรู้สึกเป็นหนี้บุญคุณ/มีข้อผูกพัน ความผูกพันทางใจ ความพึงพอใจในงาน ผลการปฏิบัติงานในหน้าที่ พฤติกรรมการเป็นสมาชิกที่ดีขององค์การ ความตั้งใจที่จะลาออกจากงาน

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Introduction

The Provincial Waterworks Authority, or PWA, is a state enterprise under the supervision of the Interior Ministry of Thailand. PWA's main mission is to provide the basic infrastructure for conveying water to the population in 74 provinces across Thailand, except for Bangkok, Nonthaburi and Samut Prakan, which are under the responsibility of the Metropolitan Waterworks Authority (MWA). PWA proclaimed its vision, "Customers are delighted with water quality and excellent services". To fulfill this vision, people or employees are viewed as the most significant asset of the organization enabling it to do so (Wedchayanon, 2000: 40). This means that human resource functions are expected to align human resources strategy and HR practices to business strategy (Srimuang, 2005: 10). Moreover, there are new roles and duty of the human resources function as a business partner working cooperatively with line managers (Srimuang, 2005: 11). Ultimately, the effectiveness of human resources management would generate and increase knowledge, motivation, synergy, and commitment of staff, resulting in a source of sustained competitive advantage for the firm (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002). In other words, the effectiveness of HRM would illustrate its strategic effect on total organizational performance.

Huselid (1995) argued that HR practices represent a means that can be utilized by organizations in shaping their employees' attitudes and behaviors. This is because HR practices generate conditions where employees become more committed and work harder to help the organization achieve its goals. According to Morrison (1996), how a firm manages its employees, as reflected by its HR practices, creates the conditions of the employee-employer relationship. When such relationship is viewed as that of a social exchange (Blau, 1964), where the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) is central, employees would be more likely to reciprocate by demonstrating positive work attitudes and behaviors based on the extent to which they feel the employer cares about their well-being and provides support (Eisenberger et al., 2001). HR practices are an organization's investment in employees which signals to them that the organization recognizes their contributions and cares about their welfare. For example, Wayne et al. (1997) proposed that when employers invest in and provide appreciation for their employees, they contribute to the development of perceived organizational support (POS).

Based on the findings of studies on POS in the Western context, the concept of organizational support is accepted as being important in improving organizational effectiveness. These perceptions of organizational support have been linked to variety of employee outcomes, including organization commitment, job satisfaction, intention to leave, and performance (Allen et al., 2003; Eisenberger et al., 2001; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Settoon, et al., 1996; Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Wayne et al., 1997; 2002). Although prior research has established the effect of certain or individual

HR practices on POS in other contexts (e.g., Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Kinicki et al., 1992; Tetrick et al., 1994; Hutchison & Garstka, 1996; Meyer & Smith, 2000; Rhoades et al., 2001; Wayne et al., 1997; 2002; Allen et al., 2003; Guchait, 2007), a lack of research has examined the impacts a set of HR practices and leader-member exchange (LMX) on POS, as well as outcomes of POS in Thai context.

Interestingly, in spite of the fact that strategic human resource management (SHRM) has been adopted and implemented in PWA's context since 2009, there still remain various unanswered questions whether human resources as employees of the organization and HR practices as a representative of SHRM really contribute to the organization's success, how HR practices work, and what are the effects of HR practices on employee and organizational outcomes. In this study, the literature on HRM is integrated with OB literature. By further examining the impacts of a set of HR practices and LMX on POS, the social exchange approach and organizational support theory have been adopted as a theoretical foundation to explain the mechanisms through which a set of HR practices and LMX impact employee attitudes and behaviors, which are believed to have an effect on organizational outcomes in PWA's context, in the case of Thailand.

The first aim is to examine whether employees' perceptions about HR practices have a positive effect on employee POS. For LMX, leaders or supervisors would be expected to act as representatives of the organization in implementing HR practices that would shape employees' perceptions of exchange relationships with the organization. Therefore, the study's second objective is to examine whether employees' perceptions about the quality of leader-member exchange have a positive effect on employee POS and affective commitment. Overall, HR practices that are interpreted to be supportive and caring tend to stimulate employees to reciprocate this support to the organization through positive work attitudes and behaviors. Thus, the study's third objective is to test whether POS has a significant effect on employee work attitudes and behaviors. They are as follows: 1) Whether POS has a significant effect on job satisfaction and affective commitment; 2) Whether felt obligation has a mediating effect on the relationship between POS and affective commitment; 3) Whether affective commitment has a significant effect on in-role performance, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) and intention to leave; and 4) Whether job satisfaction has a significant effect on in-role performance.

Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Development

The Resource-Based View of Sustaining Competitive Advantage
Human Resources Management consists of a variety of activities, and key among them are recruiting and training the best employees, ensuring they are high performers, dealing with performance issues and managing employee compensation and benefits. Although these activities are all traditional HR functions and continue to be HR main tasks or duties, HRM was brought into

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organizations to shake things up by shifting to be strategic partners of business (Fitzgerald, 2004). Thus, HRM have emerged as a key factor providing a sustained competitive advantage (Guest, 1997). In addition, HRM practices have been accepted as a strategic tool for organizations and play a crucial role in managing people through planning, recruiting, developing, retaining and motivating them to commit and deliver higher performance (Beardwell & Holden, 1997).

The resource-based view (RBV) has been used as a theoretical basis in testing a specific set of HR practices and its relationship with organizational performance and examining the HR's role in supporting business strategy (Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2001). It has been argued that internal resources of the firm attain a sustained competitive advantage because they meet the four criteria of value, rarity, inimitability and non-substitutability (Barney, 1991). For competitive advantage to be gained, internal resources are unlikely to be identical among current competitors, and these resources cannot be acquired readily. Taken from economics and strategic management, when talking about strategic human resource management, the resource-based view consolidates strategy, HR practices and the organization's human capital (Wright & McMahan, 1992). In this way, the organization must focus on organization's internal resources and invest in its human capital through progressive HR practices, through which specific capabilities of the organization are developed by generating knowledge and assets, and thereby, building and maintaining a sustained competitive advantage (Wright & McMahan, 1992; Wright et al., 1995). By investing in and utilizing HR programs that develop and motivate employees, organizations attain their competitive advantage through their employees (Pfeffer, 1996; Wright & McMahan, 1992). The HR system is defined as an "intangible asset" that generates value when it is embedded in the working systems of a firm in that it improves the organization's capabilities; and it cannot be easily imitated by another firm since the precise mechanisms by which HR systems create value are difficult to capture (Becker & Gerhart, 1996). This investment in the human capital of the firm suggests that the employees are the intended targets of such investments.

HR Practices, Employee Attitudes and Behaviors

Most research in the field of HRM has focused on the role of HR practices in enhancing human capital. For example, Snell and Dean (1992) agreed with Cascio (1991) who noted that "HR practices are the primary means by which firms invest in their employees" (p. 473). Delaney and Huselid (1996) stated that progressive HR practices should incorporate those practices that result in employee skills and ability, motivation, and structure of work. Huselid (1995: 635) coined the term "high-performance work practices", to describe as "HR practices adopted to improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a firm's current and potential employees, increase their motivation, reduce shirking, and enhance retention of quality employees while encouraging nonperformers to leave the firm". Moreover, a high performance work system (HPWS) has been also identified as "a system of HR practices designed to enhance employees' skills, commitment, and productivity in such a way that employees become a

source of sustainable competitive advantage" (Lawler, 1992; Levine, 1995; Pfeffer, 1998 cited in Datta et al., 2005: 136).

Crucially, high-performance work practices or HPWSs encourage an organization to invest heavily in human capital. The human capital theory (Becker, 1964) suggests that a firm invests in employees and provides employment security to the extent that these investments will transform into knowledge, skills and abilities, which have economic value to that firm. In other words, firms provide treatment and support to employees in exchange that they produce future returns, such as increased productivity and diminished turnover. Therefore, the final objective behind investment in human capital is to improve worker skills, knowledge, motivation and flexibility, which in turn, enhances individual productivity and total organizational performance (Youndt et al., 1996). Employers expect to gain increased operational efficiency and firm performance from employees (Richard & Johnson, 2004), by providing employees with the ability and opportunity to have the power to make decisions in the workplace. Thus, when employers invest in and implement HPWSs or HR practices in order to develop and motivate its employees, training and development, incentive rewards, performance management, recruitment and selection are considered (Huselid, 1995; Paauwe & Boselie, 2005).

The secondary objective in HRM investment is to allow employees to have the authority to make decisions on the issues that will affect their working life and changing in organizational routines. In this perspective, HR practices are conceptualized as the way organizations implementing to improve worker skills, motivation and empowerment (Wright & Boswell, 2002). Boxall and Purcell (2003) typically defined this approach of empowering workers through providing skills and motivation as the AMO theory: ability, motivation and opportunity (Bailey, 1993; Appelbaum et al., 2000). HR practices are perceived as a support from the organization, and thus employees expect to be managed fairly and treated well, starting with the process of recruitment (Gilster & Dalessandro, 2008). In addition, most employees seek to gain from the employers or the organization what they consider to be fair terms and fair employment conditions (Davenport, 1999). Empirical research suggests that aspects of productivity and organizational climate, as well as the ability to recruit and retain employees, can be determined by the history of treatment by the organization (Evans, 2004). When employees feel that the organization values them and cares about them as human beings, they will reciprocate by expanding their respective job roles and behaviors in a way that benefit the organization (Wang, 2009).

As discussed above, HPWS may function through effects on ability, motivation, and opportunity (Bailey, 1993; Appelbaum et al., 2000). These HRM practices may also result in changing the nature of organization-employee relationships through employees' perception of organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In this regard, theories that address the process by which HR practices influence employee work attitudes and engender effective work behaviors are

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expected to explain why these practices may promote exchange relationships and alter employee attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Rhoades et al., 2001; Wayne et al., 1997; 2002; Allen et al., 2003). Thus, the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986) are fundamental in explaining the effect of these HR practices on employee attitudes and behaviors, which are believed to have an effect on organizational performance.

Understanding Employee Attitudes and Behaviors: Social Exchange Theory and Perceived Organizational Support

The social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) have recently been used in organizational research to describe the motivational basis behind employee behavior and the formation of positive employee attitudes (Levinson, 1965; Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 2002). Organizational researchers today rely on Eisenberger et al.,'s (1986) concept which proposed the "perceptions of organizational support" (POS) construct, defining it as the employee's "global belief concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being" (p. 501), to describe the exchange relationships between the organization and its employees (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), employees who perceive high levels of POS tend to repay the organization with positive attitudes and desired work behaviors (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger et al., 1997). In the HRM context, it means that employees perceive investments in HR practices, when an organization invests in and provides recognition of employees, they are more inclined to reciprocate the organization with positive work attitudes and behaviors (Settoon et al., 1996; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Therefore, when employees have higher levels of positive perceptions about their training and development, fair payment or advancement opportunities, it can be expected to affect their commitment and job satisfaction to the organization. Khilji and Wang's analysis of HR satisfaction shows it to be a crucial indicator of organizational performance, leading them to investigate (2006: 1185) that 'it is employee satisfaction with HRM, not the mimicry of HR practices, which translates into improved organizational performance.'

While HR practices play a crucial role in developing and maintaining the exchange relationship between employees and organization in the workplace context (Tsui et al., 1997), the role of employee - supervisor relationships is a critical element of HR systems that offers insight about how the implementation of strategic HR practices can help to enhance high levels of POS, which in turn, contribute to positive work attitudes and behaviors. Graen and Scandura (1987) stated that the working relationship that appears between an employee and their supervisor or manager is usually referred to as leader-member exchange (LMX). LMX can also be understood from a social exchange theory perspective (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). Based on the social exchange in the context of Gouldner's (1960) "norm of reciprocity," wherein he discusses reciprocity as a "mutually

contingent exchange of benefit between two or more units" (p. 164). Liden et al., (1997) suggested that reciprocation of both tangible and intangible resources exchanges conduces to the quality of the relationship. A high-quality LMX involves a supportive relationship between both parties in which the supervisor allocates additional resources to the subordinate and provides them with responsibility, trust, influence, and support that go beyond what is the norm given by the formal organization (Feldman, 1986; Wayne et al., 1997).

Reichers (1985) argued that due to the fact that an organization is too abstract and distal to the employees, POS stems from a process of "personification" (Shore & Shore, 1995; Wayne et al., 1997 cited in Liu, 2004: 4-5). That is, the employees "personalize" the organization by accumulating experiences over time through rewards and punishments that they receive from other higher ranking staff (Shore & Shore, 1995; Wayne et al., 1997). Since employees' direct leaders are often responsible for administrating and providing additional resources, rewards, and support, it is likely that the exchange relationship between the leader or supervisor and their employees plays a crucial role in influencing employee POS (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997). Therefore, it is possible that a high quality LMX is related to favorable treatments provided to the employee by the supervisor and it acts as a representative of the organization in implementing organizational practices.

Leader–Member Exchange (LMX)

The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory was initially named by Graen and Cashman (1975) as the vertical dyad linkage (VDL) theory. It was used to describe the dyadic relationship between individuals in leadership roles and each subordinate. Renamed by Graen et al. (1982), LMX proposes a dyadic approach for providing a better understanding of the working relationships between supervisors and subordinates. It involves the degree of emotional support and exchange of valued resources between both parties (Sparrowe & Liden, 1997). Subordinates are expected to perform their jobs in accordance with their supervisors' expectations; meanwhile, supervisors are expected to treat and reward subordinates in proportion to the quality of work they perform (Wang et al., 2005 cited in Loi et al., 2009: 404). Sullivan et al. (2003) stated that the exchange between a supervisor and his or her team was based on Homan's social exchange theory. Homan's social exchange theory identified that individuals will behave themselves in response to perceived rewards (Emerson, 1976). There is a reciprocal exchange process between the two parties in that the greater the perceived value of the tangible and intangible benefits exchanged, the higher quality of the LMX relationship (Liden et al., 1997).

However, supervisors treat each subordinate differently at varying degrees and levels (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) argued that, due to limited time and lack of resources to devote to each employee, supervisors tended to develop high-quality LMX with only a

few essential subordinates, but not with the others. According to Uhl-Bien et al. (2000), high-quality LMX is characterized by high degrees of mutual trust, respect, and obligations between the dyadic parties. On the other hand, low-quality LMX manifests that subordinates are obligated to comply with formal role requirements. LMX is different from social and economic exchanges in that the development of LMX is derived from working relationships between supervisors and subordinates and their mutual role expectations (Loi et al., 2009). In brief, high-quality LMX involves exchanges of psychological benefits of dyadic relationships, whereas, under low-quality LMX, both parties have low levels of mutual support and reciprocal influence and restrict their expected roles in response to standards specified in job descriptions (Yukl & Michel, 2006 cited in Loi et al., 2009: 405).

According to the social exchange theory, employees who are part of a high-quality exchange relationship with a specific partner should develop and direct their attitudes and behaviors toward that dyadic exchange (Murphy et al., 2003). Interestingly, empirical research has shown that the quality of LMX is positively associated not only with work outcomes relevant to dyadic relationships, but also with employees' positive attitude, such as affective commitment toward the organization and a decline in their intention to quit their job (Gerstner & Day, 1997). It is theoretically significant to argue why subordinates under high-quality LMX are more committed to their organization and willing to remain with their organization.

There are several reasons why LMX would be positively associated with commitment (Wayne et al., 2009). Firstly, Graen (1976) argued that during the role-making process (i.e., the process leading to high-quality relationships), supervisors encourage employees to commit themselves to the organization, as well as devote more time and energy to the work at hand, even staying late at night. In high-quality relationships, the supervisor attempts to make the subordinates believe that they have to strongly commit to their organization (Wayne et al., 2002). In addition, employees in high-quality relationships can anticipate being committed to the organization because they are attached to their supervisors, and they have a sense of allegiance to them. Because supervisors can be seen as an important proxy, representing the agency in executing employment relationships with employees (Wong et al., 2003; Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007), this attachment and fidelity are essential in increasing feelings of affective commitment to the organization.

Secondly, organizational commitment is argued to be influenced by job challenge, opportunities for social interaction, and receiving feedback. In general, supervisors take charge of assigning tasks and giving feedback. Employees in high-quality relationships are typically given more responsibilities and duties than identified in a job contracts, making them increase their efforts (Liden & Graen, 1980; Liden et al., 1997). Furthermore, generally these subordinates also are in closer contact with their supervisors, thus raising more opportunities for feedback. Also, the closeness

that high-quality relationships generate augments the frequency of interaction between supervisors and subordinates (Dienesch & Liden, 1986).

HR Practices and Perceived Organizational Support

Based on the organizational support theory, HR practices have been considered as a support provided by the organization that demonstrates investment in the employee or appreciation of their contributions, and are discretionary in the sense that the organization is not obligated to offer the practice to all members (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Shore, 1995). Shore and Shore (1995) identified two types of HR practices that contribute to POS. The first involves discretionary practices that imply organizational caring but are not mandated by government rules or union contracts. The second type of practice involves organizational recognition, including career development, promotions, awards, and so forth. Studies conducted by Huselid (1995) and Shaw et al. (1998 cited in Allen et al., 2003: 102) argued that supportive HR practices, which signal investment in employees and contribute in their ability and skill development, should be critical for the development of high POS. The results by Allen et al. (2003: 114) demonstrated that when employees considered HR practices (e.g., opportunity for growth, fairness of rewards) as a support received from the organization, there will be a contribution to higher POS, which in turn, will lead to affective commitment as the employees perceive that the organization supports and cares for them. Wayne et al. (1997) argued that offering employees opportunities for career advancement and promoting them to higher position indicate that the organization recognizes their contribution and imply future support from the organization. Their study showed that both promotions and development experiences (training) had a significant positive relationship with POS. Similarly, allowing employees participation in the goal setting aspect of the performance management process represent that the organization values their input and recognizes their contribution. Hutchison and Garstka (1996) found that feedback and employees' participation in goal setting had a significant and positive impact on POS.

Additionally, being recognized and rewarded fairly reflected that an organization is willing to invest in employees and recognizes their contribution and care about their well-being (Fasolo, 1995), and Shore and Tetrick (1991) found that satisfaction with pay is a key driver of POS. Meyer and Smith (2000) reported that benefits and career development had a positive correlation with POS. Rhoades et al. (2001) also found that perceptions of organizational rewards and procedural justice are key drivers of POS. Providing information to the members of an organization on various employment related issues (e.g., policies and procedures, rewards, benefits and employee relations) is a key channel used by an organization to imply organizational support. Kinicki et al. (1992) found that information sharing was antecedent of POS. Similarly, providing good and safe working conditions to employees reflects that the organization cares about employees' well-being. Guchait (2007) found that good and safe working conditions had a significant positive relationship with POS,

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indicating that employees interpret good and safe working conditions as caring and support from the organization. Therefore, this study uses a set of six HR practices, which includes rewards and recognitions, training and development, promotional opportunities, information provided by HR, working conditions and performance management, to propose that they will lead to higher POS.

Hypothesis 1a: Employees' perception of the quality of reward practices will be positively related to the level of POS.

Hypothesis 1b: Employees' perception of the quality of training and development practices will be positively related to the level of POS.

Hypothesis 1c: Employees' perception of the quality of internal promotion practices will be positively related to the level of POS.

Hypothesis 1d: Employees' perception of the quality of the information provided by the HR function will be positively related to the level of POS.

Hypothesis 1e: Employees' perception of the quality of working conditions will be positively related to the level of POS.

Hypothesis 1f: Employees' perception of the quality of performance management practices will be positively related to the level of POS.

Leader-Member Exchange, Perceived Organizational Support and Affective Commitment

As mentioned earlier, while organizations often formulate HR strategies and HR policies to guide the implementation of HR practices, leaders who take responsibility for administrating and allocating rewards, resources, and opportunities may have considerable discretion as to how these HR practices are implemented for specific employees (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997). Due to Levinson's (1965) position that supervisors' positive or negative valuation are considered by employees as an indication of organizational support, supervisors are primary in the level of POS experienced by the employees. Levinson (1965) argued that employees tend to view the behavior and actions of supervisors or organizational agents as actions of the organization. Likewise, subordinates interpret the treatment and support by their supervisor as an indication of favorable organizations' policies, practices, and procedures (Eisenberger, et al., 2002; Rhoades et al., 2001). Thus, the quality of the exchange relationship between the employee and the leader (i.e., LMX) or supervisory support, appears to be a vital element in implementing HR practices that may contribute to higher POS. Prior research has shown that LMX is positively related to POS (e.g., Wayne et al., 1997; Rhoades et al., 2001; Liu, 2004). Therefore, the quality of LMX relationship could be expected to be positively related to POS.

H2: Employee perception of the quality of LMX will be positively related to the level of POS.

In addition, high-quality LMX, as has been discussed, may lead to stronger affective commitment. As discussed earlier, perceived organizational support is an employee's judgment based on the degree to which they feel the organization cares about their welfare and recognizes their contribution (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Similarly, perceived supervisor support is an employee's judgment based on the extent to which they feel his or her leader or supervisor treats them and acknowledges their value as an employee, as well as their contributions to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Employees view the actions performed by leaders or supervisors as actions performed by the organization; therefore, perceived leader or supervisor support affects subordinate perceptions of organizational support. When employees maintain positive perceptions about a supervisor or a leader and organizational support, commitment to the organization may be enhanced. This notion is validated by numerous researchers that showed supervisor support, or LMX, is positively related to organizational commitment (e.g., Duchon et al., 1986; Green et al., 1996; Liden & Maslyn, 1998; Bhal & Ansari, 2007; Kinicki & Vecchio, 1994), affective commitment (e.g., Ariani, 2012; Eisenberger et al., 2010). Thus, LMX was predicted to be a predictor of affective commitment.

H3: Employee perception of LMX will be positively related to affective commitment.

Perceived Organizational Support, Affective Commitment and Felt Obligation

Perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' perceptions of the organization's commitment to them and reflects employees' global beliefs concerning the degree to which the organization cares about their well-being and values their contribution (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Eisenberger et al. (1990) suggested that employees' perception of how an organization values them are more likely to repay the organization with positive attitudes and favorable work behaviors. According to scholars (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993), in the context of social exchange (Blau, 1964), positive, beneficial actions performed by the organization or its agent as provider aimed at employees will contribute to the establishment of high quality exchange relationships, which in turn, develop obligations for employees to reciprocate the provider with positive attitudes and favorable outcomes. One of the means employees used to repay what they received as supportive treatment from the donor is through stronger attachments to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Rhoades et al., 2001). Evidence from the Western studies support the positive association between perceived organizational support and affective commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Settoon et al., 1996; Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Eisenberger, et al., 2001; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Tumwesigye, 2010). Thus, POS would be expected to be a predictor of affective commitment in a Thai context.

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H4: Employee POS will be positively related to affective commitment.

Additionally, although POS tends to lead employee commitment to an organization, this effect may function via a feeling of obligation to reciprocate the organization's commitment to them (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger et al., 2001). Based on this proposition, Eisenberger et al. (2001) hypothesized that felt obligation will mediate the relationship between POS and affective commitment by partly increasing the employee's commitment; however, it was found that felt obligation only played a partial mediating role. This result suggested that POS still had a direct correlation with affective commitment. In interpreting the findings, Eisenberger et al. (2001) contended that an organization's perceived concern about its employees produces a feeling of obligation among the employees to care about the organization. One way for an employee to fulfill this obligation feeling is through greater attachment to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Mowday et al., 1979). Thus, POS may have a direct effect on affective commitment, and an indirect effect through felt obligation.

H5: Felt obligation will partially mediate the relationship between employee POS and affective commitment.

Affective Commitment and Employees' Attitudes and Behaviors

POS is gained through supportive HR practices and ultimately influences employee attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. When employees feel as if that they receive a higher level of support from the organization, they will perform better with respect to job roles and extra-role behaviors and have a desire to remain with the organization because they feel obligated to care about the organization and help it reach its goals through increased organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Employees with a higher level of affective commitment work harder and perform better than those with a lower level of affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Empirical support has been found for a positive relationship between affective commitment and job performance (e.g. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Riketta, 2002; Meyer et al., 1989). In addition, studies on commitment also provided strong evidence that affective commitment is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior (e.g. O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Van Dyne & Ang, 1998; Shore & Wayne, 1993). On the other hand, affective commitment is negatively related to withdrawal behaviors and turnover intention (e.g. Meyer et al., 2002; Ali & Baloch, 2009; Addae & Parboteeah, 2008; Chan et al., 2010). Thus, this study posits that:

H6: Affective commitment will be positively related to in-role performance.
H7: Affective commitment will be positively related to organizational citizenship behavior.
H8 Affective commitment will be negatively related to turnover intention.

Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the next attitudinal outcome of POS; it is defined as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience" (Locke, 1976: 1304). Mowday et al. (1982) argued attitudinal differences between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Commitment represents an attitudinal response to the organization as a whole, whereas satisfaction represents one's response to one's job or specific aspects of one's job. In addition, commitment seems to improve slowly and consistently over time, while satisfaction reflects more immediate reactions to specific aspects of the job environment, such as pay and supervision (Mowday et al., 1982). Rhoades et al. (2002: 701) suggested that "POS should contribute to overall job satisfaction by meeting socio-emotional needs, increasing performance-reward expectancies, and signaling the availability of aid when needed". Many studies concluded that POS affects job satisfaction (e.g. Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Nye &Witt 1993; Cropanzano et al. 1997; Eisenberger et al., 1997; Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002). Thus, POS is to be treated as the factor that generates job satisfaction as the following hypothesis suggests:

H9: Employee POS will be positively related to job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction and In-Role Performance

Job satisfaction and in-role performance are also important to industries and organizations because their productivity and performance depend on the employees' job satisfaction and performance (Spector, 1997). Therefore, industrial and organizational psychologists have started studying a relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance decades ago. Most of the earlier reviews of the literature reported a weak and somewhat inconsistent association between employees' job satisfaction and performance. An early study by Brayfield and Crockett (1955) reported that a high level of job satisfaction was not associated with individual job performance. In contrast, Herzberg et al. (1957) found a positive association between job satisfaction and individual employee performance where a high level of job satisfaction leads to greater individual job performance. A review of the literature in 1985 reported that the statistical relationship between job satisfaction and individual performance was about .17 (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985).

However, in a more recent review of 301 studies, Judge et al. (2001) found the average association between job satisfaction and job performance was a higher .30, and found to be higher for complex jobs (e.g., professional) than for less complex jobs. Some researchers have found a stronger relationship between satisfaction and individual job performance. For example, Brewer and Lee (2005) conducted a study of 46,000 federal government employees from 1989 to 2000 and found a strong and positive association between job satisfaction and individual performance. In addition, Sarmiento, Beale, and Knowles examined the job satisfaction of manufacturing employees

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in Mexico. The results indicated that job satisfaction had a strong correlation with both individual and organizational performance. Therefore, job satisfaction could be expected to be positively related to in-role performance.

H10: Job satisfaction will be positively related to in-role performance.

Research Methods

In this study, the researcher employed quantitative research methods to explore the unique impacts of HR practices and LMX on employees' behaviors and attitudes through perceived organizational support in a Thai context, in the case of the Provincial Waterworks Authority, or PWA.

Sample

The population consisted of 8,657 employees from the Provincial Waterworks Authority in Thailand. The researcher employed stratified simple random sampling method and calculated the sample size based on the number of constructs or the model complexity (Hair et al., 2009), which were 520 employees. A total of 600 questionnaires were delivered by hand and mail, and 520 of the questionnaires were received back, equivalent to a 86.67 percent response rate. The questionnaire design was based on theoretical concepts and operational definitions, and the tests were performed using content validity and reliability methods.

Measures

This research used standard questions adopted from previous studies to measure the variables. Respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) the extent to which they agreed with the statements.

Employee perceptions of HR practices: were measured with a twenty-nine items scale consisting of statements about six HR practices. Scales for each of these practices were developed and modified with items from established HR practices scales in existing SHRM and POS literature. The following describes each of the HR practices included in the field study.

Training and Development: were measured using seven items from the scale developed by Delery and Doty (1996) and Wayne, Shore and Liden (1997) scale (α=.747).

Internal Promotion: were measured using three items from the scale developed by Gardner et al. (2002) and Delery and Doty (1996) (α=.824).

Performance management: were measured using six items from the scale adapted and selected from various sources (Vandenberg et al., 1999; Hutchison & Garstka, 1996; Delery & Doty, 1996; Chang, 2005) (α= .778).

Rewards: were measured with five- item scale adapted and selected from various sources (Gardner et al., 2002; Vandenberg et al., 1999; Snell & Dean,1992; Balkin & Gomez-Mejia, 1990; Chang & Chen, 2002) (α =.838).

Information provided by HR: were measured using four items from the scale developed by Allen et al. (2003) (α=.882).

Working conditions: was measured using four items from the scale developed by Edgar and leaders was measured using seven items from the scale developed by Graen and Scandura's (1987) (α=.835).

Perceived Organizational Support (POS): was measured using four items from the survey of perceived organizational support (SPOS) developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) (α= .941).

Felt Obligation: employees' felt obligation to care about the organization and to help the organization reach its goals was measured by six items from the scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (2001) (α=.900).

Job Satisfaction: was measured using twenty-three items and measured by the subjects' responses based on 5-point Likert-type scales (1 = strongly dissatisfied, 5 = strongly satisfied). The twenty-item scale assesses various HRM-related aspects of job satisfaction. This measure was adapted from Bacon and Blyton's (2000) CORUS survey instrument, and the three-item scale assesses satisfaction with aspects of work which is similar to Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire satisfaction subscale were developed by Cammann et al. (1979) (α=.885). The main question was 'how satisfied are you with the following aspects of your job?

Affective Commitment: affective commitment is the employees' commitment to help the organization reach its goals as a result from perceived organizational support. This was measured by six-item from the scale developed by Meyer and Allen's (1991) (α= .900)

Organizational Citizenship Behavior: employees' direct supervisor completed the fourteen-item measure of Williams and Anderson's (1991) OCB scale (α = .776). This measure consisted of seven items that focus primarily on benefiting specific individuals as target (OCBI) and seven items

that focus on benefiting the organization (OCBO).

Turnover intention: was measured by using five-item and all items were adapted from Wayne et al. (1997) (α= .856).

In-Role Performance: the six-item in-role performance scale asked supervisors to rate the degree to which subordinates met the formal requirements of their job (α = .884; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Farh & Cheng, 1997).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

N=520	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	242	46.50
Female	278	53.50
Age		
Less than 38 years (1980-1997) Gen Y	306	58.80
38- 52 years (1965-1979) Gen X	169	32.50
53 years or above (1940-1964) Baby Boomer	45	8.70
Education level		
Less than a Bachelor's degree	77	14.80
Bachelor's degree	337	64.80
Master degree or above	106	20.40
Position in the organization		
Staff (Level 1-3)	44	8.50
Staff (Level 4-7)	332	63.80
Supervisor (Level 8)	144	27.70
Work experience		
Less than 5 years	77	14.80
5 – 9 years	133	25.60
10 – 14 years	120	23.10
15 –19 years	63	12.10
20 years or over	127	24.40
Number of years in the organization		
Less than 5 years	178	34.20
5 – 9 years	121	23.30
10 – 14 years	69	13.30
15 –19 years	44	8.40
20 years or over	108	20.80

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations among Variables.

Variables (N=520)	Means	SD.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.TAD	3.69	0.579	(0.747)													
2.IP	3.69	0.705	.556**	(0.824)												
3.PM	3.57	0.677	.503**	.607**	(0.778)											
4.RW	3.51	0.828	.403**	.563**	.650**	(0.838)										
5.IPBHR	3.53	0.647	.400**	.430**	.463**	.379**	(0.882)									
6.WC	3.83	0.648	.438**	.388**	.491**	.439**	.379**	(0.786)								
7.LMX	3.70	0.669	.395**	.476**	.468**	.399**	.412**	.309**	(0.835)							
8.POS	3.59	0.604	.501**	.558**	.537**	.559**	.423**	.462**	.461**	(0.941)						
9.FO	4.03	0.579	.280**	.210**	.234**	.185**	.302**	.262**	.176**	.363**	(0.900)					
10.JS	3.72	0.524	.506**	.482**	.595**	.567**	.474**	.514**	.406**	.694**	.294**	(0.885)				
11.AC	4.04	0.569	.365**	.356**	.344**	.329**	.391**	.278**	.283**	.455**	.612**	.439**	(0.900)			
12.OCB	3.97	0.468	.297**	.152**	.197**	.124**	.130**	.179**	.050	.195**	.391**	.165**	.323**	(0.776)		
13.TI	3.88	0.866	-.101*	-.184**	-.154**	-.187**	-.304**	-.088*	-.142**	-.238**	-.255**	-.212**	-.427**	-.095*	(0.856)	
14.IRP	3.97	0.489	.206**	.217**	.223**	.169**	.238**	.178**	.135**	.277**	.358**	.265**	.348**	.589**	-.192**	(0.884)

Note. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). TAD: training and development; IP: internal promotion; PM: performance management; RW: rewards; IPBHR: information provided by HR; WC: working conditions; LMX: leader-member exchange JS: job satisfaction; AC: affective commitment; FO: felt obligation; POS: perceived organizational support; OCB: organizational citizenship behavior; TI: turnover intention; IRP: in-role performance.

Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, which includes frequencies and percentages. The correlations among the variables, means, standard deviations, and reliabilities as well as correlation matrix appear in Table 2. Before testing the hypothesized model, the researcher first tested the measurement model, as recommended by Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-stage analysis. For the measurement and structural models, the analyses were conducted with SPSS version 22 and AMOS version 21 to generate the covariance matrix, which is used to estimate the model.

Measurement Model

The confirmatory factor model was produced, with all the factor loadings exceeding .50 (.514 - .928) and all constructs' reliability being higher than .70 (.747 - .941), which reflected construct validity of the measurement model. The goodness-of-fit indices showed an acceptable fit to the data when taking into account all of the fit statistics, Chi-Square (X^2) value = 3,393.402; the CMIN/df value = 1.981; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .043; root mean square residual (RMR) = .027; comparative fit index (CFI) = .920; normal fit index (NFI) = .852; goodness of fit index (GFI) = .827; and adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = .803. Although the results showed that GFI and AGFI are less than .90, as suggested by Bentler and Bonett (1980), AGFI that ranges from .80 to .90 is considered a moderate fit. In addition, Tanaka and Huba (1985) recommended that only a model with a GFI less than .80 should be rejected. Thus, the measurement model of this study was acceptable.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesized model also provided an acceptable fit to the data on the basis of the fit statistics, Chi-Square (X^2) value = 3,638.728, the CMIN/df value = 2.070, RMSEA = .045, RMR = .037, CFI = .911, NFI = .842, GFI = .820, AGFI = .800. Standardized parameter estimates for this model are shown in Figure 1. Five of the six HR practices, in the form of rewards (β = .289, p < .001), training and development (β=0.181; p < 0.01), internal promotion (β=0.165; p < 0.05), information provided by HR (β=0.133; p < 0.05), and working conditions were found to be significantly and positively related to POS (β=0.124; p < 0.05). Performance management was not significantly related to POS (β=0.013; p < 0.05). Leader-member exchange was significantly related to POS (β=0.132; p < 0.05) and affective commitment (β = .141, p < .01). Felt obligation mediated the relationship between POS and affective commitment (β = .217, p < .001). In predicting the outcomes of POS, POS was significantly related to affective commitment (β = .205, p < .001) and job satisfaction (β = .806, p < .001). Affective commitment was positively related to in-role performance (β = .303, p < .001), OCB (β = .372, p < .001), and negatively related to turnover intention in a significant way (β = -.477, p < .001). Job satisfaction was positively related to in-role performance (β = .172, p < .05). The amount of

variance explained for the endogenous variables was 65 percent for job satisfaction, 60.40 percent for POS, 51.30 percent for affective commitment, 22.80 percent for turnover intention, 16.30 percent for in-role performance, 16 percent for felt obligation and 13.80 percent for OCB.
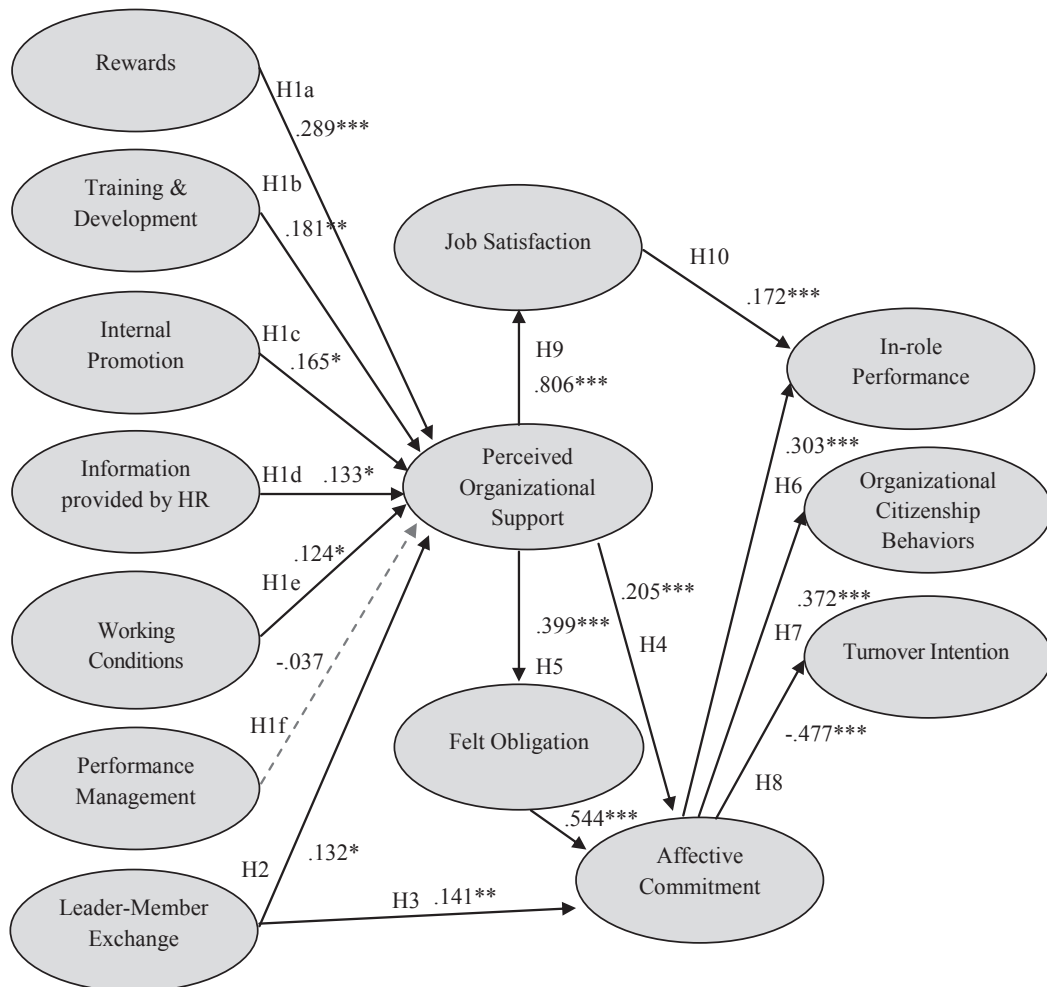

Figure 1. Maximum likelihood estimates for the hypothesized model. (*p < .05, **p <.01, ***p < .001)

Discussion

This study investigated the impact of employee perceptions with respect to a set of HR practices on employee attitudinal and behavioral outcomes through perceived organizational support (POS). It is argued that based on the organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986), HR practices are interpreted by employees as actions that reflect an organization's intentions concerning long-term investment in employees, and are likely to be judged as caring about employees' well-being and recognizing their contribution. Such favorable valuation would contribute to the development

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of POS, and it will contribute to POS more substantially, if believed to be the result of discretionary actions by the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1997; Shore & Shore, 1995). This contention is supported by this study which asserts that employees' perceptions of HR practices including rewards, training and development, internal promotion, information provided by HR and working conditions had significant positive effects on POS, as evidenced in prior research works (Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Kinicki et al., 1992; Tetrick et al., 1994; Hutchison & Garstka, 1996; Meyer & Smith, 2000; Rhoades et al., 2001; Wayne et al., 1997; 2002; Allen et al., 2003; Guchait, 2007).

In this study, performance management was not able to contribute to the development of POS. This finding is contrary to Hutchison and Garstka (1996), who found that employees' participation in the goal setting aspect of the performance management process had a significant and positive impact on POS. It can be assumed that performance management will directly help enhance the level of employee POS and ultimately increase employee and organizational performance whenever employees participate and work together with their supervisors in identifying goals and setting up objectives and also make plans together in order to achieve these objectives. Crucially, these objectives and goals must be consistent with the organizational goals. The results of this study suggest that a certain organizational context may play a role in determining whether performance management affects POS. For example, the principles of performance management may clearly be determined by PWA's HR professionals that employees must participate in the agreement with their supervisors (appraisers) at the beginning in terms of the work objective and goal setting, but they may be not seriously implemented by appraisers and appraisees. In addition, since performance management is Western tool which it may not be appropriately designed in applying to PWA's organizational culture and context, in the case of Thailand. These may prevent performance management influences on POS. Another plausible explanation may relate to the nature of the organization. PWA is a state enterprise which is operated according to the organization's goal and government policies. Within such a context, performance management may no longer be viewed as a discretionary nature or organizational free choice. Instead, employees may believe that PWA is forced to adopt a performance management approach to improve work efficiency based on government policies, leading to no increased POS.

In addition, based on the norm of reciprocity in social exchange relationship (Blau, 1964), beliefs of organizational support (POS) would generate an obligation for the recipient employees to care about the organization's well-being and aid the organization in reaching its objectives through positive attitudes and desirable behaviors towards the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This argument is supported by this study which demonstrates that employees with higher levels of POS would repay the organization with positive attitudes and favorable work behaviors, as discussed below.

In terms of attitudinal outcomes, POS was found to have both a direct effect on affective commitment and an indirect effect mediated by felt obligation. As Eisenberger et al. (1986) argued, employees' beliefs in the organization's commitment to them are referred to as POS, and thus employees with higher levels of POS would pay back the organization with higher affective commitment to the organization. In addition, higher levels of POS generate a sense of felt obligation to reciprocate the organization's treatment by caring about the organization's welfare and assisting the organization to achieve its goals (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Thus, affective commitment, which refers to an employee's identification with an organization and emotional attachment to that organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991), may also emanate from such a sense of felt obligation. Further, employee's affective commitment was predicted to be an antecedent of turnover intention. As expected, it was found that affective commitment had an influence on turnover intention. This finding concurs with the previous research results of many scholars (Meyer et al., 2002; Ali & Baloch, 2009; Addae & Parboteeah, 2008).

In terms of behavioral outcomes, employees with a higher level of affective commitment were predicted to elicit the job roles and extra-role behaviors, leading to better job performance and more OCB. As expected, it was found that affective commitment had a positive influence on in-role performance and OCB. These results are consistent with the findings of previous researches: affective commitment and job performance (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Riketta, 2002; Meyer et al., 1989) and affective commitment and OCB (O'reilly & Chatman, 1986; Van Dyne & Ang, 1998; Shore & Wayne, 1993).

In addition, it was found that job satisfaction is the next attitudinal outcome of POS, and that job satisfaction was found to have a positive impact on in-role performance. This result is consistent with the findings of Western studies: POS and job satisfaction (Shore & Tetrick 1991; Eisenberger et al., 1997; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), job satisfaction and job performance (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Judge et al., 2001; Brewer & Lee, 2005; Herzberg et al., 1957). These results suggest that the Thai's PWA employees reciprocate to the organization in a manner similar to that of Westerners, and affective commitment is a better predictor of in-role performance than job satisfaction.

While HR practices play an important role in developing and maintaining the exchange relationship between the employee and the organization, leaders or LMX is expected to play a crucial role in implementing HR practices that could shape employees' perceptions of their exchange relationships with the organization, which in turn help to create employee beliefs in higher POS and encourage their reciprocations toward the organization. Consistent with the prediction, LMX was found to have a significant positive effect on POS. This finding is consistent with that of

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previous studies (Wayne et al., 1997; Rhoades et al., 2001; Liu, 2004). In addition, LMX has a significant direct effect on employees' affective commitment. This finding is consistent with that of previous researchers (Ariani, 2012; Eisenberger et al., 2010).

Contributions

This study contributes to the existing literature in several different ways. Firstly, this study uses a combination of six HR practices as antecedents of POS. As such, it may contribute to both the HR literature and the POS literature. A main objective of HR research is to understand how HR practices can impact employee attitudes and behaviors in order to enable an organization to achieve its goals (Schuler & Jackson, 1987b). While the strategic HRM literature suggests that the alignment of HR practices with the business strategy of the organization aimed at improving employee skills and motivations, which in turn, enhance organization performance (e.g., Arthur, 1994; Delery & Doty, 1996; Huselid, 1995; Schuler & Jackson, 1987a), it is contrarily believed that HR practices do not directly impact organizational performance (Wright, McMahan & McWilliams, 1994). One of the crucial issues that remains unclear is the lack of understanding how HR practices influence an organization's performance, or the mechanisms by which this takes place is "the black box of SHRM" (Delery, 1998). In this study, it was found that employee perception about HR practices would affect their perception of organizational support, which in turn, leads to positive work attitudes and behaviors, which are beneficial to the organization. This finding may help create a better understanding of the role of HR practices and POS, one of the process or mechanisms through which these practices influence employees' behaviors and outcomes, and ultimately influence organizational performance.

On the other side, while POS refers to employees' assessment of the care and the support from organization and HR practices represent a key channel used by the organization to imply organizational support, POS literature has focused on individual aspects of an HRM practice and has not comprehensively examined the impact of HR practices on employee beliefs with respect to organizational support. Thus, this study's findings provide documents to confirm such a relationship, as well as a better understanding of the impacts of HR practices on employees' belief in POS. In other words, employees evaluated organizational support on the implementation of HR practices, implying that the organization valued their contribution and took good care of them. In return, they provided feedback to the organization that can affect employees' POS at higher levels. The findings help increase knowledge through the proof that HR practices are the antecedents of POS. Furthermore, while POS research is rooted in the literature on organizational behavior, this study bridges HR literature and the OB literature through the integration of HR practices and POS.

Secondly, studying the impacts of POS on a variety of employee outcomes in this study provides more insight into the impacts of POS. Consistent with previous study, POS was found to contribute to higher levels of affective commitment and job satisfaction, which in turn, lead to lower turnover intention and enhance in-role and extra role behaviors such as in-role performance and citizenship behavior. Moreover, the result of this research demonstrated that the relationship between POS and affective commitment mediated by felt obligation. This finding helps more fully understand the process through which POS effects on employee affective commitment.

Lastly, this research illustrated that the social exchange theory can not only be applied to the organizational support theory, but the leader-member exchange theory is also equally important in understanding the true perspectives of reciprocal exchange relationships. Results of this study also demonstrate the applicability of the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) within PWA's context in Thailand.

Study Limitations and Future Research Directions

There are several limitations of this study that need be considered. First, this study employed cross-sectional design, which prevents the researcher to test causal relationships among antecedents and outcomes. Future research monitoring change on the relationship between performance management and POS over time would enhance researchers' ability to make causal inferences. Second, the findings of this study could not be generalized to other types of employees and organizations because the data were specifically collected from the employees of the Provincial Waterworks Authority, which is a single organization in Thailand. This suggests a scope for future studies to conduct a comparative study with different types of state enterprises or other types of organizations in order to track the relationship between performance management and POS. Thus, the comparative study with other types of organizations may provide evidence to confirm such a relationship. Finally, this study collected data based almost entirely on the perception of the participants. Thus, when interpreting the results of this study, one must always keep in mind that the constructs are the products of the perceptions. Actually, some studies have demonstrated that perceptual measures of performance are appropriate where more objective measures of performance are not available, and that the research can be strengthened by the incorporation of more objective performance measures (Dess & Robinson, 1984; Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Wall et al., 2004). To address this problem in future studies, researchers should use objective performance measures.

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