# The relationship between employees' motivation sources and organizational commitment among Chinese employees

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# Abstract

This study examines relationships between the source of motivation for employees and their organizational commitment in a sample of 178 Chinese employees who are working in China. Compared to the previous studies of work motivation sources, I add two other motivation sources (internal self-concept-based motivation, external self-concept-based motivation) to examine the effect on organizational commitment. The results show that these two sources of motivation have a positive relationship with organizational commitment, and that continuance commitment plays a strong role in Chinese society. In conclusion, I emphasize the need for further research about the differences between Chinese culture and Western culture. In the end, some managerial strategies are also discussed.

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# 1. Introduction

Motivation is viewed as a result of independent decisions with respect to different types of organizationally relevant behaviors (Mayer & Schoorman, 1992). It is the process by which behavior is energized, directed, and sustained in organizational settings (Steer & Proter, 1991). The reason why employees participate or perform in an organization is based on the notion of exchange between organizations and individuals, and employees' identification with goals and values of the organization. Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) define commitment as "a result of individual-organizational transactions and alterations in side bets or investments over time". Hall, Schneider and Nygren (1970) also define commitment as "the process by which the goals of the organization and those of the individual become increasingly integrated or congruent". From the definitions, we can assume the relationship between motivation and commitment. Also in Western society, there has already been some research that examined the effects of motivation on organizational commitment.

Scholars have explained motivation from many aspects: physiological, behavioral, cognitive, and social (Barbuto, JR & Scholl, 1998). For example, we can cite need hierarchy theory (Maslow, 1954), goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1984), expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), Equity theory (Adams, 1963, 1965), self-concept-based theory (Brief & Aldag, 1981; Gecas, 1982; Snyder & Williams, 1982, Sullivan, 1989). Lenoard & Beauvais & Scholl (1999) proposed an integrative model of motivation which is built on past research. They integrated several motivation theorists' perspectives and identified five sources of motivation. These sources include intrinsic process, instrumental, external and internal self-concept, and goal internalization. In the traditional research between motivation sources and organizational commitment, it is shown both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are positively related to

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organizational commitment ( O'Reilly & Caldwell, 1980). However, Gagne, Boies, Koestner, and Martens (2004) proposed that affective commitment would be facilitated by an employee's autonomous motivation.

Organizational commitment is defined as an individual's psychological attachment to the organization which can show how employees feel about their organization. It can predict work variables such as turnover tendency, organizational citizenship behavior, and job performance. These years, scholars have been concentrating on studying the independent variables such as personal characteristics, job-related characteristics, structural characteristics, work experience (Steers, 1997), as well as dependent variables such as turnover tendency, organizational citizenship behavior, and job performance. Meyer & Allen (1991) integrate the earlier theories into three components: affective, continuance, and normative commitment. They also proved that the psychology state of each type of commitment is different from each other. Affective commitment means they want to, continuance commitment means they need to, normative commitment means they feel they ought to (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993). So the three components of commitment can be discussed as three different constructs ( Chen & Francesco, 2003). The validity of the three components of commitment is also confirmed in Chinese society (Wong, Wong, Hui, & Law, 2001).

The level of organizational commitment directly affects the performance of an organization. Especially in China organizations are facing the problem of the low level of organizational commitment and the high turnover rate. The low level of organizational commitment is considered the most important reason for turnover (Steers, 1997). Organizational commitment is therefore an appropriate and significant question for those who are interested in

organizational productivity and performance (Balfour & Wechsler, 1996). According to Wong, Wong, Hui, and Law (2001), it is also stated that an employee's commitment to the organization is an important attitude that organizations should cultivate in Chinese society. According to these authors, it has a much stronger effect on job satisfaction and turn over intention than the results from studies conducted in west.

Because employees' goals and values occupy an important position in a person's cognitive system that can influence employees' attitudes and decision-making processes, we can assume that the relationship between motivation sources and organizational commitment in Chinese differs from that in Western Society. For example, loyalty and guanxi (relationship with supervisors and coworkers) are important cultural values for Chinese. It is proved that in China loyalty to supervisors has a more strongly affect than organizational commitment (Chen, Tsu, & Farh, 2002). So in China, organization should help employees build a good relationship with supervisors which can help enhance employees' organizational commitment. Besides the cultural values, China is also experiencing a dramatic change in economic style which is different from the Western economic environment. China has been experiencing a dramatic change in economic style in last a few decades, but according to BusinessWeek's special report, "China labor turnover rate is over 20% in 2005" (Jiang & Baker & Frazier, 2009). In such unstable economic environment, employees may not commit to the organizations too strongly, because they know that their employment might be terminated at any time (Cohen, 2003).

In the previous research, scholars have examined the relationship between the traditional intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation (intrinsic process, instrumental and goal internalization) and organizational commitment in Western society. It is also proved that affective commitment

is a main determinant of many work outcomes in Western society (Cohen, 2003; Cohen & Keren, 2008). Because of the different cultural values and economic environment in China, it is necessary to test the relationship between employees' motivation sources and organizational commitment in Chinese society. In this study, I add two other work motivation sources (external and internal self-concept-based motivation sources) to examine their effects on organizational commitment. The results show that the two motivation sources have positive relationships with organizational commitment, and that continuance commitment has a large impact on organizational commitment in Chinese society.

This study will help us understand how employees' work motivation sources affect the organizational commitment in Chinese society. The findings have the following theoretical implications: (1) the results can expand and enhance our understandings of the conceptual relationship between motivation sources and organizational commitment. (2) The results suggest the need for further research on other non-Western cultures. As the practical implications: (1) the results can help supervisors select employees in the recruiting process. (2) The results show the importance of improving the affective commitment and normative commitment for Chinese employees.

## 2. Theory and hypotheses

### 2.1. Motivation: definition and framework

Work motivation is the process by which behavior is energized, directed, and sustained in organizational settings (Steer & Proter, 1991). In organizations, if supervisors know what kind of source of motivation employees respond to, how to motivate employees from different backgrounds, the organization can enhance efficiency and productivity. As noted in the

introduction, scholars have explained motivation from different perspectives: physiological, behavioral, cognitive, and social. One of the traditional motivation theories divided work motivation into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Katz and Kahn (1978) argue that the bases of motivation can be categorized in terms of legal compliance, external rewards, self-expression, and internalized values. Etzioni (1975) argues that motivation takes place by one of these three ways: alienative, calculative, or moral. Although there have been so many theories, it is also a problem that it creates conceptual clutter for scholars and confusion for participants. So Lenoard & Beauvais & Scholl (1999) proposed an integrated model of motivation which is built on past research. They integrated several motivation theorists' perspectives and identified five sources of motivation. These sources include intrinsic process, instrumental, external and internal self-concept, and goal internalization motivation. They also have the proposition that there is a dominant source of motivation for every individual, when two or more sources of motivation in an individual conflict, the dominant source will prevail (Lenoard, Beauvais &Scholl 1999). In China, it was proven that instrumental motivation is especially important for employees (Child, 1994; Jackson & Bak 1998).

## 2.2. Organizational commitment: definition and framework

Becker's (1960) "side-bets" theory firstly explained organizational commitment from "perceived cost" approach. In later research, scholars explained organizational commitment from three approaches: affective attachment to the organization, perceived costs associated with leaving the organization, and obligation to remain with the organization. For example, Buchanan (1974) defined commitment as "partisan, affective attachment to the goals and values, and to the organization for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth". Kanter (1968) defined continuance commitment as "profit associated with continued participation and a 'cost'

associated with leaving". Wiener (1982) defined the obligation meaning as "the totality of internalized normative pressures to act in a way which meets organizational goals and interests". From the different meanings of organizational commitment, we can argue that organizational commitment not only means value and goal congruence, but also reflects a desire, a need and an obligation to maintain the employment.

Meyer & Allen (1991) integrate the earlier theories into three components: affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Because of the conceptual differences, Meyer & Allen (1991) also proposed the psychological states reflecting the three components of commitment will develop as the function of quite different antecedents and have different implications for relevant behavior. The three forms of commitment are not mutually exclusive. And employees can experience the three forms of commitment to varying degrees.

## 2.3. The relationship between motivation and organizational commitment and research hypotheses

Both motivation and organizational commitment are psychological states, based on internalized values, external rewards, and moral involvement. Both have been described as energizing forces with implications for behavior (Meyer & Becker & Vandenberghe, 2004). Crewson (1997) explained the relationship between motivation and organizational commitment as "Whether a member decides to commit himself or herself to the group depends on the relationship between the individual's motivational predispositions and the type of organizational

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incentive system. That is, individual predispositions must match the organizational opportunity structure before action is initiated. The absence of either element will result in no forthcoming commitment from individuals". Crewson (1997) also assumes that organizational member's moral and their job-related attitudes are correlated to organizational commitment which eventually affects organizational performance and effectiveness. Expectancy theory also assumes a positive association between the level of intrinsic and extrinsic expectancy and organizational outcome and organizational commitment (Brudney & Condrey, 1993; Rainey, 1997). It means the level of intrinsic motivation is positively related to the level of organizational commitment. In addition, some researches have proposed goal internalization as one dimension of organizational commitment (Becker, 1992; O'Rcilly & Chatman, 1986). However, Gagne, Boies, Koestner, and Martens (2004) proposed that affective commitment would be facilitated by employees' autonomous motivation. From the previous studies, we can assume employees' motivation level will affect employees' organizational commitment level.

Though in the previous studies, scholars discussed the relationship between motivation and organizational commitment, but many conceptual and methodological questions were not unified and clear. For example, the three components of commitment can be discussed as three different constructs ( Chen & Francesco, 2003), so the three organizational commitments can be discussed independently. In this paper, I will use Lenoard & Beauvais & Scholl's (1999) framework of five sources of motivation as independent variables, and Meyer & Allen's (1991) framework of three components of organizational commitment as dependent variables to discuss the relationship between each other in Chinese society.

Intrinsic Process Motivation

Individuals primarily motivated by intrinsic processes engage in certain types of behavior for fun at work. So the work acts as the incentive as workers enjoy what they are doing. So as long as work is enjoyable, these individuals will be motivated to work effectively.  If employees have a high level of intrinsic process motivation, it is easier for them to identify with the organization and they are happier to be involved with the organization. The following is the first hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1**: Chinese employees' intrinsic process motivation is positively related to the level of affective commitment.

Because employees are motivated by the fun of the work itself, external factors will not serve to improve the employee's performance. So we can assume that they have a low continuance commitment.

Instrumental Motivation

Instrumental motivation will take place when employees think their performance will lead to external tangible rewards, such as: bonuses, promotion, pension etc. In this situation of pure instrumental motivation, individuals will engage in the work and be motivated mostly by the extrinsic benefit. So in this situation, it is difficult for the employees to have an emotional attachment or obligation to the organization without external benefit. They think the relationship between employees and organizations is an exchange relationship. So they have a strong awareness of costs associated with leaving the organization. Especially in China, it is proved that instrumental motivation plays a more important role than in western settings. We can assume

that employees who are motivated by a high level of instrumental motivation will have a high level of continuance commitment. So here we can have the second hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 2**: Chinese employees' instrumental motivation is positively related to continuance commitment.

Because of this kind of employees are almost motivated by the external rewards, we can also assume that they have a low level of affective and normative commitment.

Internal Self-concept-based Motivation

In this source, internal self-concept-based motivation will take place when the employees are inner-directed. They have their own internal standards of traits, competencies, and values that motivate them to engage in organization. When faced with alternative tasks, individuals dominated by internal self-concept-based motivation will engage in tasks that provide them with affirmative task feedback about their traits, competencies, and values in their important identities (Leonard & Beauvais & Scholl, 1999). When they have a high level of internal self-concept-based motivation, their own values and traits are more identified with the organization, so they will have a high level of emotional attachment to the organization. So here we can have the third hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 3**: Chinese employees' internal self-concept-based motivation is positively related to affective commitment.

External Self-concept-based Motivation

This source of motivation takes place when the employees are other-directed. In this situation, employees' motivation is based on role expectation of reference group. Individuals try to satisfy group members' expectations first and then gain status from group members. Especially in China, the salary and position are important ways to show an individuals' status in the group. When employees have a high level of external self-concept-based motivation, they also have a strong concern about the salary and position they have gained in the organization. So here we have the forth hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 4**: Chinese employees' external self-concept-based motivation is positively related to continuance commitment.

Goal Internalization Motivation

In this source, individuals are motivated by goal internalization, when they think the goal of the company is congruent with their personal value systems. This source of motivation is based on internalized values and pure moral involvement ( Katz & Kahn,1978; Etzioni, 1975). These goals will be pursued without their extrinsic benefits, their ability to provide for attribution of success to members, or their ability to provide individual, personal credit to members through goal attainment. So in the organization, if employees have a high level of goal internalization motivation, they will have a high level of affective and normative commitment.

**Hypothesis 5**: Chinese employees' goal internalization motivation is positively related to affective commitment.

**Hypothesis 6**: Chinese employees' goal internalization motivation is positively related to normative commitment.

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# 3. Method

## 3.1. Sample

In this study, we collected data from 178 Chinese employees in China by a free online questionnaire Website. All questions were in Chinese. I asked my Chinese friends who are working in China to fill out the questionnaire through social networks. My friends also helped me send the questionnaire to their friends.

From the data, we know that 32.76% of them work for private enterprises, 31.61% of them work for foreign enterprises, 4.6%of them work for joint ventures, 22.99% of them work for state-owned enterprises. 38.51% of them are male, 61.49% of them are female. 64.94% of them have a bachelor degree. 18.39% of them have a master degree. 14.94% of them have junior college degree. 80.46% of them are 25-35 years old. 14.37% of them are under 25 years old. 4.02% of them are 35-45 years old. 1.14% of them are older than 45years old. 48.85% of them have worked less than 3years. 37.36% of them have worked for 3-5years. 7.74% of them have worked 5-10years. 6.32% of them have worked more than 10 years. 63.79% of them are married, 36.21% of them are unmarried.

## 3.2. Measures

The scale which was used to measure the sources of motivation is developed by Barbuto, JR and Scholl published on Psychological reports in1998. The scale is based on the five dimensions of the motivation sources including six items for each dimension. The responses to these items are made on 7-scales (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach's alpha for each dimension (intrinsic process motivation, instrumental motivation, external and internal self-concept-based motivation, and goal internalization motivation) is .711, .705, 759, .892, .783. All of these reliabilities were above .70 which was acceptable.

The scale which was used to measure organizational commitment is developed by Meyer, Smith and Allen published on Journal of Applied Psychology in 1993. The scale is based on three dimensions of the organizational commitment including six items for each dimension. The responses to these items are made on 7-scales. (1 = strongly disagree 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach's alpha for each dimension (affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment) is $\alpha$ = .723, .743, .765. All of these reliabilities were above .70 which was acceptable.

## 4. Results

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations and the inter-correlations among the study variables. From the table we can know the correlations among the independent variables were not very high, because only one of them exceeds .50. But they still introduce the problem of the possibility of multicollinearity which is a common problem in psychology scales.

From the table we can also know the correlations between independent variables (motivation sources) and dependent variables (organizational commitment). For example, internal self –concept-based motivation and external self-concept-based motivation are positively correlated to affective commitment. Instrumental motivation, external self-concept-based motivation and goal internalization motivation are positively correlated to continuance commitment. Intrinsic process motivation, internal self-concept-based, external self-concept-based motivation and goal internalization are positively correlated to normative commitment. In the control variables, only position is positively correlated to affective commitment.

Table 1

| Inter-correlations among study variables | Mean | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **IV** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 IPM | 4.23 | 1.11 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 IM | 4.92 | 1.11 | .395** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 ISCBM | 5.47 | 1.2 | .280** | .275** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 ESCBM | 5.17 | 1.11 | .328** | .592** | .441** | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 GIM | 4.31 | 1.22 | .478** | .369** | .442** | .428** | | | | | | | | |
| **DV** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 AC | 4.1 | 1.18 | 0.131 | -0.066 | .274** | .205** | 0.077 | | | | | | | |
| 7 CC | 3.64 | 1.21 | 0.074 | .337** | 0.03 | .376** | .234** | -0.02 | | | | | | |
| 8 NC | 3.55 | 1.26 | .198** | 0.022 | .228** | .188** | .231** | .566** | .290** | | | | | |
| **CV** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 Gender | 0.39 | 0.49 | .069 | -.168* | .104 | -.038 | -.012 | .040 | -.034 | -.034 | | | | |
| 10 Age | 1.93 | 0.49 | .041 | .092 | .173** | .146 | .122 | .058 | .119 | .004 | .095 | | | |
| 11 WY | 1.74 | 0.92 | .058 | .163** | .192 | .132 | .046 | .071 | .042 | -.048 | .031 | .596** | | |
| 12 Wage | 2.78 | 1.15 | -.021 | .070 | .143 | .047 | -.019 | .102 | -.027 | .015 | .224** | .316** | .291** | |
| 13 Position | 2.43 | 0.71 | .045 | -.089 | .174 | .056 | .058 | .200** | -.114 | .078 | .083 | .232** | .397** | .212** |

Note.    IV = independent variables; DV = dependent variables; CV = control variables; IPM = intrinsic process motivation; IM = instrumental motivation; ISCBM = internal self-concept-based motivation; ESCBM = external self-concept-based motivation; GIM = goal internalization motivation; AC = affective commitment; CC = continuance commitment; NC = normative commitment; WY = working years. Gender: 0 = female; 1 = male. Age: 1 < 25; 2 = 25-35; 3 = 35-45; 4 = 45-55; 5 > 55. Working years: 1 < 3; 2 = 3-5; 3 = 5-10; 4 = 10-20; 5 > 20; Wage: 1 > 2000yuan; 2 = 2000-4000yuan; 3 = 4000-6000yuan; 4 = 6000-10000yuan; 5 > 10000yuan. Position: 1 = front-line worker; 2 = office worker; 3 = low-level manager; 4 = middle-class manager; 5 = high-class manager.

**. Correlation is significant at the level 0.01 level; *. Correlation is significant at the level 0.05 level.

After the correlation analysis, I use the stepwise regression analysis which can solve the problem of multicollinearity to test the study hypotheses regarding motivation sources and organization commitment.

Firstly, I regressed the motivation sources on affective commitment. I first entered internal self –concept-based motivation, external self-concept-based motivation and position in

step 1, then entered affective commitment in step 2. Table 2 shows only the relationship between internal self-concept-based motivation, position and affective commitment are significant while external self-concept-based motivation is excluded variable. It means hypothesis 3 is supported.

Table2. Stepwise regression results (coefficients) of motivation sources and position on affective commitment

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.629 | .400 | | 6.569 | .000 |
| | Internal self-concept-based motivation | .270 | .071 | .274 | 3.777 | .000 |
| 2 | (Constant) | 2.140 | .456 | | 4.692 | .000 |
| | Internal self-concept-based motivation | .243 | .072 | .246 | 3.383 | .001 |
| | position | .262 | .121 | .157 | 2.160 | .032 |

a. Dependent Variable: AC

Secondly, I regressed the motivation sources on continuance commitment. I entered instrumental motivation, external self-concept-based motivation and goal internalization motivation in step1, and entered continuance commitment in step 2. Table 3 shows only the relationship between external self-concept-based, instrumental motivation and continuance

commitment are significant, while goal internalization motivation is excluded variable. It means hypotheses2, 4 were supported.

Table3. Stepwise regression results (coefficients) of motivation sources on continuance commitment

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.524 | .402 | | 3.790 | .000 |
| | External self-concept-based motivation | .410 | .076 | .376 | 5.389 | .000 |
| 2 | (Constant) | 1.161 | .436 | | 2.662 | .008 |
| | External self-concept-based motivation | .296 | .094 | .272 | 3.169 | .002 |
| | Instrumental motivation | .193 | .094 | .176 | 2.053 | .042 |

a. Dependent Variable: Continuance Commitment

Thirdly, I regressed motivation sources on normative commitment. I entered intrinsic process motivation, internal self-concept-based, external self-concept-based motivation and goal internalization in step 1, entered normative commitment in step 2. Table 4 shows only the relationship between goal internalization motivation and normative commitment is significant, while intrinsic process motivation, internal self-concept-based, external self-concept-based are excluded variables. It means hypothesis 6 is supported.

Table4. Stepwise regression results (coefficient) of motivation sources on normative commitment

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| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (Constant) | 2.531 | .339 | | 7.462 | .000 |
| Goal Internalization motivation | .238 | .076 | .231 | 3.147 | .002 |

a. Dependent Variable: Normative commitment

From the results, we know that hypotheses 1, 5 are not supported.

## 5. Discussion and implications

This study considers the relationship between motivation sources and organizational commitment among Chinese employees.

The results show that all of employees' motivation sources are positively related to organizational commitment which is similar to the results in Western society. Compared to the traditional studies of work motivation sources (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation), from hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 4 we can know that the two new motivation sources (internal self-concept-based motivation, external self-concept-based motivation) are also positively related to organizational commitment. But hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 5 are not supported which means affective commitment is not as important as we assumed in Chinese society. However, external self-concept-based motivation and instrumental motivation are positively related to continuance commitment.

It shows that continuance commitment plays an important role in organizational commitment among Chinese employees. It means that Chinese employees have a strong concern

about the costs of leaving the organization. While affective commitment is the most important

commitment in Western settings (Meyer et al., 2002). One of the possible reasons for this is that

for Western employees, the relationship with the organization is based on the congruence of their

values with the organization. While in China, because of the high speed of economic growth and

the unstable labor market, the exchange relationship with the organization is based on the

external tangible rewards, so the employees have a strong concern about the cost and the risk of

leaving the organization. Compared to the job satisfaction in Western society, for employees in

China, being employed is the most important thing for them. On the other hand, affective and

normative commitments have not played an important role in organizational commitment.

Supervisors in such organizations should pay more attention to affective and normative

commitments. In the results, it also shows that position is positively related to affective

commitment. It means that the employees who have a high position in the organizations will

have a high level of affective commitment. Supervisors of these organizations should pay more

attention to enhancing the affective commitment of low-level position employees.

From the findings, we can have the following theoretical implications: (1) the results can

expand and enhance our understandings of the conceptual relationship between motivation

sources and organizational commitment. For example, this model enhances motivation sources

from three to five, so we can have a deeper understanding of the relationship between motivation

sources and organizational commitment. (2) The results suggest the need for further research on

other non-Western cultures. In this study, the results differ from those in Western cultures, so we

suggest that more studies are necessary in other non-Western cultures.

We also have some practical implications for the supervisors. First, it helps supervisors to understand employees' commitment state better according to the type of employees' motivation sources in the recruiting process. For example, in the recruiting process, if organizations are interested in affective commitment, they can hire internal self-concept-based motivation. Second, supervisors should enhance employees' affective and normative commitment. For example, they can build stronger organizational culture which can enhance employees' belongingness and loyalty and give the employees more education about organizational culture in the training program.

## 6. Limitations and future research directions

In this study we examined the relationship between employees' motivation sources and organizational commitment in Chinese society. But there are still some limitations we need to notice. First, China is a huge country which comprises 9.6 million square kilometers with huge differences between north and south, between coastal and inland regions, between urban and country areas. It is difficult to get all the information and views by a sample of 178. So in future research, we need more extensive research to validate the results. Second, the method of data collection is too simple. In this study, we only used the online questionnaire. In the further studies, interviews are also suggested. Third, because both motivation sources and organizational commitment are complicated psychological states, we need to further consider the mechanism of how motivation sources influence organizational commitment. For example, we need to consider if there is moderator or mediator between the two.

Because of changing cultural values and the economic environment, the relationship between motivation sources and organizational commitment may change. So we suggest that more research is necessary to examine their relationship in non-Western cultures.

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Demographic variables

1. What is your gender?    Male    Female

2. What is your age?    <25    25-35    35-45    45-55    >55

3. What is your education background?    Lower than junior college    Junior college    College

Master    Doctor

4. What kind of company is your company?    Foreign enterprise    Private enterprise    Joint

venture    State-owned enterprise    Government agency

5. What is your employment status?    Full-time employment    Contract employment    Part-time

employment

6. How many employees are in your company?    <50    51-200    201-500    501-
1000    >1000

7. How many employees are in your department?    <5    6-10    11-15    16-20    20- 25    26-
30    >30

8. How many years have you been working here?    <3    3-5    5-10    10-20    >20

9. What is your marriage status?    Unmarried    Married

10. What is your job position?    Front-line worker    Office worker    Low-level manager    Mid-
level manager    High-level manager

11. What is your salary?    <2000yuan    2000-4000yuan    4000-6000yuan    6000-
10000yuan    > 10000yuan

Motivation sources inventory

1. I only like to do things that are fun.

2. If I did not enjoy my work, I will leave.

3. I often put off some work so that I could have more time to do fun work.

4. When I choose work, I would like to choose the work that sounds like the most fun.

5. The people I choose to spend my time with are the most fun to be with.

6. If choosing between two jobs, the most important criteria is "which is more fun?"

7. Job requirements dictate how much effort I exert during work.

8. A day's work for a day's salary.

9. I would work harder if I know my effort would lead to a higher pay.

10. When choosing jobs, I usually choose the jobs that pay most.

11. In the work, my favorite day of one week is payday.

12. People should always keep their eyes and ears open for better opportunities.

13. It is important for me that others approve of my behavior.

14. I always make decisions based on what do others think.

15. I work harder on a project if public recognition is attached to it.

16. If choosing jobs, I want the one allows me to be recognized for successes.

17. These people who make the most friends have lived fullest time.

18. I will give my best effort if I know it will be seen by the most influential people in the organization.

19. Decisions I make will reflect high standards that I have set for myself.

20. It is important that I work for a company that allows me to use my skills and talents.

21. I try to make sure that my decisions are consistent to my personal standards of behavior.

22. I consider myself as a self-motivated people.

23. I like to do things which give me a sense of personal achievement.

24. I need to know that my skills and values are impacting the organization's success.

25. I would not work for a company if I don't agree with its mission.

26. I have to believe a cause before I will work hard at achieving its ends.

27. Unless I would believe in the cause, I would not work hard.

28. When choosing companies to work for, I choose one that supports my values and beliefs.

29. The organization's mission needs to be in agreement with my values for me to work hard.

30. If an organization is accomplishing missions that I agree with, it does not matter whether I was responsible for it success.

Organizational commitment inventory

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.

2. I really feel as if the organization's problems as my own.

3. I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization. (R)

4. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization. (R)

5. I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization. (R)

6. The organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

7. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.

8. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.

9. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.

10. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.

11. If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.

12. One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.

13. I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer. (R)

14. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.

15. I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.

16. This organization deserves my loyalty.

17. I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.

18. I owe a great deal to my organization.