Antecedents and Consequences of Affect-based and Role-based Loyalty of Section Chiefs to Supervisors in Taiwanese Elementary Schools

Shueh-Chin Ting[1,*] & Chien-Hui Su[1]

[1]Department of Education, National University of Tainan, Taiwan

*Corresponding author: Department of Education, National University of Tainan, Taiwan.
E-mail: tingsc@ms49.hinet.net

Abstract

This study surveyed 660 section chiefs in public elementary schools in Taoyuan and revealed that affect- and role-based loyalty are two distinct types of loyalty to supervisors. The findings indicated that role-based loyalty had a positive impact on affect-based loyalty for section chiefs in public elementary schools. The ethical behavior of supervisors and perceived supervisor sharing vision predicted affect-based loyalty, whereas leadership justice perception and respect for hierarchy predicted role-based loyalty to the supervisor. In addition, affect-based loyalty had positive impacts on word of mouth, supervisor-directed organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and a negative impact on emotional exhaustion. Role-based loyalty had positive impacts on in-role performance and supervisor-directed OCB. In particular, affect-based loyalty had a greater impact on supervisor-directed OCB than role-based loyalty did.

Keywords: Affect-based loyalty, Role-based loyalty, Loyalty to supervisor

1. Introduction

Both in practice and in business research, loyalty programs have become popular over the past decade (Henderson, Beck, & Palmatier, 2011). A few educational researchers have explored loyalty in school organizations. Guido-DiBrito, Chavez, Wallace, and DiBrito (1997) explored loyalty between senior student affairs officers and their department heads at four college campuses. Brown and Mazzarol (2009) and Simsek and Noyan (2009) explored the effect of perceived instructional effectiveness on student loyalty. Obviously, loyalty is an important issue in school organizations.

Cheng and Jiang (2008) indicated that Chinese culture emphasizes the fulfillment of social role expectations in a specific social context. They explored affect- and role-based loyalty in a Taiwanese financial services company and indicated that two types of loyalty can be observed in the privately commercial organization. In the context of elementary schools, section chiefs may remain loyal to their supervisor because they have an emotional attachment to their supervisors. We refer to this type of loyalty as affect-based loyalty. Alternatively, they may feel obligated by their role to remain loyal to their supervisors. We refer to this type of loyalty as role-based loyalty. These two types of loyalty have not been verified in conservative organizations such as elementary schools. Therefore, the first objective of the current study was to identify these two types of loyalty of section chiefs to the supervisor. The second objective was to explore predictors and outcomes of these two types of loyalty in elementary schools. Finally, we sought to provide insight into how loyalty to supervisors operates in Taiwanese elementary schools by identifying factors that are related to these two types of loyalty.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Affect- and Role-based Loyalty

Affect-based loyalty results from an emotional bond with the supervisor (Cheng & Jiang, 2008), and also involves a potential commitment (Kleinig, 2007). There are two dimensions included in affect-based loyalty: identification with supervisor and internalization of supervisor's values (Chen, 1997). Identification occurs when the section chiefs admire certain attributes of the supervisor, such as the supervisor's attitudes and behaviors, as well as personality or accomplishments. They may feel proud to be associated with the supervisor who has these admired attributes (Chen, Tsui, & Farh, 2002) and develop affect-based loyalty to the supervisor. Internalization occurs when the section chiefs adopt the attitudes and behaviors of the supervisor because the supervisor's attitudes and behaviors are congruent with the section chiefs' value systems. Many researchers (Chen, 1997; Chen et al., 2002; Cheng & Jiang, 2008) have used these two dimensions to measure loyalty to the supervisor in Chinese organizations, and all agree that it does belong to the attitude and affective dimension of loyalty.

Confucian traditions of social duty and obligation might well lead to an emphasis on respect for authority and section chiefs are often expected to be loyal to their supervisor (Wong,

Wong, & Ngo, 2002). Chinese who have been impacted by Confucian values, which emphasize the structure of hierarchy and compliance with ethics are oriented towards enhancing in-group harmony, and also have a stronger sense of responsibility and obligation towards those who have closer relationships with them (Royce, 1995).

Common features of school cultures are collaborative collegial relationships and opportunities for collective problem solving (Zhu, Devos, & Li, 2011). Section chiefs identify the individual with the objective of having special meaning and importance and going beyond calculated involvement (Somech & Bogler, 2002). Section chiefs who feel obligated by their social role to remain loyal to their supervisor not only fulfill a social role expectation (Biggart & Hamilton, 1984), but also maintain harmony and public image. Section chiefs presenting role-based loyalty in the school organization are more likely to follow instructions and reduce supervisor worries. Under such conditions, a supervisor displays ethical behavior by showing concern for his section chiefs and helps subordinates to develop commitment and positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Thus, affect-based loyalty of section chiefs to supervisor may be created by role-based loyalty. Consequently, the first hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1: Role-based loyalty has a positive impact on affect-based loyalty.

2.2 Predictors and Outcomes of Affect-based Loyalty

Collier and Esteban (2007) provide a list of personal attributes associated with ethical leadership, including the ability to listen, willingness to consult and open-mindedness, willingness to learn, courage in the face of the challenges to maintaining corporate ethical standards, and respect for the views of others. According to social identity theory, a supervisor who displays ethical behavior helps section chiefs to develop trust, commitment, and positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace (Schminke, Ambrose, & Neubaum, 2005). In addition, section chiefs tend to identify with supervisors and internalize supervisor's valued positive attributes as they perceived supervisor's ethical behavior (Cheng & Jiang, 2008). Thus, a supervisor's ethical behavior should be a predictor of the affect-based loyalty of section chiefs. The second hypothesis is thus:

Hypothesis 2: Supervisor ethical behavior has a positive impact on affect-based loyalty.

Personal values are important because they shape people's actions in work settings, and also because they make people's work experience more meaningful (Collier & Esteban, 2007). Section chiefs' performance can be the result of championing by a few supervisors, due to their personal values and beliefs (Hemingway & Maclagan, 2004). According to social identity theory, section chiefs tend to identify with supervisors who possess valued positive beliefs (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Based on the link between organizational values, personal values and employee commitment (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990), the shared vision of the supervisor could lead section chiefs to internalize the valued positive beliefs of their supervisors. Therefore, the supervisor's expression of shared vision increases section chiefs' emotional bond with supervisors. Hence, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: Shared vision of supervisor has a positive impact on affect-based loyalty.

Positive word of mouth relates to section chiefs' willingness to say positive things about the supervisor and the readiness to recommend the supervisor to others. However, word of mouth is a behavior that results from a sense of attachment to and affection for a supervisor and is also suggested as a loyalty intention measure (Peloso, 2004). Thus, a section chief who is committed to his supervisor exhibits behaviors such as positive word of mouth (Sven & Ewa, 2008; Liljander & Strandvik, 1995). Thus, compared with role-based loyalty, affect-based loyalty should have a stronger relationship with attitudinal outcomes. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4: Affect-based loyalty has a positive impact on word of mouth.

Social exchange theory states that employees form relationships at work through the exchange of social emotional benefits. Past research has proposed using organizational commitment to operationalize an employee's social exchange relationship with his or her employing organization (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002). A commitment by section chiefs to supervisors may contribute to lower emotional exhaustion (Landry, Panaccio, & Vandenberghe, 2010). Supervisory behavior plays a significant role in section chiefs' psychological well-being even when work stressors are controlled for, and the quality of the relationship with the supervisor can buffer the effect of stressors on strain (Landry et al., 2010). Previous research has shown the effect of supportive leader behaviors on coping with emotional exhaustion (Cole & Bedeian, 2007). Given this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 5: Affect-based loyalty has a negative impact on emotional exhaustion.

2.3 Predictors and Outcomes of Role-based Loyalty

Leadership justice reflects the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity, and respect by the authorities in executing procedures or making outcome decisions (Greenberg, 1990). In Chinese organizations which emphasize power distance, leadership justice is a spiritual assignment when the supervisor, as a parent, pays more attention and offers recognition to section chiefs. The supervisor is expected to treat section chiefs well, and the section chiefs are expected to reciprocate with loyalty (Chen et al., 2002). However, this form of loyalty in a conservative environment results in individuals being in situations where they must cede to authority, and ceding authority to another person provides an opportunity to be exploited (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001). When section chiefs show these behaviors, they can help secure their social identities by contributing personal resources to a social entity (Cropanzano et al., 2001). At present in Taiwan, leadership justice is governed by Confucian norms, which require fulfillment of role obligations and maintenance of group harmony. We thus considered these behaviors to be role-based loyalty to the supervisor. Hence, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 6: Leadership justice perception has a positive impact on role-based loyalty.

Confucian work ethics prefer to respect hierarchy. This is derived from the five cardinal role relations and obligations of Confucianism to attain harmony (Yeh & Xu, 2010). When section chiefs accepted the obligations that come with their position in the hierarchy and

show a certain respect for supervisors, they show loyalty to authority (Brodbeck, Chhokar, & House, 2007). Thus, we present the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 7: Respect for hierarchy has a positive impact on role-based loyalty.

In a school, each organ (e.g. section chief) has its own duties, and stands in a complementary relation to the others. Members are required or expected to perform the duties and responsibilities of the assigned role which are considered to be in-role behavior (Van Dyne, Cummings, & Parks, 1995). Section chiefs with role-based loyalty are willing to respect the role and position of supervisor, obey his orders, and complete assigned duties. Thus, loyalty to the supervisor because of duties, obligations, or responsibilities enables section chiefs to do well in-role behavior performance. Therefore, we construct the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 8: Role-based loyalty has a positive impact on in-role performance.

Section chiefs exhibit role-based loyalty to their supervisor because they feel that they are personally obligated to do so and are willing to follow the behavioral expectations associated with their role as an employee (Cheng & Jiang, 2008). However, one of the five virtues Confucianism promotes is benevolence (Rarick, 2007). Based on benevolence, each section chief with role-based loyalty performs to the best of his/her abilities and works for the good of the group (Rarick, 2007) or even for the supervisor (Chen et al., 2002). The behaviors of section chiefs with role-based loyalty are similar to the constructs of supervisor-directed OCB such as willingness to help supervisor (altruism), courteous treatment of supervisor and coworkers (courtesy), and careful attention to their jobs (conscientiousness) (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000; Williams & Anderson's, 1991). Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 9: Role-based loyalty has a positive impact on supervisor-directed OCB.

3. Method

3.1 Participants and Procedures

The questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 750 section chiefs of four offices in elementary schools in Taoyuan, who returned 720. After 60 invalid responses were deleted, 660 valid responses were retained for analysis. Of the participants, 45.6% are male and 54.4% are female. Their age distribution is: 7.9% were below 30 years old, 47.7% between 31 and 40, 37.4% between 41 and 50, and 7% over 51. Moreover, 25.2% have teaching experience of less than 10 years, 48% between 11 and 20, 22.7% between 21 and 30, and 4.1% over 31. Furthermore, most of the participants had completed a postgraduate degree (34.8%). Others had graduated from teachers' college (30.2%), general university (19.4%), or normal university (15.6%).

3.2 Measures

All the variables of the study are measured using a six-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

3.2.1 Affect- and Role-based Loyalty

Affect- and role-based loyalty were measured using the supervisory loyalty scale developed by Cheng and Jiang (2008). The responses were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis. Table 1 shows that the two loyalty measures formed separate factors. A two-factor solution was extracted after considering the screen plot. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's α) was 0.86 for the affect-based loyalty measure and 0.89 for the role-based loyalty measure.

3.2.2 Predictors

Supervisor ethical behavior was measured using the benevolent leadership scale of Cheng, Chou, Huang, Wu, and Farh (2004). The measure had eleven items. We selected seven items which fit for the research and described the ethical behavior of supervisors. For example, "Beyond work relations, my supervisor expresses concern about my daily life." Cronbach's α for this scale was 0.91.

The measure of shared vision was adopted from one dimension of Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) of Kouzes and Posner's (1997) study. The measure had six items. One did not fit the research topic. Sample items include "my supervisor appeals to share his or her dreams of the future" and "my supervisor speaks with conviction about the meaning of our work."

The leadership justice perception measure was adopted from a leadership justice perception scale developed by Liu Long, and Li (2003). The scale has six items. Sample items are "My supervisor has no bias on me" and "I get approval of my job from my supervisor." Cronbach's α for this scale was 0.88.

Respect for hierarchy was measured using five items taken from the traditionality scale of Yang, Yu, and Yeh (1991). Sample items are "When people are in dispute, they should ask the most senior person to decide who is right" and "Obeying authorities and respecting superiors are good virtues and should be acquired by everyone." Cronbach's α for this scale was 0.76.

3.2.3 Outcome Variables

The word of mouth measure was adopted from the WOM scale of Harrison-Walker (2001). The scale has thirteen items and is composed of the two factors of WOM activity and WOM praise. Sample items are "I am proud to tell others that I use this service organization", and "I have told more people about this service organization than I have told about most other service organizations". However, the Cronbach's α of the scales are .80 and .78, respectively. Since the participants are section chiefs and positive word of mouth behavior is a target of this study, we modified and generated five items to measure word of mouth.

The emotional exhaustion scale was measured using five items taken from the scale of Maslach and Jackson (1981) which described feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. Sample items are "I feel emotionally drained from my work" and "Working with my supervisor directly puts too much stress on me." Cronbach's α for this

scale was 0.81.

In-role performance measure was adopted from scale of Williams and Anderson (1991). Sample items are "I can adequately complete assigned duties" and "I can fulfill responsibilities specified in job description." Cronbach's α for this scale was 0.72.

We measured supervisor-directed OCB with five items selected from the Organizational Citizenship Behaviors Towards Individuals Scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002). Sample items are "I willingly give my time to help my supervisor who has work-related problems" and "I assist my supervisor with their duties." Cronbach's α for this scale was 0.76.

Table 1. Exploratory Factor Analysis of Affect- and Role-Based Loyalty Measures

Item	M	SD	Factor loading 1	2
1. I praise my current supervisor in front of my friends as a great supervisor to work with.	4.67	1.19	**.32**	.76
2. When someone praises my supervisor, I feel like it is a personal compliment.	4.77	1.16	**.32**	.72
3. My values and those of my supervisor are similar.	4.66	1.24	**.22**	.79
4. Since starting this job, my personal values and those of my supervisor have become more similar.	4.52	1.15	**.29**	.72
5. The reason why I prefer my current supervisor to others is because of what he/she stands for, that is, his/her values.	4.57	1.10	**.26**	.75
6. Being a section chief, I have an obligation to perform well and let my supervisor be free of worries.	4.91	0.98	.78	**.32**
7. Being a section chief, it's necessary to recognize my supervisor's job requirements.	4.72	1.00	.77	**.26**
8. I have an obligation to follow the instructions of my immediate supervisor.	4.76	0.94	.78	**.27**
9. Being a section chief, I am willing to sacrifice personal time to accomplish tasks my supervisor assigned to me.	4.75	1.00	.75	**.29**
10. I do my assigned work well and efficiently; this is what a section chief should do.	4.88	1.11	.75	**.31**
Eigenvalues			5.50	1.15
Total variance explained (%)			55.03	11.47
Cumulative total variance explained (%)			55.03	66.50

Note: Analysis method: Principal component method with oblimin rotation.

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Reliability and Validity

Convergent validity was assessed through a confirmatory factor analysis. However, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were used to investigate construct validity (Hökerberg, Aguiar, Reichenheim, Faerstein, Valente, Fonseca, & Passos, 2010). We tested ten variables through confirmatory factor analysis individually and found that the CR of the individual variables ranges from 0.86 to .93, with all variables exceeding 0.70. Table 2 shows that the AVEs of the ten latent variables range from .55 to .76, with all values higher than 0.50. Hence, individual CFA-based convergent validity and internal consistency are all acceptable.

Table 2. Factor Loadings, Composite Reliabilities and Average Variance Extracted

Items	Factor loadings	t-values	Error variance	CR	AVE
Affect-loyalty to supervisor	.71- .79	19.80-22.81	.38- .49	.86	.55
Role-loyalty to supervisor	.74- .84	21.37-25.43	.30-.45	.89	.61
Supervisor ethical behavior	.72-.82	19.39-25.30	.33-.49	.91	.61
Shared vision	.74-.81	21.19-24.11	.34-.45	.86	.59
Leadership justice perception	.85-.89	27.05-28.94	.21-.27	.93	.76
Respect for hierarchy	.74-.79	21.23-23.15	.38-.45	.88	.59
Word of mouth	.75-.85	21.75-26.25	.28-.44	.90	.64
Emotional exhaustion	.72-.78	20.37-22.63	.39-.48	.87	.57
In-role performance	.83-.87	25.66-27.89	.24-.31	.93	.73

Discriminant validity, the degree to which measures of different constructs are discrete, was assessed by chi-square difference tests (Kaynak & Hartley, 2006). Chi-square difference tests between the constrained and the unconstrained model were performed (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In the constrained model, each pair of factor correlations was set to 1.0 and separate tests were performed for each pair. The significant chi-square difference between each constrained model and unconstrained model (lower $\chi2$ for the unconstrained model) demonstrates that the factors have discriminant validity (Kaynak & Hartley, 2006). Moreover, discriminant validity is achieved if the chi-square difference (with 1 df) is significant, meaning that the model in which the two constructs are viewed as distinct (but correlated) factors is superior. As a result, all the chi-square difference statistics are greater than 18.56, exceeding 10.83 ($p < 0.01$). Discriminant validity is thus successfully achieved.

4.2 Theoretical Model Testing

The statistics of fit show the goodness-of-fit of the overall model in Table 3. Most of the overall fit statistics ($\chi2/$ df = 1.79, RMSEA = 0.030, NFI = 0.99, and CFI= 0.99) for the model are acceptable, but GFI (0.88) and AGFI (0.87) are less than 0.9. Moreover,

modification indices that refer the model may need to be modified in order to improve the fit, to estimate the most likely relationships between variables (Mukherjee & Malhotra, 2006). However, the maximum value of the modification indices between affect-based loyalty to supervisor and supervisor-directed OCB is 132.45. The results of this research model indicate that adding an additional path to the model may improve the fit.

Table 3. Results of the SEM for the Theoretical and Revised Model

	χ^2/ df	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RFI	PNFI	PGFI	MI
Theoretical Model	1.79	.030	.05	.88	.87	.99	.99	.99	.94	.81	132.45
Revised Model	1.67	.032	.04	.89	.88	.99	.995	.988	.94	.81	23.19

4.3 Revised Model

Based on the modification indices presented in the theoretical model, an additional path (affect-based loyalty to supervisor toward supervisor-directed OCB) was added to the model. The revised model improves the fit: χ^2 /df = 1.67 (χ^2 /df < 3), GFI = 0.89, AGFI = 0.88, NFI = 0.99, CFI = 0.995, and RMSEA = 0.032. There are ten paths as shown in Figure 1. All of the paths in this study are significant (p < .001), suggesting that the hypotheses of this study are all supported.
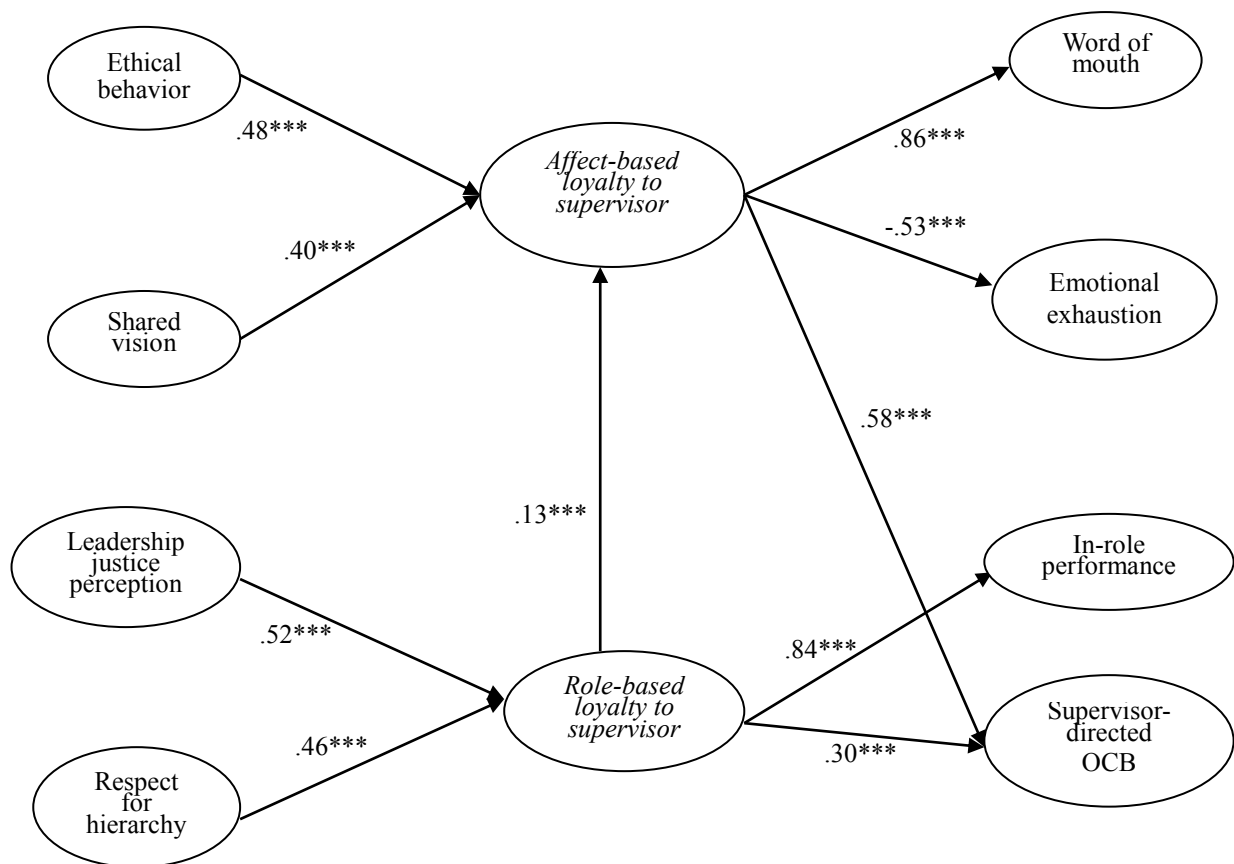

Figure 1. Path Analysis of the Predictors and Outcomes of Affect- and Role-Based Loyalty

*Note: ***: p＜.001 when the t-value exceeds 3.29*

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The present study examined possible predictors and outcomes of affect- and role-based loyalty. The results show that ethical behavior and shared vision are significantly and positively related to affect-based loyalty. According to the study, section chefs tend to identify and internalize the valued positive attributes of their supervisors (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007) when the supervisors perform actions such as encouraging and supporting section chiefs as if they were family members, realizing section chiefs' working conditions, sharing his vision, and speaking with conviction about the meaning of their work. By contrast, leadership justice perception and respect for hierarchy are significantly and positively related to role-based loyalty. That is, section chiefs who perceived a higher level of leadership justice and had more respect for hierarchy felt more obligated by their role to remain loyal to their supervisor.

As expected, affect-based loyalty has a positive impact on word of mouth and a negative impact on emotional exhaustion. The former is also consistent with other recent findings (Kim, Han, & Lee, 2001; Kim, Lee, & Yoo, 2006) in research on hotels and luxury restaurants, while the latter is consistent with Wilk and Moynihan (2005), which also indicates that supervisors can regulate the interpersonal demands to which employees are exposed at work to influence employees' experience of emotional exhaustion. The findings of this study show that the in-role behavior of section chiefs results from role-based loyalty to the supervisor. This finding is consistent with studies conducted with salespeople (Piercy, Cravens, Lane, & Vorhies, 2006) and teachers (Belogolovsky & Somech, 2010).

Some of the results were inconsistent with previous studies. First, the findings of this research are similar but different from the findings of Cheng and Jiang (2008) which indicated that affect- and role-based loyalty are positively related to each other. Because role-based loyalty to the supervisor results from social norms and role obligations, role-based loyalty to the supervisor of section chiefs fulfills a social role expectation (Biggart & Hamilton, 1984), especially for teachers in elementary schools. In addition, we argue that role-based loyalty is necessary for a teacher, but affect-based loyalty is motivated by other factors like role-based loyalty. The influence of role-based loyalty on affect-based loyalty is validated by our research.

Role-based loyalty had a weaker impact on supervisor-directed OCB than affect-based loyalty in our study. It may be that section chiefs exhibit role-based loyalty to their supervisor because they feel that they are personally obligated to do so. However, since OCB is not an in-role behavior, teachers who have no affect connection with their supervisor do not necessarily exhibit OCB.

6. Implications for Practice

Because of the influence of social norms and traditional work culture, section chiefs attach importance to role-based loyalty in the workplace. This is a crucial concept in studies of work behaviors. Our findings show that role-based loyalty is strongly predictive of in-role

performance. This suggests that developing and maintaining the role-based loyalty of section chiefs may be an effective approach supervisors can use to increase school organizational effectiveness. For the school organization as a whole, we found that both perceived leadership justice and respect for hierarchy are positively related to role-loyalty to supervisor, which then improves the in-role performance of section chiefs. For instance, treating section chiefs fairly by establishing a system of reward and penalty or maintaining appropriate distance between the upper and lower positions can encourage them to obey the supervisor's instructions.

Affect-based loyalty is an important factor in creating a long-term healthy relationship between the supervisor and section chiefs. It is necessary to emphasize section chiefs' attachment to their supervisor. We found that supervisors' ethical behavior and shared vision with their section chiefs can promote the affect-based loyalty of section chiefs, and then enhance positive word of mouth and reduce emotional exhaustion. For individual supervisors, it is clear that having a good personal relationship with their section chiefs can foster their emotional attachment. Of course, supervisors must be careful and take appropriate action in developing personal relationships with individual section chiefs. Supervisors have to enable section chiefs to perceive them as a family member and communicate with them to further understand their ideas about work. However, supervisors' attitudes and behaviors towards section chiefs may create a stabilizing effect and serve to increase the section chiefs' commitment to supervisors.

7. Limitations and Future Research

Future research should investigate section chiefs' views for organizational citizenship behaviors. Precisely which behaviors are OCB for section chiefs is not very clear, especially for the difference between supervisor-directed in-role behavior and supervisor-directed OCB. Schools cannot completely state in-role job descriptions (Belogolovsky & Somech, 2010). Section chiefs' recognition for OCB is thus worth scholarly attention.

The administrative conditions of the elementary school are different from those of the business enterprise. Businesses stress competitiveness and individual performance. Managers have the authority to give raises or promotions. Therefore, future research should use different antecedents and consequences of the two types of loyalty on the basis of the work situations of commercial and non-traditional organizations.

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