PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT WITHIN A SELECTED CHINESE ORGANISATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: A CASE STUDY APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Chinese organisations are benefiting from increasing support from the Chinese government to enter into Africa. It is believed that over 2 000 Chinese organisations are operational in Africa, contributing greatly to employment within the continent. Despite the importance of Chinese organisations and their operations in Africa, very little research has been done on individual and organisational issues in Chinese organisations operating in Africa, and more specifically the local employees' organisational commitment to such organisations. The organisational commitment of South African employees within Chinese organisations in South Africa is important as it promotes the success of Chinese business, which may promote further investment into the country, as well as the use of local human resources. The primary aim of this research was therefore to conduct a literature and empirical study into the levels of and factors influencing the organisational commitment of South African employees in a selected Chinese organisation in South Africa.

For the purposes of this study, a single case study approach, located within the phenomenological research paradigm, was used. A large multinational Chinese organisation with operations in South Africa agreed to participate in this study. The research made use of a descriptive case study design. To give effect to the primary aim of the study, three research objectives were identified. Firstly, to identify and describe key factors influencing local employee commitment. Secondly, to identify and describe current commitment levels amongst local employees, and lastly, to propose recommendations to improve local employee commitment and its implications for the appropriate management of human resources within the Chinese organisation.

Data were collected by means of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 20 participating employees at four organisational branches across South Africa. Moreover, although the interview transcripts were the primary source of data, the collection process was enriched with the use of organisational and participant observations.

The findings of this research revealed ten factors which are perceived to influence the commitment of South African employees within the organisation, namely: Open communication, Leadership, Supervisory support, Opportunities for training and

development, Compensation, Job security, Promotional opportunities, Shared values, Recognition and Trust. Certain issues were raised by the participants during the in-depth interviews, most notably the limited opportunities for training, development and promotion, as well as issues regarding the perceived limited compensation received from the organisation. Despite these issues, the general findings relating to the levels of commitment in the organisation were positive for the organisation under study, with the majority of the participants being perceived to demonstrate high levels of affective, normative and continuance commitment.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND DELIMITATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, Chinese bilateral trade and investment has grown remarkably in Africa (Bräutigam & Xiaoyang 2011: 27), following rapid commercial and political engagement with the continent (Corkin & Burke 2006: 8). Chinese interaction with the African continent currently includes, but is not limited to, commercial trade, foreign direct investment, construction and engineering contracts, development finance, humanitarian assistance, and military aid and cooperation (Bräutigam 2011a: 1). This has resulted in China becoming a vital role-player in African economics. Chinese organisations are furthermore benefiting from increasing support from the Chinese government to enter into Africa (Corkin & Burke 2006: 7). So much so, that bilateral trade between China and Africa rose from 10.6 billion US dollars in 2000 to over 160 billion US dollars in 2011 (Abkowitz 2009: 57; Bräutigam 2011a: 1; Bräutigam & Xiaoyang 2011: 27; Cissé 2012). Furthermore, investments amounted to more than 13 billion US dollars between Africa and China in 2011 (Cissé 2012). It is believed that in 2011 over 2 000 Chinese organisations were operational in Africa, contributing greatly to employment in Africa (Cissé 2012; Latham 2011: 1).

The Chinese have furthermore arranged agreements with countries in Africa, in which African resources are used to secure a commercial line of Chinese credit, enabling various infrastructure projects to be financed across the continent (Bräutigam 2011a: 5). Such infrastructure projects are deemed to be of great importance in developing Africa into more than an "exporter of raw materials" (Baah & Jauch 2009: 11). Additionally, China contributes to the African continent through various aid schemes, with roughly 40-50 percent of China's total aid being received by Africa (Bräutigam 2011a: 2). China has committed itself to training and educating Africans, including diplomats, and offers roughly 4 000 full scholarships to African students each year (Shinn 2011: 4). For these reasons, many African leaders have welcomed China into their countries and view Chinese investors as welcomed competition against Western investors with their poor history of exploitative behaviour, in many instances (Muyakwa 2009: 8; Zadek et al. 2009: 21).

Concerns have, however, been raised by China's reputation as being characterised by a lack of work, health and industry standards, often resulting in poor working conditions and a lack of basic worker rights (Bräutigam 2011b: 4; Zadek et al. 2009: 21). Furthermore, China's need for natural resources is ever growing (Muyakwa 2009: 3), and concerns have been raised about the destructive and exploitative consequences this will have for Africa, if trade is not managed carefully (Zadek et al. 2009: 22). Concerns have also been expressed about the limited Chinese knowledge of local African culture and practices, which may result in a large number of imported Chinese human resources instead of focusing on local employment and training (Zadek et al. 2009: 22). It is reported that in 2009 roughly 187 396 Chinese citizens were working on the African continent (Bräutigam 2011a: 1). If a lack of cultural understanding and cooperation between Chinese employers and African employees exists, together with a range of other possible factors, including poor employment standards, this could lead to a negative effect on the organisational commitment of local employees and therefore a negative effect on Chinese business interests in Africa. Organisational commitment of local employees is therefore an important factor for consideration.

Organisational commitment continues to be an important area of research in the field of management, as it is associated with work-related constructs such as employee turnover, profits, long-term survival, job satisfaction, internal dispute resolution and leader-subordinate relations (Arnolds & Boshoff 2004: 1-2; Chen 2009; Sharma & Irving 2005: 25). Hart and Willower (2001: 174) are of the opinion that commitment within an organisation can be defined as an employee's acceptance of, and confidence in, the organisation's goals, a strong willingness to apply effort for the benefit of the organisation, and the desire to continue employment in the organisation. According to Meyer and Allen (1997), a committed employee will often stay with the organisation through ups and downs, protect the organisation's assets and share the goals and values of the organisation.

As employee commitment is believed to differ often across cultures and nationalities within multinational organisations (Chen 2009; Luthans, McCaul & Dodd 1985: 219; Randall 1993), and considering the likely differences in cultural and managerial practices between the Chinese and South Africans (Corkin & Burke 2006; Hempel 2001: 203); gaining an understanding of employees' commitment within a selected Chinese organisation in South Africa, and the factors which influence their commitment, is therefore important in order to

promote Chinese business success and the most appropriate management of local human resources.

Despite the importance of Chinese organisations and their operations in South Africa, very little research has been done on individual and organisational issues in Chinese organisations operating in Africa (Jackson 2012: 181), and more specifically the local employees' organisational commitment to such organisations. Furthermore, the importance of studies on organisational commitment theory within developing countries, across cultures and within multinational organisations has been highlighted by Chen (2009) and Cheng and Stockdale (2003).

Based on the literature review on organisational commitment, as presented in Chapter Three, for the purpose of this study, use was made of Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of commitment, in order to gain an understanding into the levels of commitment within an organisation. A theoretical framework of the possible factors influencing local employee commitment was also compiled. The factors comprising the theoretical framework were based on Venter, Farrington and Finkelstein's (2010) research of the factors influencing commitment in family organisations in South Africa, as well as Finegold, Mohrman and Spreitzer's (1999) research on the factors influencing the commitment of technical knowledge workers. The factors comprising the theoretical framework were furthermore based on Chen's (2009) research on organisational commitment across an international organisation, Bagraim's (2004) research on the commitment of South African knowledge workers, as well as Cheng and Stockdale's (2003) research of organisational commitment within a Chinese context. Factors influencing organisational commitment included in the theoretical framework were Open communication, Leadership, Supervisory support, Job security, Opportunities for training and development, Compensation, Promotional opportunities and Shared values. Questions relating to the participants' perceived levels of commitment, as well as the questions which broadly addressed the three-components of commitment, were based on Meyer and Allen's (1997) commitment research regarding work-place application. For the purpose of this study, a Chinese organisation refers to an organisation operating in South Africa, in which at least 51 percent is owned and controlled in China or by Chinese nationals. A local employee will refer to a South African employee, who is employed by a Chinese organisation operating in South Africa.

1.2   RESEARCH PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Given the economic significance of multinational Chinese organisations operating in South Africa, and in an attempt to address the gap in the literature pertaining to the organisational commitment of South African employees in these organisations, the main aim of this research is to conduct a literature and empirical study into the levels of and factors influencing the organisational commitment of South African employees in a selected Chinese organisation.

More specifically, in order to achieve the primary aim of this research, the following objectives have been formulated, namely to:

- To identify and describe key factors influencing local employee commitment.
- To identify and describe current commitment levels amongst local employees.
- To propose recommendations to improve local employee commitment and its implications for the appropriate management of human resources within a Chinese organisation in South Africa.

1.3   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOLDOLOGY

For the purposes of this study, a single case study approach, located within the phenomenological research paradigm, was used (Collis & Hussey 2003: 66). A large multinational Chinese organisation with operations in South Africa agreed to participate in this study. The current research makes use of a descriptive case study design. The participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique (Welman & Kruger 2001: 63). With the assistance of the organisation's regional manager, appropriate participants, across hierarchical levels within the organisation, were selected. Data were collected by means of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 20 participating employees. Moreover, although the interview transcripts were the primary source of data, the collection process was enriched with the use of organisational and participant observations. Such observations are believed to provide important details and insights into the research, which are important for the triangulation of data (Remenyi 2013: 199). In order to assist with the interview process, an interview guide was developed.

The researcher analysed the data using content analysis, which is described as a technique for making replicable and sound inferences from texts, or other meaningful matter in the contexts of their use (Krippendorff 2004: 18). Qualitative content analysis involves compressing large amounts of text into fewer categories, enabling systematic processing (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1278). It allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective, yet scientific way (Zhang & Wildemuth 2009: 1). The qualitative data collected for this study were analysed manually, making use of Tesch's (1990) model of content analysis, as well as the researcher's own understanding of qualitative data analysis. Due to the nature and size of this study, manual analysis was deemed an appropriate method of analysis (Basit 2003: 152-153).

In assessing the quality of the analysis, the four criteria for reliability as identified by Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Golafshani, 2003: 602) were used, namely confirmability, credibility, transferability and dependability. In this study, validity was obtained by checking the findings with five of the 20 participants, who were given the opportunity of comment on the researcher's interpretations of their personal interviews (Collis & Hussey 2003: 279). In qualitative research the term "dependability" is believed to refer to the concept of reliability within quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba 1985, cited in Golafshani 2003: 601). The dependability of the research encompasses the concepts of consistency, confirmability, credibility and transferability, which are associated with qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba 1985, cited in Golafshani 2003). Dependability was addressed in this study by ensuring the consistency in data gathering and processing by making use of an interview guide (Appendix A), and ensuring the research process was made clear (Collis & Hussy 2003; Shenton 2004: 71). Moreover, use was made of data triangulation, and a substantial amount of time was spent in the organisation (Lincoln & Guba 1985, cited in Golafshani 2003; Pitney & Parker 2009: 63). The researcher further ensured that the design, collection, preparation and analysis of the data were handled with the utmost integrity, in order to support the credibility of the findings. Dependability was further addressed by adopting well-recognised research methods and regularly debriefing the researcher's supervisor (Shenton 2004: 73).

The researcher ensured adherence to the research ethical considerations such as voluntary participation, confidentiality, and non-disclosure in the use of research data. The research proposal and the research ethical aspects were discussed with relevant management within the participating organisation. This research complied with all ethical requirements of the Department of Management Human Research Ethics Committee.

1.4   DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

In selecting a research case, the researcher had the difficult task of locating a suitable Chinese organisation which would agree to participate in the study. The researcher began discussions with a large Chinese multinational organisation with operations in South Africa. The organisation was deemed to be an ideal case, due to its current success and growth globally and in South Africa. After clearly explaining the importance of the research, the organisation agreed to participate in the study, on condition that the organisation was not named. The organisation, operating in the electronics and appliances industry, has sales and service branches in four South African cities, as well as a large manufacturing and assembly plant in an industrial zone in Gauteng. The organisation is actively investing in its operations in South Africa, and is aiming to enhance its current workforce with over a thousand new South African employees over the next few years. With its current growth, active investment in South Africa, and expected growth in local employee numbers, the organisation is an ideal case for this study.

1.5   STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter One serves as the introductory chapter of this study, and provides the background to the topic under investigation. The importance of the research and the research objectives are discussed. The research design and methodology are also introduced in this Chapter.

Chapter Two discusses China's involvement with Africa. In order to create a holistic perspective, China's history in Africa is discussed. The primary motives of China's involvement in Africa are then described, as well as the importance of China's investment for South Africa in particular. Cultural differences between China and South Africa are then described.

Chapter Three focuses on organisational commitment theory. The importance of local employees for international organisations is discussed, followed by a focus on contextualising organisational commitment as a multi-dimensional concept. The importance of organisational commitment is highlighted, followed by a discussion on managing employee commitment.

The factors which are deemed to influence organisational commitment are then identified, and applied in the context of this study.

Chapter Four explains and motivates the research methodology adopted in this study. The phenomenological paradigm, research method, data collection methods and data analysis techniques are explained. The validity and reliability of the research, as well as all ethical considerations are then commented on.

Chapter Five focuses on the research findings derived from an analysis of the in-depth interviews and observations.

Chapter Six summarises the research findings, and discusses the findings by reflecting on the literature in Chapters Two and Three. The limitations of the research and recommendations for future research will be highlighted. Recommendations on how the organisation can possibly improve the organisational commitment of its employees will be put forward.

CHAPTER 2
CHINA'S INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA

2.1   INTRODUCTION

China's involvement with the African continent has grown remarkably over the past decade, with China now becoming one of the major role players in the African economy. Chinese development aid, commercial trade, diplomatic and military assistance have all contributed greatly to the African continent and increased its value internationally (Butts & Bankus 2009: 1-2). Chinese organisations are furthermore benefiting from increasing support from the Chinese government to enter into Africa (Corkin & Burke 2006: 7). It is believed that over 2 000 Chinese organisations have invested in operational branches in Africa, contributing greatly to African employment (Latham 2011: 1). Many African leaders therefore place great importance on the value of Chinese relations (Latham 2011: 1).

The purpose of this Chapter is to gain an insight into China's involvement in Africa. The Chapter begins with an historical overview of China's involvement in Africa, over three significant eras. The three primary categories of current China's involvement will then be discussed, namely: resource seeking, market seeking and political seeking motives. This is followed by an overview of the positive and negative perspectives of China's involvement in Africa. The importance of Chinese foreign direct investment to South Africa is then discussed. Lastly, Chinese and South African cultural differences are discussed, in order to create a stronger theoretical framework.

2.2   A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHINA-AFRICA RELATIONS

China's involvement in Africa is not new (Adisu, Sharky & Okoroafo 2010: 3). China considers itself a long-time friend of Africa, within its self-declared role as "leader of the developing world". Note-worthy Chinese relations with Africa date as far back as the 1960s, and have included Chinese development aid, trade, political relations and military assistance

to Africa (Butts & Bankus 2009: 1-2). Although China-Africa relations are not new, the degree of involvement has fluctuated and changed due to certain historical circumstances. In order to give perspective to this study, a brief history of China-Africa relations will be given, broken up into three periodical sections: Early involvement from 1956 to 1977, involvement from 1978 to the 1990s and more recent involvement from 2000 to the present.

2.2.1   China's involvement from 1956 to 1977

Initial China-Africa relations were slow moving after the first Asia-Africa conference in 1955, known as the Bandung Conference. China's goal as a result of this conference was to: affirm its leadership over the developing world (Butts & Bankus 2009: 2); take a stance against imperialism and colonialism, countering diplomatic recognition of Taipei's claims of sovereignty over Mainland China; and competing with the West and Soviet Union for global influence (Meidan 2006: 72-74; Muyakwa 2009: 5). By 1956, Egypt was the only African country to have formal diplomatic relations with China. During the 1960s, however, diplomatic ties with African countries began to grow after the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai's political tour of 10 countries on the African continent, including oil-rich Sudan. African countries signed an agreement to promote the principle of non-alignment, while seeking to promote China-African economic and cultural cooperation (Muyakwa 2009: 6). By 1977, 44 African countries had formal diplomatic relations with China. During this period, China supported African countries with development aid, political support, and military assistance (Meidan 2009: 72-74). Such development aid included thousands of Chinese engineers and skilled workers being sent to the continent to work on various infrastructure projects, many of which were financed through Chinese soft-loans, including the 1 860-kilometre long Tanzania-Zambia railway (Muyakwa 2009: 6). Such generous aid for the continent was seen as a tangible demonstration of Chinese friendship, gaining significant appreciation from Africans. Through such diplomatic relations with the African people, the People's Republic of China achieved its goal of replacing the Taiwan-based Republic of China as a member of the United Nations in 1971, with the support of many African countries (Adisu et al. 2010: 1-2; Baah & Jauch 2009: 88).

2.2.2 China's involvement from 1978 to the 1990s

Following China's economic reform from 1978, which focused on domestic development and opening up ties with Western countries (Zadek et al. 2009: 20), China's political involvement with the African continent began to decline (Muyakwa 2009: 6-7). It is believed that as a result, relationships with African leaders were neglected by China during the 1980s, resulting in slightly broken political ties. During this same period China re-evaluated its aid programmes for Africa, and announced that they would need to "do more with less", putting greater emphasis on "mutually beneficial" cooperation instead of direct "one-way aid" (Brautigam 2011b: 5).

In 1989 however, China's relationships of good standing with the West took a quick turn after the Tiananmen Square Protest in which student protestors were brutally dealt with by the Chinese regime at the time. As a result of the protest, China was highly criticized and isolated by Western governments (Meidan 2006: 74). On the contrary however, many African governments were quick to defend China's actions, hoping that their support against Western criticism would ultimately reignite Chinese aid and support to the continent; which, as previously mentioned, had been dwindling over the decade (Muyakwa 2009: 6-7). As a result of Western criticism and the subsequent loyal African support, China reinvigorated its political interest in Africa. Once again African political support was deemed a priority for China to achieve its political goals in multilateral forums, and keep up with its ever growing need for natural resources (Butts & Bankus 2009: 1-3; Meidan 2006: 74). In 1998, South Africa, one of Taipei's most important African partners, cut off diplomatic ties with Taipei, and formally recognised Beijing, with the majority of the remaining Taiwan supporters in Africa shortly following suit (Meidan 2006: 74). With China's renewed attention in the African continent, Chinese commercial interest also began to grow over the 1990s, with many high level Chinese business and political visits to the African continent (Muyakwa 2009: 7).

2.2.3   China's involvement from 2000 to the present

The new millennium has seen unprecedented growth in China-Africa relations. Commercial and political involvement has grown remarkably, resulting in the growth of bi-lateral trade rising from 6.5 billion US dollars in 1999, to over 120.9 billion US dollars in 2010, outperforming even optimistic projections (Abkowitz 2009: 57; Brautigam 2011b: 1; Muyakwa 2009: 7). It is believed that over 2 000 Chinese organisations had invested in operational branches in Africa by 2011, contributing greatly to employment in Africa (Latham 2011: 1). Such trade and investment has resulted in China contributing to African infrastructure development, while building strong beneficial diplomatic and business relationships with African countries (Corkin & Burke 2006: 7; Zadek et al. 2009: 19). With the increasing commercial relations over the past decade, China has linked its development assistance to the continent. China continues to contribute to the African continent through various aid schemes, with roughly 40-50 percent of China's total aid being received by Africa (Brautigam 2011b: 2). In 2009, China allocated 10 billion US dollars in aid to the African continent, which was to be distributed over a three-year period from 2009 to 2011 (Adisu et al. 2010: 5).

China has furthermore intensified political ties with African countries over the past decade, with the Chinese premier and official delegates making frequent visits to the African continent. As a result of the intensified political relations, China has secured diplomatic relations in 50 African countries, holding an embassy in 49 of them (Shinn 2011: 2). With the rapid growth of bilateral trade, the African market continues to be a place of interest for Chinese exporters and manufacturers, and continues to develop as a result (Asche & Schüller 2008: 18; Shinn 2011: 3).

Jackson (2012) asserts that there are three broad motives that guide China's current interest in Africa, namely, resource seeking; political seeking; and market seeking. These motives have continued to develop throughout recent history, and are now deemed stronger than ever before (Meidan 2006: 90-92). The current government-supported influx of Chinese business into Africa is therefore likely to continue (Adisu et al. 2010: 3-5), resulting in ever-increasing research opportunities for management scholars at organisational level (Jackson 2012: 182). The three motives which are deemed to guide China's current interest in Africa will be discussed in the next section.

2.3   THREE MOTIVES OF CHINA'S INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA

Unlike the beliefs of many Western critics, China's interest in the African continent is not limited to its resources (Brautigam 2011b: 8). Although Chinese reasons may differ between industries and particular African countries, it is generally believed that China's interest in Africa can be generalised into three broad motives, namely, resource seeking, market seeking and political seeking activities (Jackson 2012; Lafargue 2005: 1; Muyakwa 2009: 11-12). Such interaction is believed to have an influence at organisational level (Jackson 2012), and is thus an important consideration for this study. China's involvement and relations regarding these three motives will thus be briefly presented.

2.3.1   Resource seeking motives for China's involvement in Africa

China's unprecedented economic growth has implications in the global context of which one such implication is the country's increased need for imported raw materials (Van De Looy 2006: 14). China's demand for minerals and oil is increasing almost exponentially, and thus driving up commodity prices (Butts & Bankus 2009: 4). China, the fastest growing energy consumer in the world, has averaged a 13 percent annual growth in energy demand, a trend which is likely to continue. Thus, the naturally resource rich country has found itself incapable of meeting the needs of its growing domestic economy (Butts & Bankus 2009: 3; Meidan 2006: 77). The source and security of China's future resource imports are thus a vital consideration for the Chinese government (Keenan 2009: 86). Its intention is not, however, to compete for these natural resources on the open market, but to rather own them and their related infrastructure in order to create a protected supply source for the nation. In line with this aim, a source of the required natural resources has been identified in Africa (Butts & Bankus 2009: 3-5). Consequently, one of the primary reasons for China's involvement in Africa is its natural resources; with particular emphasis on its oil supply (Keenan 2009). Almost three-quarters of all of China's imports from Africa are considered to be crude oil (Broadman 2006: 81), with China obtaining roughly one-third of its total oil imports from Africa (Asche & Schüller 2008; Shinn 2011: 3). Although the majority of resource imports are crude oil, Africa is also a strategic supplier of a multitude of other minerals and raw materials to China. Metals such as aluminium, copper, iron ore, lead and zinc; together with minerals such as coal, diamonds and uranium, are all present in Africa and imported in large

quantities by China (Butts & Bankus 2009: 5; Meidan 2006: 76). Due to Africa's debt and lack of infrastructure, it can benefit greatly from China's interest and dependence on its resources (Butts & Bankus 2009: 5). It has been proposed by Jackson (2012) that the nature of China's resource seeking may have an influence on human resource management matters at organisational level, including the number of local employees employed, and the degree to which local skills development takes place.

2.3.2   Market-seeking motives for China's involvement in Africa

Although raw material trade is the dominant form of China-African trade, Africa is seen to potentially offer Chinese organisations a wealth of other opportunities and commercial prospects (Lafargue 2005: 1). Africa is seen as a new and exciting market which offers Chinese organisations exceptional conditions, with many potential customers for affordable Chinese products (Van De Looy 2006: 22). Goods primarily imported from China by countries in Africa include household utensils, mechanical and electric products, textiles and clothes (Van De Looy 2006: 22). While it is growing at a rapid pace, total trade with the African continent is comparatively marginal for China, constituting roughly four (4) percent of China's global trade (Shinn 2011: 3). Despite this, Africa is a potentially large market in which Chinese exporters could trade (Asche & Schüller 2008: 18). With approximately 900 million people, many of whom come from well-established communities with increasing levels of buying power, the African market has potential to be highly profitable for Chinese organisations (Lafargue 2005: 1). The focus on the African market is evidenced through the declaration of the "diversification of foreign trade and the expansion of trade with Africa" as an aim of the Chinese government, recognising the potential within the African market (Asche & Schüller 2008: 18).

Although some are sceptical of the China's market seeking motives, African governments often try to keep a positive outlook, believing that Chinese business offers exposure to international markets, entrepreneurial learning and competitive dynamism; often bypassing "stale" traditional commercial methods (Lafargue 2005: 1). Although the comparatively marginal trade with Africa is not large for China, China is considered one of the most important trade partners for Africa, resulting in African leaders often welcoming Chinese organisations and their products on the African continent (Asche & Schüller 2008: 18; Shinn

2011: 3). Critics, however, reveal a different analysis of the situation, stating that an analysis of trade reveals China's dominance, rather than a situation of "South-South cooperation" (Adisu et al. 2010: 5). Most commonly, China imports raw materials from Africa, and exports finished and industrial goods back through state-owned enterprises (Asche & Schüller 2008: 21). Critics therefore question the true value of Chinese trade for the African continent, and the long-term effect of increasing Chinese imports into the African market (Adisu et al. 2010: 5). The nature of China's market seeking activities is however believed to have an influence at organisational level. It has been proposed that China's market seeking activities may lead to local employment opportunities and result in employment and skills development (Jackson 2012)

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2.3.3   Political-seeking motives for China's involvement in Africa

China's political-seeking motives are regarded as a key factor for their involvement with Africa (Lafargue 2005: 1; Meidan 2006: 74). China is a great political supporter and advocate for many African countries, holding formal diplomatic relations with 50 African countries, and the Chinese premier making frequent visits to the African continent (Shinn 2011: 2). Moreover, many prestigious African projects are funded by Chinese grants and zero-interest loans in order to gain diplomatic support from African states. It is asserted that many of the Chinese-built stadiums, hospitals and government buildings are built in Africa with diplomatic motives (Brautigam 2011b: 8). Moreover, many African countries view China as a powerful political ally, which is less demanding in terms of democratic norms, and less inquisitive with regard to how funding is spent. An example of such political cooperation was seen in 2004 when China threatened to use its UN Security Council veto to block the adaption of political sanctions against Sudan over the conflict in Darfur (Lafargue 2005: 1). Many African countries rely on China's support to counterbalance Western political pressure, isolation and arms embargos (Shinn 2011: 5). As a result of political ties, China also provides many African countries with military assistance including arms sales, training and capacity building, as well as peacekeeping operations (Butts & Bankus 2009: 8-9). In return for its political protection, China counts on the support of African countries for its foreign policy, particularly with regard to its territorial claims (Lafargue 2005: 1). Furthermore, Africa is well represented in organisations such as the UN Human Rights Council, the World Trade Organisation, as well as holding three non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council

(Shinn 2011: 5). Through diplomatic relations with Africa, China can often rely on African support through such forums. An example can be seen when China leaned on African countries to defend their actions in Tibet, after the West began to show its disproval in 2008 (Shinn 2011: 5). Diplomatic relations between China and Africa can therefore be seen as a good example of "mutually beneficial cooperation".

In summary, it is evident that Chinese interest in Africa is not limited to its resources, but includes market-seeking and political-seeking motives. Positive and negative perspectives relating to China's involvement in Africa will be discussed in the next section, in order to provide greater context to matters affecting organisational issues.

2.4 PERSPECTIVES OF CHINA'S INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA

China's interest in Africa is not new, and its current investment approach is consistent with its history with the African continent. The magnitude of China's involvement has however increased significantly (Keenan 2009: 84). Analysing the various advantages and disadvantages of such Chinese involvement in Africa is not a simple matter (Adisu et al. 2010: 5). China-African relations have resulted in many positive outcomes for African countries. However, serious questions have been raised about China's strategies and tactics in its quest for diplomatic allies, new markets and natural resources (Adisu et al. 2010: 7). A summary of positive and negative perspectives of China's involvement in Africa will be presented in this section.

2.4.1 Positive perspectives of China's involvement in Africa

China is believed to have a monetary surplus, and is desperately seeking new external markets for investment (Keenan 2009). African countries, often seeking foreign investment, have been deemed a fertile environment for Chinese investment. China is therefore believed to have an ever increasingly positive relationship with African countries, based on mutual economic and strategic needs (Keenan 2009).

China has approached many African countries with the option of securing soft-loan finance, which can be used for infrastructure development, in exchange for resource-backed contracts. China has therefore become an important builder of infrastructure on the African continent (Shinn 2011: 4), allowing African economic development opportunities and greater global competitiveness. Such aid, in sharp contrast to typical Western aid to Africa, comes with "no strings attached" (apart from the non-recognition of Taiwan) and is often regarded by African leaders as refreshing, pure capitalism without any social or political preconditions. The Chinese "just business" policy is therefore to stay clear of African politics and not to interfere in the internal affairs of African partners (Brautigam 2011a: 3). Chinese assistance is thus preferred by many African leaders, compared to assistance from other sources, as the Chinese are seen to recognise and respect the independence of their African partners (Keenan 2009). As Western aid and trade have been carrying increasing levels of preconditions – ranging from environmental and corruption reports, to maximum expenditure allowances on social services – more and more African states are becoming receptive to further Chinese involvement (Keenan 2009). China has furthermore shown a willingness to fund prestigious African projects, such as the building of new conference centres, stadia, and government houses, which are seen by the people of Africa as a tangible demonstration of Chinese respect for Africa (Keenan 2009). This is further demonstrated, as previously mentioned, by the granting of regular formal state invitations to leaders in Africa (Shinn 2011: 2).

Other than its direct investment in African infrastructure through resource backed loans, China has proven a very generous partner in providing aid for many of Africa's most pertinent issues such as illness, poverty, hunger, education, and war. China has shown great commitment in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases across the continent, and has helped treat thousands of malaria and HIV/AIDS patients through direct aid programmes. Furthermore, desperately needed Chinese medical doctors and health workers have been despatched to the continent, together with the construction of new clinics and hospitals (Adisu et al. 2010: 5; Butts & Bankus 2009: 7). Other aid programmes include food assistance, and the training and education of thousands of diplomats, apprentices and students through various bursary schemes, along with the construction of schools and training facilities (Adisu et al. 2010: 5; Shinn 2011: 4). Furthermore, China has shown loyalty to the people of Africa and their safety, by committing roughly 1 600 military personnel to various current UN African peacekeeping missions (Meidan 2006: 84; Shinn 2011: 2).

The genuine Chinese pledge to assist the African continent has not even been altered by the recent global economic crisis. The Chinese Premier was quoted as saying, "whatever change may take place in the world…our policy of supporting Africa's economic and social development will not change" (Adisu et al. 2010: 7; Xinhua News Agency 2009: 2). Furthermore, as mentioned previously, in 2009 China allocated 10 billion US dollars in aid for the African continent, to be distributed over three years (Adisu et al. 2010: 5).

China's involvement in Africa is therefore deemed to have many potentially positive effects for the continent, including, but not limited to, the creation of jobs, the growth of technology, the political growth and development of leaders, the assistance with Africa's most desperate ailments, and the increased competition for African trade and resources (Keenan 2009).

2.4.2   Negative perspectives of China's involvement in Africa

Despite what many African and Chinese leaders would like to have the media believe, China-African relations do have their downsides. A primary negative effect stems from China's "just business" policy within the continent (Keenan 2009). Although leaders in Africa appreciate the independence that comes from a lack of preconditions for Chinese aid, the unfortunate reality is that such preconditions are often needed (Keenan 2009). A lack of such conditions is seen to fuel corruption, mismanagement and greed within the African continent (Keenan 2009). Keenan (2009) asserts that due to China's lack of interest in how the funding is to be used and spent, the reality is that leaders in Africa have little accountability, and are simply using resource-backed funding as personal bank accounts in many of the countries in Africa. It is believed that the lack of the promotion of good governance in connection with development aid has hampered efforts by Western sources, including the European Union and the International Monetary Fund, to promote African development and human rights issues (Meidan 2006: 87). An example can be found in Angola, the largest external supplier of oil to China. Despite the belief that Angola's oil production almost matches that of Kuwait, 70 percent of Angola's population is surviving on less than two (2) US dollars per day, with the country being regarded as one of the most corrupt environments in the world (Keenan 2009). Due to the financial mismanagement of the Angolan state funds and the "disappearance" of billions of US dollars, the IMF in 2004 imposed strict regulations for the proper management of IMF funds. China then came forward and offered Angolan leaders a

more appealing offer for funding, backed with Angolan oil contracts, with few preconditions or requirements, allowing Angola to forgo IMF funding. Despite Angola being China's largest external oil supplier, the poor in the country have virtually no access to clean drinking water, sanitation and reliable food sources (Keenan 2009).

Angola's situation does not occur in isolation. Similar situations can be found in Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. Chinese oil companies, for example, continue to increase investment in war-torn Sudan, even after Western companies left due to the outrage over the gross human rights violations and genocide (Butts & Bankus 2009: 9). China's support in Sudan has furthermore allowed Sudanese leaders to avoid otherwise crippling Western sanctions (Keenan 2009). Moreover, Chinese support of Mugabe's regime in Zimbabwe, has allowed the president to remain in power, providing financing and weaponry to the country, despite a Western arms embargo (Butts & Bankus 2009: 2; Meidan 2006: 87). Such involvement with some of the African countries has ultimately resulted in the limitation of African progress to political and economic reform, while Chinese investment seems to feed into the institutional dysfunctions of resource-rich countries (Adisu et al. 2010: 5; Kolstad & Wiig 2011: 31). Although the actions of leaders in Africa cannot be blamed on China, one needs to question the appropriateness of China's "just business" policy under the circumstances.

The negative issues relating to China's involvement in Africa are, however, not limited to its "just business" policy. Local industries and merchants in Africa have been hard hit by the recent influx of affordable Chinese goods and retail networks (Adisu et al. 2010: 5). Due to low Chinese production costs, imported goods are often substantially cheaper than locally produced goods. Should such imported goods then be passed onto Chinese wholesale and retail networks on the continent, the entire African production and retail line finds itself bypassed, which is detrimental to local economies (Adisu et al. 2010: 5). The only African country which has effectively managed to "weather the Chinese storm" is South Africa. This is attributed to strict bilateral agreements between South Africa and China to limit the amount of Chinese imports (Meidan 2006: 83).

The use of Chinese human resources in Africa by Chinese organisations is also deemed a concern for the continent's labour market. China has been heavily criticised for bringing in Chinese human resources, when there were ample local human resources available (Butts & Bankus 2009: 5; Meidan 2006: 86; Zadek et al. 2009: 22). It is reported that in 2009, roughly

187 400 Chinese citizens were working on the African continent (Brautigam 2011b: 1). According to Davies et al. (2008: 17), studies have however shed more light on the matter, and have argued that no obvious preference is given to Chinese employees by Chinese organisations, and Chinese human resources are usually only reserved when managerial or technical skills are required, which are not available locally.

Further concerns have been raised about the long working hours and poor working conditions in Chinese organisations, often not adhering to local labour laws or African customs (Brautigam 2011a: 4; Zadek et al. 2009: 21). Such practices often lead to discontent in African communities which feel employees are mistreated or are replaced by foreign Chinese employees (Adisu et al. 2010: 5). Jackson (2012) asserted that if the assumption that there are human rights issues at organisational level in Chinese organisations is correct, it may have serious implications for employment conditions. Jackson (2012) states that further research into China's presence in Africa is needed at organisational level, with a particular area of interest being employment conditions in Chinese organisations operating in Africa. Moreover, Butts and Bankus (2009: 7) state that employee dissatisfaction in certain African industries is substantial, due to the poor wages and working conditions offered by Chinese organisations; a noteworthy statement for this study considering the close correlation between employee job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Arnolds & Boshoff 2004: 1).

2.4.3 Summary of the positive and negative perspectives of China's involvement in Africa

In the previous section, the positive and negative perceptions relating to China's involvement in Africa were provided. In the simplest terms, China's involvement has raised Africa's value, offering Africa a new political voice, stimulating trade, and Western interest and competition within the continent (Meidan 2006: 92). Furthermore, China has generously provided aid to the continent, including desperately needed development finance, health services, hunger relief and military peacekeeping (Adisu et al. 2010: 5; Shinn 2011: 2-4). Certain African countries have, however, exercised more caution with Chinese involvement, acknowledging that, although Chinese aid and trade come with little political interference, they may come with local economic limitations (Meidan 2006: 92). Concerns have also been raised about the practicality of China's "just business" policy with the continent, when it has

been asserted that many of the countries in Africa are fuelled by corruption and political turmoil (Adisu et al. 2010: 5; Kolstad & Wiig 2011: 31).

Commercial sectors in Africa have been hard hit by the influx of Chinese goods, and Chinese distribution and retail networks (Adisu et al. 2010: 5). Moreover, concerns have been raised about the number of Chinese employees brought into Africa, together with low Chinese labour standards (Adisu et al. 2010: 5; Zadek et al. 2009: 22). China's involvement in Africa is therefore a complicated and multifaceted concept, having many advantages for the African continent, and certain disadvantages. Perhaps China's involvement can be simplified in the words of Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, current Nigerian Minister of Finance, and Harvard University and MIT graduate: "China should be left alone to forge its unique partnership with African countries and the West must simply learn to compete" (BBC News, October 24, 2006, cited in Brautigam 2011a: 16).

The positive and negative perspectives of China's involvement in the African continent have been discussed. As the focus of this study is within South Africa, the next section will discuss the role and importance of Chinese foreign direct investment in South Africa specifically.

2.5   CHINA'S FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Developing nations, such as South Africa, are often dependent on foreign capital for their developmental strategies (Mosia 2012: 1-2; Mwilima 2003: 31). Such foreign capital traditionally comes from two sources, foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA). ODA consists of aid given by a foreign government, often from a developed country, to developing countries, in order to offer economic support (Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 10). FDI on the other hand refers to foreign capital in the form of an investment from a foreign organisation, to the receiving country (the country which receives the investment). The intention of such an investment is to benefit the foreign investor (Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 10).

The inflow of FDI has traditionally been linked to economic growth in developing countries (Mwilima 2003: 31; Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 9). Historically, the main source of FDI to Africa came from the West, notably the United States, the United Kingdom and France.

China has however increased FDI drastically over the past decade, and is considered the fifth largest contributor of FDI to Africa (Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 9). Recognising the importance of FDI, South Africa and other SADC (Southern African Development Community) members generally encourage FDI into their economies (Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 9-11). Such encouragement is often seen through incentives such as tax exemptions and subsidised infrastructure projects (Mwilima 2003: 34).

FDI is typically in the form of either a 'greenfield' investment or a merger and acquisition (M&A). Greenfield investment involves a foreign organisation investing in new assets and ventures in the receiving country (Mwilima 2003: 31-32). M&As on the other hand, simply involve the transfer of existing local assets to foreign organisations and investors. As M&As do not directly stimulate the receiving country's economy, greenfield investments are often considered more advantageous to the receiving country (Mwilima 2003: 31-32). Mosia (2012: 1-2) asserts that it is therefore important for South Africa to stimulate greenfield investment into the country, and to focus on strengthening its manufacturing capacity in order to create employment opportunities. As the organisation under study has invested in assets and ventures in South Africa, including a large manufacturing facility, with the intention to build a second such facility, the FDI received from the organisation is therefore considered a favourable greenfield investment for South Africa.

As the point of FDI, from the view of the investor, is to maximise return on investment, the primary aim will not be poverty reduction in the receiving country, as is often the aim of ODA (Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 10-11). Despite the fact that it may be an indirect result of FDI, the result may however be similar. For instance, foreign investors will often make use of local human resources, thereby reducing unemployment and poverty within the receiving country (Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 10). This is the case for many Chinese organisations which have invested in South Africa, including the organisation under study. Moreover, FDI has the potential to stimulate the receiving country's economy through the introduction and transfer of new human resource skills, as well as new technological knowledge (Mwilima 2003: 33; Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 10-11). Additional advantages may include the stimulation of the receiving county's competitive market, the promotion of an entrepreneurial environment, and opening up foreign trade markets (Mwilima 2003: 33).

As the foreign investors are there to maximise profits, jobs may be created in the receiving country, but they may be characterised by poor working conditions and low wages. Mwilima (2003: 33) therefore states that it is important for researchers to consider not only the quantity, but also the quality of jobs which are created, as employees may experience limited job security and poor working conditions.

It is therefore recognised that the extent to which Chinese FDI benefits South Africa is dependent on its government's ability to manage FDI inflows effectively (Van Der Lugt et al. 2011: 11-12). This study has the unique opportunity to conduct research on a Chinese organisation which has invested in South Africa. The result of this will provide some insight into the working conditions within the organisation, as well as the local employees' related commitment to it.

The research opportunities for management scholars are often believed to be intertwined with culture. Understanding and managing cultural challenges has been deemed an important component of Chinese business success in foreign countries (Daouda 2009: 1). Consequently, cultural differences between China and South Africa will be discussed in the next section.

2.6 NATIONAL CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHINA AND SOUTH AFRICA

Globalisation has created opportunities for collaboration between different countries; however, it has created a unique set of challenges relating to the effective management of different cultures (Daouda 2009: 1). Hofstede (2007: 413) asserts that management skills are culturally specific, and that management techniques which may be appropriate in one culture, may not be appropriate in another. Addressing cultural differences across borders is thus deemed of great importance for international business success. It is believed that cultural barriers have led to many failed Chinese and Western investment and development projects in Africa (Butts & Bankus 2009: 1; Daouda 2009: 1). Therefore, due to the rapid growth of Chinese involvement in Africa over the past decade (Brautigam 2011a: 1; Corkin & Burke 2006: 8), understanding and minimising cultural differences is of importance.

Notable researchers in the field of culture and cultural diversity include Hall (1966), Hofstede (1984) and Schwartz (1999). Dutch researcher, Geert Hofstede's research which entailed a worldwide survey of employee values, is still widely used across cultural and multicultural research (Addison 2006: 3). Hofstede's five cultural dimensions, namely: power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term/short-term orientation, are deemed an appropriate way to partially clarify paramount cultural differences between nationalities (Daouda 2009: 1; Hofstede 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede 2005). It is asserted that Hofstede's dimensions provide insight into cultural differences, in order to make it easier to bridge these differences at organisational level (European Institute for Brand Management 2009: 3).

Hofstede's dimensions will be discussed in order to distinguish between certain cultural differences between South Africa and China. Furthermore, Thomas and Bendixen's (2000) more recent research, which applied Hofstede's dimensions in South Africa, will be referred to. The primary differences relating to the Chinese and South African cultures will now be discussed.

2.6.1 Power distance

Power distance is described as the extent to which the less powerful members of a group or organisation, expect and accept an unequal distribution of power (Hofstede 2001). In high power distance cultures, such as that of China (Hofstede 2001), authority of an individual is correlated to their position within the hierarchy. There are strong dependency relationships, as well as significant social distances between parents and children, teachers and scholars, managers and employees. It is deemed a relatively patriarchal society, which places importance in the lines of authority (Basabe & Ros 2005: 191). In comparison, Thomas and Bendixen's (2000) research found power distance to be low in South African culture, with Hofstede (2001) considering it moderate. In lower power distance cultures, such as that of South Africa, the stratification of society is less distinct, with titles and hierarchal standing meaning less than within high power distance cultures (Basabe & Ros 2005: 192).

2.6.2 Individualism-Collectivism

Individualism-collectivism refers to the importance placed on the needs of the individual versus the needs of the group or community (Basabe & Ros 2005: 190). China is believed to exhibit strong characteristics of a collectivistic culture (Basabe & Ros 2005: 224; Hofstede 2001). In collectivistic cultures, people are regarded as 'we'-conscious, and the interests of the group or community will take preference over the interests of the individual (De Mooij & Hofstede 2010: 89). Individual identities are based on their surrounding social system. Within such cultures there tends to be a strong sense of loyalty and community. The Chinese term "guanxi" roughly translates as "relationships" or "connections" (Daouda 2009: 1). In the Chinese business culture the term is used and understood to represent the importance of relationships as a key to successful business, and refers to the existence of relational ties between individuals (Daouda 2009: 1). South Africa on the other hand, demonstrates more individualistic qualities, as compared with China (Basabe & Ros 2005: 224; Hofstede 2001; Thomas & Bendixen 2000). Within South African culture, the interests of the individual often take preference over the interests of the group or community. People tend be more 'I'-conscious, and consider self-actualisation to be essential (De Mooij & Hofstede 2010: 89).

2.6.3 Masculinity-Femininity

Masculinity-femininity, also known as goal orientation, refers to the extent to which traditional "male" orientations, such as ambition and achievement, are emphasised over traditional "female" orientations, such as nurturance and interpersonal harmony (De Mooij & Hofstede 2010: 89). Cultures which exhibit aggressive goal orientated behaviour, are considered more "masculine", and value assertiveness, performance and financial success. Both China and South Africa are believed to demonstrate "masculine" characteristics, scoring similar scores in Hofstede's study (De Mooij & Hofstede 2010: 89; Hofstede 2001). Thomas and Bendixen's (2000) research however asserted South African culture may be less "masculine" than concluded by Hofstede (1984), implying China may be the more "masculine" culture.

2.6.4 Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance can be defined as the extent to which individuals within a culture feel threatened, and therefore avoid uncertain, vague or new situations (De Mooij & Hofstede 2010: 90). China is regarded as moderate, and is willing to accept a certain degree of ambiguity and uncertainty (Hofstede 2001). South African culture is believed to have a preference for avoiding uncertainty, placing more value on traditional structure and routine (De Mooij & Hofstede 2010: 103; Hofstede 2001). Thomas and Bendixen (2000) are however of the opinion that uncertainty avoidance is more complicated in South Africa, and may range from low to high depending on the South African sub-culture.

2.6.5 Long-term/short-term orientation

Long-term/short-term orientation refers to a culture's capacity for patience, careful practice and delayed gratification (De Mooij & Hofstede 2010: 90). China is regarded as being a long-term orientated culture, and tends to exhibit patience in reaping results, and encourages persistence and perseverance (Hofstede 2001). Although Hofstede's research did not include this dimension in South Africa, Thomas and Bendixen (2000) believe South Africa demonstrates a medium-term outlook.

Hofstede's five cultural dimensions have highlighted some of the fundamental cultural differences between countries (Fang 2011: 25), including those of China and South Africa. Hofstede's work is deemed a good starting point for distinguishing cultural differences between nationalities. As these differences ultimately affect organisations and management practice, it is important to understand such differences in order to effectively manage them at organisational level (Daouda 2009: 1). Hofstede's work has demonstrated the importance of managing and showing respect for different cultures within an organisation (Fang 2011: 25).

As Hofstede's original study was conducted almost 30 years ago however, the study does have certain limitations. A fundamental limitation is Hofstede's attribution of one culture to one country. This is considered unrepresentative of both South Africa's current and historic cultural situation (Addison 2006: 4). Moreover, the majority of the sample taken in South Africa consisted of predominately White males (Addison 2006: 4). Although Hofstede (2007:

413) argues that cultural values are remarkably stable over long time periods, Fang (2011: 26) asserts however that such an assumption is no longer valid, in a time of globalisation and increasing exposure to different cultures. As China is becoming increasing globalised, and is being exposed to Western media and norms, Chinese people are becoming less reserved, and are learning to stand out as individuals (Fang 2010: 162).

Fang (2011: 26) proposes a Ying Yang perspective on culture, as an alternative to Hofstede's work. Fang (2011: 26) conceptualises culture as "possessing inherently paradoxical value orientations, thereby enabling it to embrace opposite traits of any given cultural dimension", and to this end "…potential paradoxical values coexist in any culture and they give rise to, exist within, reinforce, and complement each other to shape the holistic, dynamic, and dialectical nature of culture." Culture should therefore not be viewed as a simple "either-or" phenomenon, but rather understood to have the capacity to incorporate opposite ends of a spectrum, and can therefore be both "feminine" and "masculine", and both "short-term orientated" and "long-term orientated" and so forth (Fang 2011: 28-29). This is believed to particularly be the case within Asian culture, as it is believed Asians generally recognise that opposites can exist side by side, with one being more evident than the other, depending on situation and time. Asians can therefore display collectivistic thinking during business meetings, but may prioritise individual identities during social evenings with colleagues (Fang 2010: 159-161).

2.7   SUMMARY

This Chapter discussed Chinese involvement in Africa. In seeking a theoretical framework, Chinese history with the African continent was discussed over three noteworthy eras, namely, early involvement from 1956 to 1977, involvement from 1978 to the 1990s and more recent involvement from 2000 to the present. It was highlighted that China's involvement in Africa has fluctuated over history, but has intensified greatly over the past decade, with bilateral trade higher than ever before.

The three primary motives of Chinese involvement in Africa were then discussed, namely: resource seeking, market-seeking and political seeking activities. The positive and negative perspectives of China's involvement in Africa were then discussed. Positive perspectives

ranged from Chinese development aid to increased competition for African resources on the global market. This was then contrasted with the negative perspectives of Chinese involvement, ranging from unregulated financing, to poor working conditions in Chinese organisations. It was then noted that analysing positive and negative long-term effects, and their subsequent effect at organisational level, is a problematic task, and perhaps Chinese involvement should simply be left to run its course with a guiding hand. The role and importance of Chinese FDI to South Africa was then discussed.

Moreover, this Chapter analysed the cultural differences between China and South Africa. General cultural differences were highlighted, making use of Hofstede's (2001) five cultural dimensions, namely: power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term/short-term orientation.

The following Chapter will discuss organisational issues in greater detail, with particular focus on matters relating to organisational commitment.

CHAPTER 3
THE FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The main focus of this Chapter is to provide a critical overview of the theory of organisational commitment as well as highlighting the factors influencing such commitment. The Chapter will commence with a discussion regarding the importance of local employees to international organisations based abroad. This will be followed by an overview of organisational commitment theory, leading to a definition of organisational commitment as a multidimensional construct. The importance of organisational commitment will then be highlighted, followed by a discussion on managing employee commitment. The Chapter will be concluded by discussing factors which are deemed to influence organisational commitment, in order to develop a proposed theoretical framework of the factors influencing local employee commitment to Chinese organisations in South Africa.

3.2   THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES

As explained in Section 1.1 of Chapter One, a local employee will refer to a South African employee, who is employed in a foreign Chinese organisation operating in South Africa. The availability of local human resources is an important factor considered by any international organisation when making a decision about where to locate and operate abroad. The availability of trained local employees, or the available potential of appropriate local employees for training, is often vital to ensure the sustainability of any operation abroad (Toh & DeNisi 2005: 133). It has been asserted that local managerial employees can offer more control to the local operations of a multinational organisation, notably in situations where cultural and language differences exist between the host country and the headquarter country, and when the circumstances in the host country are deemed risky (Volkmar 2003). Moreover, the roles of local managers and supervisors are often more appropriately suited to the training and development of the local employees as they are more familiar with the situations of the

local labour force. Additionally, successful use of local employees is believed to assist a foreign organisation in the successful penetration of local target markets (Toh & DeNisi 2005: 133-134).

It is believed local employees and communities may not appreciate the influx of large numbers of foreign employees into their country. This, in turn, may lead to low productivity, absenteeism and lower commitment to the organisation (Toh & DeNisi 2005: 133-134). For these reasons, international organisations cannot be insensitive to the views and feelings of their local employees. As there are deemed to be large language, cultural and managerial differences between China and South Africa, the importance of South African human resources is therefore apparent, if China wishes to succeed with its South African operations. Chinese organisations must therefore strive to engender the commitment of their South African employees. The following section will discuss and conceptualise organisational commitment.

3.3   ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Organisational commitment is widely regarded as a significant element of business research due to its close relationship with multiple work-related constructs, including job satisfaction, employee turnover, internal dispute resolution and leader-subordinate relations (Arnolds & Boshoff 2004: 1-2; Sharma & Irving 2005: 25). It is believed that employees simply treating their job as a "9 to 5" is no longer enough to allow the employing organisation to perform in a highly competitive market. Employees need to be dynamic, committed and actively contribute to the organisation's success (Coetzee 2005).

Organisations therefore not only need to secure and appoint good employees, but more importantly need to create a committed workforce. Organisations need to understand the concept of commitment, the importance of commitment for the organisation, and the behaviours demonstrated by committed employees in order to channel committed behaviour more effectively (Coetzee 2005: 5.1).   The following section will begin by defining organisational commitment.

3.3.1 Defining organisational commitment

Organisational commitment is a complicated concept, involving multiple forms and dimensions. Meyer and Allen (1991: 61) assert that an issue regarding organisational commitment research is the lack of consensus in the literature regarding its definition.

Despite the lack of a single accepted definition of organisational commitment, there is a core essence which characterises it among the multiple descriptions (Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 35). The multiple definitions found in the literature share a common theme in that organisational commitment is considered a psychological link between employees and their organisations. Employees who are committed to their organisation will have a psychological attachment or bond that links the employee to the organisation, and subsequently influences their behaviour in ways that are consistent with that organisation (Smith, Mitchell & Mitchell 2009: 821). Employees who are committed to their organisations will therefore be less likely to want to leave their jobs (Meyer & Allen 1997: 11).

In order to gain an understanding of the commonalities among the existing conceptualisations of organisational commitment, Table 3.1 provides a set of definitions taken from the relevant literature.

Table 3.1: Organisational commitment definitions

Definition	Source
"…the strength of an individual identification with and involvement in a particular organisation."	Porter et al. 1974: 604
"…a psychological state that binds the individual to the organisation."	Meyer & Allen 1991
"…the psychological attachment felt by the person for the organisation; it will reflect the degree to which the individual internalises or adopts characteristics or perceptive of the organisation."	O'Reilly & Chatman 1986: 493
"…a bond or linking of the individual to the organisation."	Mathieu & Zajac 1990: 171
"…the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation."	Mowday, Steers & Porter 1979
"…a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organisation and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in the organisation."	Miller 2003: 73

Source: Researcher's own construction

For the purposes of this study and in line with the accepted definitions of multiple authors, as summarised in Table 3.1, organisational commitment will be defined as an individual's identification with the organisation, including a strong belief in the organisation's goals. It includes a willingness to exert extra effort on behalf of the organisation, and a desire to remain an employee of the organisation (Byrne 1998: 11; Hart & Willower 2001: 174; Porter et al. 1974: 604; Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56).

It is evident from the literature however, that authors often disagree as to the particular dimensions of organisational commitment which may exist (Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 36). The next section will discuss organisational commitment as a multidimensional construct.

3.3.2 Organisational commitment as a multidimensional construct

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of commitment on work related behaviour, it is important to acknowledge that organisational commitment is a complicated concept which can take various forms and dimensions (Vallejo 2009). A number of multidimensional models of organisational commitment have thus been developed by researchers, each with different motives and strategies. Table 3.2 presents the various dimensions of commitment provided in prominent multidimensional models of organisational commitment.

Table 3.2: Dimensions of organisational commitment

Source	Dimensions	Definitions
Angle & Perry 1981	Value Commitment	Commitment to support organisational goals.
	Commitment to stay	A desire to remain in the Organization.
O'Reilly & Chatman 1986	Compliance	Instrumental involvement for specific extrinsic rewards.
	Identification	Involvement based on a desire for affiliation.
	Internalisation	Involvement resulting from congruence between individual and organisational values.
Penley & Gould 1988	Morale	Commitment based on acceptance of and identification with the organisation's goals.
	Calculative	Commitment as a result of employees receiving incentive which matches their contributions.
	Alternative	Commitment as a result of a lack of better alternatives.
Meyer & Allen 1991	Affective	Commitment as a result of the employee's identification with and emotional attachment to an organisation.
	Normative	Commitment based on a sense of obligation or duty to the organisation.
	Continuance	Commitment based on the costs and risks the employee associates with leaving the organisation.
Jaros et al. 1993	Affective	Commitment based on feelings of loyalty, affection, warmth, belongingness, fondness, and pleasure.
	Continuance	Commitment an individual experiences a sense of being locked in place because of the high costs of leaving.
	Moral	Commitment based on the internalisation of organisational goals, values, and missions.

Source: Researcher's own construction

Of the multidimensional models which have been developed, some of the most prominent of which are demonstrated in Table 3.2, the three-component model proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991) has become the most widely accepted in the literature (Bagraim 2004: 11; Chen 2009; Coetzee 2005: 5.18).

According to Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-dimensional model, commitment can take three unique forms, namely; affective, continuance and normative commitment. Meyer and Allen (1991) are of the belief that these three forms of commitment should be regarded as components, rather than types of commitment. The components should not be regarded as mutually exclusive, but rather it can be assumed that an employee may experience all forms of commitment to varying degrees. The three dimensions of commitment, namely; affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen 1991), will now be discussed in order to provide greater clarity.

3.3.2.1 Affective commitment

Affective commitment is believed to refer to an employee's identification with and emotional attachment to an organisation. Employees with strong affective commitment will remain with an organisation because they *wish to do so* (Meyer & Allen 1997: 11; Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56). These individuals are deemed to be highly committed to making a positive contribution to the organisation (Vallejo 2009). Affective commitment is deemed to involve aspects related to the employee's affection or fondness for the organisation, which may be illustrated in the extent to which the employee identifies with the organisation (Meyer & Allen 1997). Employees with high levels of affective commitment will portray a strong belief in and excitement about the organisation's goals (Greenberg 1994: 85).

3.3.2.2 Continuance commitment

Continuance commitment refers to an employee's commitment based on the costs and risks the employee associates with leaving the organisation (Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56). Employees with high levels of continuance commitment believe they must remain employed with the organisation because of the investment of time and effort already put into the

organisation, or due to the belief that they may have difficulty in finding new employment elsewhere (Aamodt 2004: 323). Therefore, employees with strong continuance commitment will remain with the organisation as they feel they *have to do so* (Meyer & Allen 1991). It is asserted that any situation which increases an employee's perceived costs of leaving the organisation has the potential to increase continuance commitment. Such perceived costs may include: giving up seniority or work status, disruption of one's personal life, losing company benefits, the lack of alternative employment, and the waste of time gaining company-specific skills (Chen 2009; Meyer & Allen 1991: 77; Vallejo 2009). As such, the fewer attractive employment opportunities an employee has, the higher the perceived continuance commitment may be (Chen 2009).

3.3.2.3 Normative commitment

Normative commitment relates to an employee's commitment based on a sense of obligation or duty to the organisation, even if the organisation is facing problems and challenges (Meyer & Allen 1991: 67). Employees with strong normative commitment will therefore stay with an organisation because they feel they *ought to do so* (Meyer & Allen 1991). Reasons for a strong sense of normative commitment may include: acceptance of the terms of a psychological contract between the employee and employer, the result of personal rewards and benefits provided by the organisation, or the acknowledgement of significant organisational expenditure and sacrifice for the employee, such as training and tuitions costs (Aamodt 2004: 323; Meyer & Allen 1991; Vallejo 2009: 138). Aamodt (2004: 323) asserts that if employees feel a great sense of gratitude after receiving their first job from the organisation, or after receiving valuable mentoring or training, it may cause them to feel ethically obligated to remain with the organisation, thus increasing their normative commitment. Therefore, in exchange for the organisation's investment in their employment, employees may feel a need to reciprocate with commitment and loyalty to the organisation (Aamodt 2004: 323; Vallejo 2009: 138).

3.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Committed employees are believed to be one of the most important factors in determining the success of an organisation in a competitive market (Jafri 2010: 63). Organisations cannot succeed without the efforts and commitment of their employees (Mosadeghrad, Ferlie & Rosenberg 2008: 211). Without commitment to their organisation, employees will treat their job as nothing more than a source of income, without any drive to accomplish more than what is required to remain employed in their position. Employees who are committed to an organisation are willing to exert effort in order to remain in the organisation and will be less likely to leave voluntarily. Such employees will do that "bit extra" for the organisation's benefit, and positively influence the mindset of other employees. Committed employees will furthermore place high value on job performance, and invest their personal resources in ensuring work-place success, while accepting challenging work activities (Meyer & Allen 1997).

Moreover, a committed workforce will often result in a low staff turnover. This, in turn, will often result in a stable and highly productive organisation (Arnolds & Boshoff 2004: 1-2; Meyer & Allen 1997; Morrow 1993). The costs associated with a high staff turnover, such as advertising fees, administrative, recruitment, and training costs can be avoided (Aamodt 2004: 339). A committed workforce will not only reduce turnover, but is also deemed to reduce employee absenteeism – a highly disruptive and unpredictable cost for any organisation (Cohen 1992: 539).

In addition, employees who are committed will be more satisfied with their job, while feeling a personal attachment to the organisation. This may result in employee innovation and improved levels of performance (Cohen 1992: 539). Internal disputes will be more easily resolved amongst committed employees, and leader-subordinate relations will be more effective (Arnolds & Boshoff 2004).

3.5 MANAGING ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

In the ever-increasing competitive business environment, a key component for any organisation is the ability to manage and retain human resources effectively. As direct monitoring systems are often not practical, managers need to rely less on formal managerial rules and procedures and more on building a committed workforce to attain organisational objectives (Carson et al. 1999) Organisations need to focus on inspiring employees, and encouraging them to go beyond what is required or expected of them. The level of inspiration to go "beyond the call of duty" will most often be influenced by the type of commitment experienced by the employee. Employees who feel they *want to* (affective commitment) remain employed in the organisation will tend to be more driven than those that *need to* (continuance commitment) or are *obligated to* (normative commitment) remain with the organisation. Therefore, of the three forms of commitment, affective commitment is believed to have the greatest influence on organisational performance, and should therefore be encouraged by managers (Coetzee 2005; Yiinh & Ahmad 2009: 56).

In order for an organisation to promote and manage affective commitment effectively, it needs to value humanity and human resources (Finegan 2000). One such way to promote commitment is to focus on fairness within the organisation, through human resource policies that are seen to be fair by employees (Meyer & Allen 1997). Human resource practices within the organisation therefore need to focus on the employee's perceived self-worth in order to promote affective commitment. To this end, Tjosvold, Sasaki and Moy (1998) state that in order to enhance organisational commitment, leaders within the organisation should focus on: the employees' need for fulfilment; their self-esteem; and social support.

Moreover, employing organisations need to understand that cultural differences across nationalities play a significant role in influencing and managing commitment (Chen 2009: 7-8). China's distinctive culture, which emphasises loyalty and friendship, is believed to promote high levels of commitment, particularly normative commitment amongst Chinese employees (Chen 2009: 17). Chinese culture emphasises loyalty to the emperor (zhong), obedience to one's parents (xiao), loyalty to one's spouse (jie), helpfulness to one's friends (yi) and conformity to social norms (hemu). For these reasons, it has been asserted that Chinese individuals prefer to remain within formalised systems, rather than expressing

themselves as individuals (Chen 2009: 17). Chinese organisations may therefore incorrectly assume high levels of normative commitment from South African employees.

Additionally, it has been asserted that commitment to an organisation can be a very personal matter for employees, and each employee has unique needs and expectations. It cannot be assumed that factors which increase commitment within one group will have a positive impact on another. Additionally, whether or not employee needs are being met by the organisation, are often subjective perceptions, and organisations should therefore work at influencing such perceptions by the employees, and not simply always address the work environment (Rego & Cunha 2006).

The next section will discuss factors which have been identified in the literature as having an influence on employee commitment.

3.6   FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

A great deal of research has been done over the past few decades relating to the nature and measurement of organisational commitment (e.g. Byrne 1998: 11; Hart & Willower 2001: 174; Porter et al. 1974: 604; Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56). In order to efficiently manage organisational commitment, it is important to understand the antecedents that contribute to its development (Meyer & Allen 1997: 4). An examination of the relevant literature revealed numerous factors which are deemed to influence organisational commitment. Although other factors may exist, a summary of prominent factors which are recognised in the literature and were deemed appropriate for the context of this study are shown in Table 3.3. The factors identified were Open communication, Leadership, Supervisory support, Job security, Opportunities for training and development, Compensation, Promotional opportunities and Shared values.

Table 3.3: Factors influencing organisational commitment

Factors	Source
Open communication	Devries 2007: 42; Gladstein 1984; Rego & Cunha 2006: 19; Robbins 2001
Leadership	Davenport 2010: 278-279; Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 40; Morris & Sherman 1981; Pierce & Dunham 1987: 164; Vallejo 2009: 138; Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56-58
Supervisory support	Aube, Rousseau & Morrin 2007; Bagraim 2004: 241; Finegan 2000; Venter et al. 2010.
Job security	Buitendach & De Witte 2005: 27; Gaertner & Nollen, 1989; Iqbal 2010: 17; Sambosivan 2010; Yousef 1998
Opportunities for training and development	Jiang & Klein 2000; Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 40; McElroy 2001; Meyer & Allen 1997: 69
Compensation	Chen 2009: 17; Farris 2000; Higginbotham 1997; Hoyt & Gerdloff 1999; Kochanski & Ledford 2001
Promotional opportunities	Chen 2009: 18; Giffords 2009; Iqbal 2010: 17; Lok & Crawford 2004: 321; McCormick & Ilgen 1985: 314; Moorhead & Griffen 1992
Shared values	Coetzee 2005; Hyde & Williamson 2000: 3-4; Posner, Kouzes & Schmidt 1985; Posner & Schmidt 1993: 341

Source: Researcher's own construction

Each of the factors demonstrated in Table 3.3 will now be discussed in the sections below.

3.6.1   Open communication

Communication within an organisation can be defined as the process by which information is exchanged and understood, usually with the purpose of motivating and influencing work behaviour (Bagraim, Cunningham, Potgieter & Viedge 2007: 163). Leaders within an organisation can use communication as a manner to disclose information to employees (Buchholz 2001: 1). Business strategies, goals and performances should be clearly communicated to all employees, encouraging regular constructive feedback (Rego & Cunha 2006: 19-20). Open and regular communication with employees should therefore exist within an organisation (Venter et al. 2010). Such communication with employees is deemed to have

a positive influence on employee commitment, and is deemed to assist in building trust, employee satisfaction and work place relationships (Haugh & McKee. 2003: 144; Rego & Cunha 2006: 19). On the other hand, if regular communication with employees is not practised, it can lead to misunderstandings in the work place, and low employee morale; resulting in low levels of organisational commitment (Devries 2007: 42; Rego & Cunha 2006: 19). Chinese organisations therefore need to strive to ensure open communication with their local South African employees.

3.6.2   Leadership

Organisational leadership is deemed to be a process involving creating a way forward, and inspiring others to follow a designated path. A significant body of literature has highlighted the link between such leadership and organisational commitment (Davenport 2010: 278-279; Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 40; Morris & Sherman 1981; Pierce & Dunham 1987: 164; Vallejo 2009: 138; Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56-58). Leaders who demonstrate commitment to the organisation and serve as an example of the desired changes within the organisation are important for organisational success (Iqbal 2010: 17). If employees perceive leaders to be committed and dedicated, it will build employee commitment to the organisation and its vision (Chawla & Renesch 2006: 96).

Moreover, employee's self-esteem and identification with the organisation will be boosted if there is a perception of trust and credibility in the organisation's leadership. Therefore, there is deemed to be a link between the employees' trust in their leadership, and their commitment to the organisation (Cook & Wall: 1980; Rego & Cunha 2006: 6). A lack of trust in the competencies of an organisation's leadership can however result in lower employee morale and be a source of distress within the workplace (Rego & Cunha 2006: 19). Considering the accusations of poor working conditions within many Chinese organisations, and China's often controversial interactions with the continent (Butts & Bankus 2009: 5-9; Zadek et al. 2009: 22), local South African employees may have poor levels of trust in and perceptions of their leadership in certain industries and organisations.

The leadership styles demonstrated by leaders may also have a significant impact on employees. Leadership styles involving a high degree of social interaction between the leader

and the employees may positively influence employee commitment to the organisation (Morris & Sherman 1981). Moreover, it is asserted that participative and consultative leadership styles result in higher degrees of organisational commitment, rather than highly structured or task orientated leadership styles (Gaertner 1999: 482; Venter et al. 2010; Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56-58). It is believed that such social ties with the organisation and its leadership result in employees being more emotionally attached to the organisation, thus increasing affective commitment, and resulting in employees being less willing to sever ties with it (Davenport 2010: 278-279). Leaders within Chinese organisations therefore need to seek social, participative and fair leadership practices in order to enhance employee commitment.

3.6.3 Supervisory support

A supervisor refers to an employee who oversees the work tasks performed by subordinate employees. The primary goal of a supervisor is to provide employees with the direction and support required in order to achieve their goals, as well as those of the organisation (Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 54). The perceived level of supervisory support experienced by employees is deemed to have an influence on their organisational commitment (Aube, Rousseau & Morrin 2007; Venter et al. 2010). If the organisation supports employees in such a way that they believe the organisation has their best interests at heart, they are more likely to be more dedicated in their work (Coetzee 2005). If employees are treated as "just a number", without any perceived genuine organisational support, it is deemed to damper employee spirits and negatively affect their commitment to the organisation (Venter et al. 2010: 16). Employees need to feel a sense of recognition and appreciation from their superiors for tasks which are performed well. Recognition from superiors gives employees a sense of self-worth, importance and ultimately motivation to perform within the organisation (Agarwal & Ferratt 1999; Dockel 2003).

Similarly, when leaders display supportive trust in the employees of the organisation, they are likely to feel a stronger connection to the organisation and have an increased sense of affective organisational commitment (Bagraim 2004: 241; Finegan 2000). Moreover, research indicates that the stresses related to starting a new job, and performing within the job, can be reduced by supportive relationships within the organisation, particularly with

direct supervisors. Many organisations therefore apply this principle by adopting mentoring and buddy systems within organisations (Toh & DeNisi 2005: 134).

Due to the cultural differences between China and South Africa (Hempel 2001: 203), the level of perceived support from supervisors to local employees may prove to be inadequate. This may particularly be the case if supervisors within the organisation are foreign Chinese nationals, who may have difficulty in connecting and relating to local employees.

3.6.4   Job security

Job security can be regarded as an employee's perception of the risk associated with future job loss, and the extent to which the employing organisation is expected to provide employment in the future (Bagraim 2004: 15).

It has been asserted that jobs are perceived as increasingly becoming more insecure (Roskies & Louis-Guerin 1990). Employees who perceive their jobs to be insecure will often be less motivated to perform their work tasks (Klandermans, Hesselink & Van Vuuren 2010: 560). It is believed that many individuals have experienced job losses and sustained unemployment, due to many organisations engaging in restructuring, mergers, downsizing and acquisitions (Hirsch & De Soucey 2006: 171). It is believed that organisations are more inclined to make use of short-term and temporary employment contracts, to ensure they are able to remain flexible (Belous & Mangum 1986). Perceived job security plays an important role in an employee's commitment to an organisation (Buitendach & De Witte 2005: 27; Yousef 1998).

It has furthermore been asserted that certain groups are more sensitive to job security, often for a number of personal factors. For example, affirmative action laws in South Africa are seen as negatively affecting the job security of certain white employees (Bagraim 2004: 105-106). As many local employees are employed on a temporary basis within Chinese organisations, together with many Chinese organisations engaging in temporary projects on the African continent, many local employees may feel insecure in their positions (Baah & Jauch 2009: 100). Chinese organisations therefore need to engage with their workforce, in order to promote a sense of job security when it is appropriate.

3.6.5 Opportunities for training and development

In broad terms, training and development are regarded as an organisational activity which is concerned with bettering the performance of employees in an organisational setting. More specially, training is believed to refer to the process of improving specific job skills, often in the short term, while development is regarded as a long-term process which moulds employees, helping them grow to reach their potential (Gansberghe 2003; Truelove 1992: 273).

The continual training and development of an organisation's employees is deemed to be important for organisational development, adaptability and success (Asche & Schuller 2008). Meyer and Allen (1997: 69) believe that the training and development of employees are important for providing opportunities for employee advancement, and may be perceived as a demonstration of the value the organisation places in its employees, ultimately building commitment to the organisation. Organisations which promote opportunities and employee development through training and learning, will encourage employees to want to stay in the organisation. Moreover, it is believed that if organisations give employees the opportunity to train, and later apply their skills, it may lead to a postive psychological attachment to the organisation, which encourages affective commitment (Jiang & Klein 2000; McElroy 2001). Venter et al. (2010: 21) found that constant training and development in an organisation will likely lead employees to a sense of empowerment and increase their attachment to the organisation.

The training and development of Africa's work force are deemed vital to its development. This being so, China has committed to many training, learning and development programmes throughout Africa. In 2006 China expressed its intentions to train and develop 15,000 African experts and managerial personnel (Asche & Schuller 2008: 42). However, what are the realities at organisational level? Are opportunities for development provided in Chinese organisations, or are skilled positions reserved for Chinese nationals or those who already have the knowhow? Chinese organisations therefore need to ensure such opportunities are provided in order to promote the loyalty and commitment of its local employees.

3.6.6 Compensation

Compensation can be broadly defined as any form of reward received by an employee in exchange for the services performed for the benefit of the employing organisation (Klein & Bell 2007: 27). Employee compensation is deemed a fundamental factor in the retention of employees. Compensation from an employer provides employees with a sense of security, recognition and self-worth. Compensation is therefore of great importance to most employees (Hoyt & Gerdloff 1999; Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 40). Higginbotham (1997) asserted that although high salaries are not essential, employees who perceive their compensation to be "good" or "fair" are more likely to be committed to the organisation. Moreover, it is believed that one-time rewards are not correlated to commitment, but long-term incentives and increases are deemed to reduce employee turnover and promote long-term commitment to the organisation (Farris 2000). Additionally, non-financial rewards, such as time off, are believed to promote employee commitment (Kochanski & Ledford 2001).

Chinese organisations, especially in the construction and mining industries, as compared to their Indian and Western counterparts, have been accused of providing local African employees with very poor compensation packages (Butts & Bankus 2009). This may be an important factor in many local employees' dissatisfaction with Chinese employers. Chinese organisations therefore need to ensure the compensation of their employees are seen as "fair" and "just" by the workforce, in order to gain the commitment of their local South African employees.

3.6.7 Promotional opportunities

Promotional opportunity can be defined as the perceived chance or likelihood of an employee's future upward movement in the organisational hierarchy (Medsker & Berger 1990: 5). Promotions within an organisation are deemed to provide employees with opportunities for personal growth, increased responsibility and increased social status (Mezzinson, Mosely & Pietrie 1992: 433). As a result, it has been asserted that an employee's perceived opportunities for promotion are likely to influence the level of commitment to the organisation (Giffords 2009; Iqbal 2010: 17; Lok & Crawford 2004: 321; McCormick & Ilgen 1985: 314; Moorhead & Griffen 1992). Moreover, an employee's commitment can be

directly related to a number of promotionally related factors. Factors such as the likelihood of promotion, the basis of promotions, and the perceived fairness of previous promotional decisions, are all deemed to affect the employee's commitment (McCormick & Ilgen 1985: 314).

The importance placed on promotional opportunity for local employees in a Chinese organisation may differ greatly depending on the organisational structure. For example, employees of smaller organisations may place less importance on promotional opportunities, due to the flatter organisational structure (Bagraim 2004: 114). Moreover, certain Chinese organisations, such as those within the construction industry, may reserve managerial, supervisory and skilled positions to Chinese nationals (Bräutigam 2011b), which may greatly affect local employees' perceived promotional opportunities, and their related commitment to the organisation. In order to ensure a committed local workforce, Chinese organisations need to clearly manage promotions and promotional opportunities within the workforce.

3.6.8   Shared values

Organisational values represent the acceptable norms of behaviour and specific modes of conduct which aim to guide the actions of employees (Hyde & Williamson 2000: 3). Shared values between the organisation and the individual employee are deemed to be a contributing factor to employee commitment (Hyde & Williamson 2000; Posner & Schmidt 1993; Venter et al. 2010). It has been asserted that the existence of shared values amongst the organisation and its employees offers the organisation a competitive advantage, a basis for the alignment of employees, steers the organisation's reaction to potential crisis, and ultimately results in employee commitment to the organisation (Hyde & Williamson 2000: 3-4). Moreover, shared values may result in self-confidence amongst employees, increased ethical behaviour, and feelings of personal success for employees (Hyde & Williamson 2000: 3-4; Posner et al. 1985). If the organisation shares noncontroversial values which are easy for employees to relate to, this may result in employees establishing a close relationship with the organisation. To this end, Coetzee (2005: 5.12) notes that if employees believe their organisation values quality products, they will be more inclined to strive to contribute to such a goal. Moreover, if employees believe their personal insight and participation are valued by the organisation,

they will be more inclined to participate and contribute to the organisation's success (Coetzee 2005: 5.12).

As the ultimate values of Chinese business in Africa have been clouded by some degree of controversy (Butts & Bankus 2009: 5-9; Zadek et al. 2009: 22), it is important for Chinese organisations to clearly communicate the core values of the organisation and to ensure the employees share these values in order to build organisational commitment.

In summary, management scholars have only recently extended commitment studies across cultures (Kipkebut 2010: 2) and within international organisations (Chen 2009). Due to very unique South African and Chinese cultural and organisational norms, identifying key factors which influence South African employees' commitment to Chinese organisations would therefore be very difficult based on the current literature. The commitment of local South African employees is important in order to ensure the success of Chinese business in Africa, as well as to encourage the use of local human resources. Based on Table 3.3, and the discussion of factors which are deemed to influence organisational commitment, the following proposed theoretical framework is presented.

Figure 3.1: Proposed theoretical framework of factors influencing local employee commitment
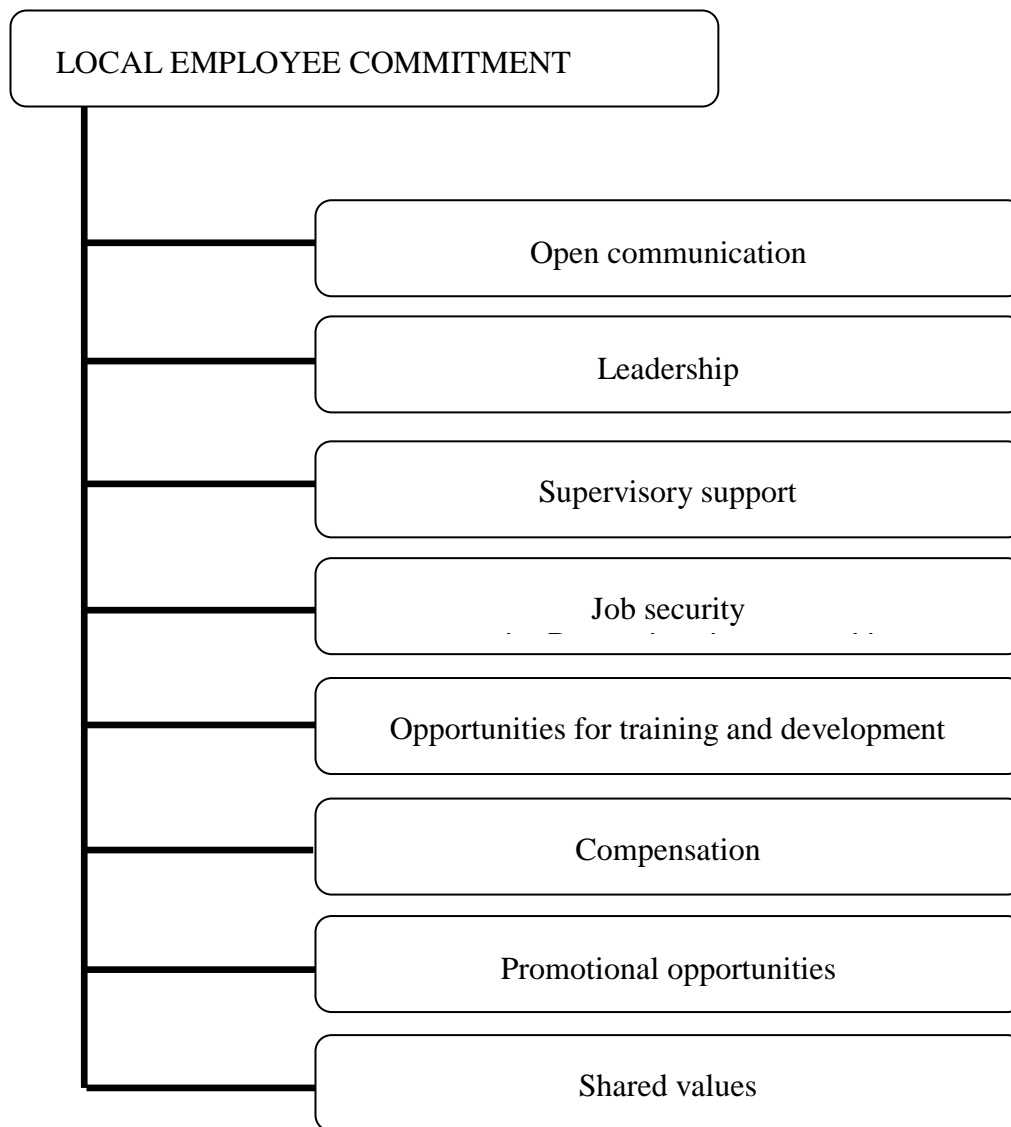
Source: Researcher's own construction

3.7   SUMMARY

This Chapter focused on organisational commitment theory, and more specifically the commitment of South African employees to Chinese organisations.

The Chapter commenced by illustrating the importance of local employees for international organisations. This was followed by an overview of organisational commitment theory,

which began with a focus on contextualising organisational commitment as a multi-dimensional concept. Meyer and Allen's (1997) model of employee commitment was highlighted. According to the three-dimensional model, commitment can take three unique forms, namely; affective, continuance and normative commitment, each of which has an effect on work-related performance. Of the three forms of commitment, affective commitment to an organisation is believed to be the most desirable as it is strongly correlated with positive work performance (Coetzee 2005; Yiinh & Ahmad 2009: 56).

The importance of organisational commitment was then highlighted, followed by a discussion on managing employee commitment. The factors which are deemed to influence organisational commitment were then discussed. Based on these factors, the Chapter was concluded by developing a proposed theoretical framework of the factors influencing the organisational commitment of local employees in Chinese organisations in South Africa. Based on the theory presented in this Chapter, as well as in Chapter Two, eight factors were identified as possibly being influential on local employee commitment. These were: Open communication, Leadership, Supervisory support, Job security, Opportunities for training and development, Compensation, Promotional opportunities and Shared values.

Chapter Four, which follows, will detail the specifics of the research design and methodology chosen for this study.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Research entails a process of methodical and thorough examination and investigation, which is systematic and methodical in nature, with the intention to fulfil a current need for knowledge (Collis & Hussey 2003: 1; Zikmund 2003: 5).

In Chapter One the main aim of this descriptive study was presented, namely to conduct a literature and empirical study into the levels of and factors influencing organisational commitment of South African employees in a selected Chinese organisation in South Africa. To demonstrate the linkage to knowledge creation, the objectives of this research are restated:

- To identify and describe key factors influencing local employee commitment.
- To identify and describe current commitment levels amongst local employees.
- To propose recommendations to improve local employee commitment and its implications for the appropriate management of human resources within a Chinese organisation in South Africa.

It is envisaged that this study will contribute to the current body of knowledge by identifying current commitment levels amongst local employees, and the factors which are perceived to influence such commitment, by employing an interpretivist research paradigm as described in this Chapter.

The purpose of this Chapter is to present an overview of the research design and methodology used in this study; namely the research paradigm, research methodology, data collection methods, methods of analysis, quality criteria and ethical considerations.

4.2   RESEARCH DESIGN AND PARADIGM

The concept of research design refers to the research paradigm (Collis & Hussey 2009: 11), the kind of research being planned and the kind of results that are targeted (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 55). A research design is regarded as a plan which guides the researcher through the research process, ensuring the empirical evidence addresses the initial research questions (Yin 2003: 19-20). In designing a research project, the beginning point is to identify the research paradigm. A research paradigm involves the development of scientific practice based on people's philosophies and suppositions about the world and the nature of knowledge (Collis & Hussey 2003: 46). It is a set of interrelated theories about the social world which offer a philosophical and conceptual framework for research. The research paradigm provides a guideline on how research should be done (Collis & Hussey 2009: 11).

Traditionally, when designing a research project, researchers used one of two opposing research paradigms, namely positivism or interpretivism. Collis and Hussey (2009: 57) note however that many new paradigms have emerged over the years, and few researchers apply pure forms of the main paradigms. Collis and Hussey (2009: 57) therefore suggest that it may be useful to view positivism and interpretivism as the "extremities of a continuous line of paradigms that can exist simultaneously". Based on this assumption, "as you move along the continuum, the features and assumptions of one paradigm are gradually relaxed and replaced by those of the next" (Morgan & Smircich 1980, cited in Collis & Hussey 2009: 57).

The selection between quantitative and qualitative research design should be determined by the research question, and should not be based on the researcher's preference. The primary characteristics of the two most extreme paradigms are given below in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1: Primary characteristics of the two main paradigms

Positivism	Interpretivism
Tends to produce quantitative data	Tends to produce qualitative data
Uses large samples	Uses small samples
Concerned with hypothesis testing	Concerned with generating theories
Data are highly specific and precise	Data are rich and subjective
The location is artificial	The location is natural
Reliability is high	Reliability is low
Validity is low	Validity is high
Generalises from sample to population	Generalises from one setting to another

Source: Adapted from Collis and Hussey 2003: 55 and Collis and Hussey 2009:62

The selected paradigm has great importance for the research methodology (Collis & Hussey 2003: 55). The positivist paradigm will be briefly discussed, followed by the interpretivist paradigm, which forms the basis of this research.

4.2.1   Positivist paradigm

The positivist research paradigm is also known as the quantitative, objectivist, scientific, experimentalist or traditionalist research paradigm (Collis & Hussey 2003: 53). The paradigm originated in the natural sciences and is concerned with the identification of facts and preoccupied with establishing casual relationships between concepts (Neville 2005: 6). Researchers who use quantitative research utilise experimental methods and quantitative measures to test hypothetical generalisations (Hoepfl 1997: 47).

The advantage of using a positivist research methodology is that it is descriptive in nature and identifies and quantifies the various elements of any phenomena, making it simpler to reproduce research methods and for other studies to test your findings. The methodology provides objective information which may be used to make scientific assumptions (Neville 2005: 37). A disadvantage of positivist research is that it is highly structured and imposes

predetermined confines on the research. Moreover, it does not answer the question of *why* things happen, and assumes researchers are always objective (Neville 2005: 37).

4.2.2 Interpretivist paradigm

Interpretivism is believed to have been developed as a result of the inadequacy of positivism to meet the needs of social research (Collis & Hussy 2009: 56). The paradigm seeks to provide interpretive understanding of social phenomena within a particular situation. Interpretivist research is regarded as highly subjective in nature as it aims to understand human behaviour from the perspective of the participant (Zikmund et al. 2010: 137). The paradigm allows for the exploration of issues deeper than their presented surface, and is appropriate for the study of relatively unknown phenomena, aiming at bridging the gap between human behaviour and scientific research (Struwig & Stead 2001: 11-13; Zikmund et al. 2010: 138). This approach focuses on the subjective aspects of human activity and phenomena, focusing on meaning rather than measurement (Collis & Hussey 2003: 53). The paradigm is associated with qualitative research methods, and seeks to understand the meaning, and not the frequency of phenomena in the social world (Collis & Hussy 2009: 56-57). Interpretivist research does therefore not derive its findings from the statistical analysis of quantitative data (Strauss & Corbin 1990, in Collis & Hussy 2009: 57). This paradigm rather concerns itself with the quality, richness and depth of the data, while seeking to describe, translate and understand the meaning of social phenomena (Collis & Hussy 2003: 53). Interpretivist researchers are therefore able to conduct research with a single participant if required (Collis & Hussy 2009: 62).

The most common qualitative methods are interviews, discussions, and participant observations (Zikmund et al. 2010: 138). An advantage of this paradigm is the gain in personal insight from a relatively small sample group. The paradigm further allows for the exploration of issues deeper than their presented surface (Neville 2005: 37). A disadvantage of the paradigm is that the research findings are subjective in nature. This makes it difficult to test or duplicate such research or to generalise research findings (Neville 2005: 37).

Given the nature of the problem statement and the research objectives of this study, an interpretivist approach is proposed as the most appropriate means to launch a scientific

enquiry into the perceptions of local employees and the factors influencing their organisational commitment.

Research can be further categorised into three types, based on the nature of the problem statement, namely exploratory, descriptive or causal (Zikmund et al. 2010: 54). Exploratory research is undertaken when limited previous research exists. It is conducted in order to clarify ambiguous problems and the aim of such research is to identify patterns, hypotheses or ideas that can be tested and can form the basis for future studies (Neville 2005: 2). Descriptive research is undertaken to describe or classify the characteristics of a population or a phenomenon. It is used with a previous understanding of the research problem, as a theoretical foundation is available (Neville 2005: 2; Zikmund et al. 2010: 55). Lastly, causal research is undertaken to determine causal relationships of phenomena when the research problem has been narrowly defined (Zikmund et al. 2010: 56). Given the nature of this study, it is appropriate to classify this study as descriptive in nature.

4.3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology refers to the means in which one proceeds to solve problems, and refers to the overall approaches to and perspectives on the research process as a whole. The process begins with the theoretical foundation of the research at hand, through to the collection and analysis of the data (Collis & Hussey 2003: 55). A research method refers to the various specific tools which can be utilised by the researcher or ways data can be collected and analysed (Neville 2005: 5)

There are a number of research methodologies, which can be linked to the positivist or interpretivist approaches, as shown in Table 4.2. Although research often falls within one approach, research may be mixed and contain both positivist and interpretivist approaches and characteristics.

Table 4.2: The main research methodologies

Positivist	Interpretivist
Associated methodologies	Associated methodologies
Surveys	Case Studies
Experimental Studies	Action Research
Longitudinal Studies	Ethnography (participant observation)
Cross-sectional Studies	Participative Enquiry
	Feminist Perspectives
	Grounded Theory

Source: Adapted from Neville (2005: 7)

Due to this study's interpretivist nature, the focus of this study is on the case study approach. The following section will elaborate on the chosen methodology, referring to the population, sampling procedure, data collection, and data analyses methods.

4.3.1   Case study approach

For the purposes of the current research, the case study method was utilised. The case study method is a research technique that intensely investigates one or more situations similar to the researcher's problem (Baxter & Jack 2008: 544; Zikmund 2003: 115). The case study method is viewed as a broad research strategy, and not simply a data collection approach or design feature (Yin 2003: 14). The case study method affords researchers the opportunity to explore or explain a phenomenon in context by means of an assortment of data sources. This ensures that the subject is not explored from only one point of view, but rather a variety of angles which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be exposed and understood (Baxter & Jack 2008: 544).

Case studies as a research method are widely used by researchers as they may offer insights that may be difficult to achieve with other approaches (Rowley 2002: 16). Cases may focus on individuals, groups, organisations, events or geographic units (Neuman 2006: 40). Through the use of a case study, qualitative researchers may gain insight into a particular case. It allows the researcher to collect data from a variety of sources and to converge the data to clarify the case at hand (Baxter & Jack 2008: 556). Rowley (2002: 16) states that "case studies are useful in providing answers to 'How?' and 'Why?' questions, and in this role can be used for exploratory, descriptive or explanatory research."

Zikmund et al. (2010: 140) state that an important advantage of a case study is that an entire organisation can be investigated in depth, with great attention to detail. The current research makes use of a descriptive case study design. A descriptive case study describes a phenomenon and the context in which it occurred (Yin 2003). The primary objective of descriptive case study is to describe a current practice (Collis & Hussy 2003: 68). A descriptive design has the aim of covering the depth and scope of the case under study (Tellis 1997).

The case under study in this research is a large Chinese multinational organisation with operations in South Africa. The organisation, operating in the electronics and appliances industry, currently has five organisational branches in South Africa. Branches include four sales and service offices in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Durban, as well as a manufacturing and assembly facility in Gauteng.

For the purposes of this research, a single case study design was selected. Single case studies are believed to provide rich, illuminating data (Radder 1997: 46). The choice of a single case study is appropriate given that Rowley (2002: 21) argues that the use of a single case study design is suitable when the case at hand is unique or has something special to reveal. Considering the size of the organisation, the importance the industry plays in local employment, and the lack of any similar previous research on a Chinese organisation in South Africa, a single case study is indeed appropriate.

According to Yin (1994) and Collis and Hussey (2003: 69), case studies follow specific stages. Collis and Hussey (2003: 69) identify the stages as the selection of the case, the

preliminary investigations, the data collection and the data analysis. In this regard, a discussion on data collection and data analysis follows.

4.4   DATA COLLECTION

Upon identifying the chosen sample of the study, the data collection methods, namely in-depth interviews and observations will be discussed.

4.4.1   Sample and sampling procedure

Sampling is the method of systematically selecting that which will be examined throughout the duration of a study. The main alternative sampling strategies can be grouped together into two categories, namely probability and non-probability sampling (Zikmund et al. 2010: 395). In probability or random sampling, each member in the population has a known probability of being selected for the sample. In non-probability sampling, the probability of selection of a particular member of the population is unknown. Researchers using this strategy often need to rely on personal judgement in selecting the sample (Zikmund et al. 2010: 395).

Qualitative samples tend to be substantially smaller than quantitative samples, and it is therefore often not possible to make generalisations on the entire population based on the small sample (Marshall 1996: 523). An appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is deemed to be one that sufficiently answers the research question. It requires a flexible research design with a cyclical and unique approach to sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation (Marshall 1996: 523). Selecting qualitative samples randomly is therefore deemed inappropriate. It has been asserted that even if a random and representative sample was desirable for a qualitative study, the sampling error of an undersized sample is likely to lead to high levels of bias (Marshall 1996: 523). Moreover, it is believed that the values, philosophies and attitudes that form the core of a qualitative investigation, giving it its depth and richness, are not deemed to be normally distributed, making the probability approach to sampling unsuitable (Marshall 1996: 523).

The participants of this study, in the selected Chinese organisation in South Africa were selected using non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling can be followed with a number of strategies. These are highlighted below in Table 4.3:

Table 4.3: Main non-probability sampling techniques

Technique	Definition
Convenience sampling	A sampling technique whereby the sampling units are selected that are most conveniently available to the researcher (Zikmund et al. 2010: 396).
Purposive sampling	A sampling technique in which the researcher selects the sample based on personal judgement about the appropriate characteristics of the sample members and the research objectives (Neville 2005: 31; Zikmund et al. 2010: 396).
Quota sampling	A sampling technique that ensures that various subgroups of a population are appropriately represented in the sample, based on pertinent characteristics desired by the researcher (Zikmund et al. 2010: 397).

Source: Researcher's own construction

The researcher made use of purposive sampling, as it was determined to best meet the objectives of this research and, in accordance with the purpose of this research, only South African employees working for the selected organisation were included in this study. With the assistance of the organisation's regional manager, appropriate South African employees across hierarchical levels within four organisational branches, in four South African cities, were selected to participate in this study.

The hierarchical levels in the selected organisation included employees at the following levels, namely technical, supervisory and managerial. Due to the technical nature of the organisation's operations, as well as the perceived difficulty in replacing such employees, it was expected that the commitment of skilled technical and managerial employees is of importance to the organisation. Four managers, three supervisors and thirteen skilled technical employees were interviewed across the four organisational branches. The researcher interviewed at least one manager at each organisational branch, as well as a number of supervisory and technical employees in each branch. At the request of the

organisation's regional manager, the participants will not be differentiated according to the branch in which they work, as it may be detrimental to the participant's confidentiality.

Boyce and Neale (2006: 4) assert that when the same stories, issues, themes and topics are emerging from interviewees, then an adequate sample size has been reached. Following interviews at four organisational branches, namely the sales and service offices in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, as well as the Gauteng manufacturing facility, the researcher observed similarities in the themes and topics which emerged. The researcher therefore did not collect data from the fifth branch, namely the Durban sales and service office, and concluded the collection process after interviewing 20 participants.

4.4.2   Data collection methods

Zikmund et al. (2010: 156) assert that focus groups and interviews are the most common forms of qualitative data collection. Case studies often draw on multiple sources in the collection of data, and popular collection techniques include relevant documents and records, interviews, direct observation, and participant observation (Rowley 2002: 23). Collis and Hussey (2003: 78) state that when different research approaches, methods and techniques are used in a study, it is regarded as triangulation. Remenyi (2012: 95) asserts that multiple sources of data can be used in such a way as to support and enrich each other. When data are collected at different times, or from different sources, it is regarded as data triangulation (Collis & Hussy 2003: 78). Data triangulation enables the researcher to view the situation "through a number of different lenses" (Remenyi 2012: 95). In the current research, data were collected from different sources, namely the 20 participating employees, across four organisational branches. Moreover, although the interview transcripts were the primary source of data, the collection process was enriched with the use of observations and field notes. The data collection methods used by the researcher will be briefly discussed in the following sections.

4.4.2.1   Interviews

Interviews are a data collection method that involve a researcher asking a research participant questions in order to explore his/her perspectives on a given topic (Collis & Hussey 2003: 167; Zikmund et al. 2010: 150). For the purposes of this study, the researcher made use of in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are non-standardised and are commonly used in qualitative research. The interviewer does not do the research to test a specific hypothesis, but rather attempts to cover a list of key themes, topics, and questions (David & Sutton 2004: 87).

Semi-structured interviews give the researcher opportunities to probe the participants for views and opinions, allowing the interviewer to discover new paths which were not originally considered (Collis & Hussey 2003: 167). Through the use of interview questions, the researcher is able to explore the perspectives of the participants on a given idea, programme or situation (Collis & Hussey 2003: 167). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to obtain large quantities of data relatively quickly. Participants are also given the opportunity to provide further details, and clarify possible areas of misunderstanding (De Vos et al. 2002; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006: 315).

In order to guide research interviews, an interview guide is deemed an essential component for conducting interviews. An interview guide is a list of questions and topics about which the interviewer wishes to gather information (Mack et al. 2005: 32). It should consist of questions in order to direct, but not dictate the interview. The guide should be clear and structured, however allow the participant the freedom to cover areas of interest (De Vos et al. 2002). Although the participants are all asked the same questions, the nature of semi-structured interviews allows the researcher to adapt, omit or add questions, in order to suit the conversation, as well as the preferences, language abilities, background and education level of the participants (Neville 2005: 19; Welman, Kruger & Mitchell 2005: 166)

In-depth interviews provide "deeper" probing into the participant's thoughts, and are designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspectives (Mack et al. 2005: 29). In depth interviews should be done on a one-on-one basis with each participant, and should last from one to two hours per interview (Mack et al. 2005: 34).

The interview guide (Appendix A) used in this study was based on the theoretical framework derived from the theory presented in Chapters Two and Three. The semi-structured interviews included four miscellaneous open-ended questions in order to ease the participant into the interview, research questions pertaining to the eight factors influencing organisational commitment, as well as questions relating to the participants' levels of commitment. With regard to the miscellaneous questions, participants were asked if they had worked for other organisations in the past, as well as if they felt the organisation under study understood local South African culture. Participants were also asked if they were generally happy with the working conditions in the organisation, and if they felt it was easy for a Chinese organisation to operate in South Africa. The formulation of the questions relating to the factors deemed to influence organisational commitment, as identified in the theoretical framework (Chapter Three, Table 3.3) drew on the research of Venter et al. (2010), which investigated the factors influencing commitment within family organisations, as well as the research of Finegold et al. (1999), which investigated the factors influencing the commitment of technical knowledge workers. The questions further drew on Chen's (2009) research on organisational commitment across an international organisation, Bagraim's (2004) research on the commitment of South African knowledge workers, as well as Cheng and Stockdale's (2003) research of organisational commitment within a Chinese context. Questions relating to the participants' perceived levels of commitment were also posed. Such questions which broadly addressed the three-components of commitment, as well as the participants' own perceptions of their commitment, were based on Meyer and Allen's (1997) commitment research regarding work place application. An outline of the demographical information of the interviewees is shown in the Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Interviewee demographical information

Interviewee Number	Gender	Race	Job category
P1	Female	Coloured	Managerial
P2	Female	Black	Technical
P3	Female	Black	Technical
P4	Male	Coloured	Technical
P5	Male	White	Supervisory
P6	Male	Black	Technical
P7	Male	Black	Technical
P8	Male	Black	Technical
P9	Male	Black	Technical
P10	Male	White	Technical
P11	Male	White	Technical
P12	Male	Black	Technical
P13	Female	White	Supervisory
P14	Male	Black	Technical
P15	Male	Black	Technical
P16	Female	White	Managerial
P17	Male	White	Supervisory
P18	Female	Indian	Managerial
P19	Male	Black	Technical
P20	Male	White	Managerial

Source: Researcher's own construction

The in-depth interviews took place on site at each organisational location, in a separate and private room away from organisational activities, at the convenience of the participants. The interviews lasted approximately 25 hours in total, and varied in time depending on each interview, as certain participants were more interactive and offered greater detail than others.

Interviews provide researchers with a great amount of data, and are deemed an effective method for getting people to share their personal feelings, opinions, and perspectives.

Furthermore, interviews provide a relaxed setting for participants who are able to address sensitive topics that they might be reluctant to in a formal group setting (Mack et al. 2005: 30). Interviews allow the researcher to ask more complex questions than would be available with other methods such as surveys, as well as allowing the researcher to ask follow up questions, and adapt questions to certain settings if need be (Collis & Hussy 2003: 170). Despite the advantages associated with interviews, they are also connected to certain limitations. Prior to the interviews, the researcher became familiar with the limitations associated with interviews, as well as the commonly accepted techniques to reduce such limitations. Bias is deemed one of the most important limitations of interviews (Neville 2005: 38). It may affect the responses of the interviewee to the interviewer, and the perceptions of interviewers of the interviewees (Neville 2005: 38). In order to limit possible bias which may arise, the interviewer became familiar with effective interview techniques, such as appropriate interviewer demeanour, ensuring the interviewee was comfortable, and maintaining a polite manner (Neville 2005: 39). The interviewer used language the interviewee appeared comfortable with, and maintained a demeanour of being interested in what the interviewee had to say. Possible interviewee suspicion was further addressed by clearly explaining the research methods, confidentiality and research motives to each interviewee (Neville 2005: 39).

As the opening stages of an interview are of great importance, and may set the tone for the remainder of the interview, the following suggestions made by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003, cited in Neville 2005: 40) prior to conducting a semi-structured interview were adopted:

- "The interviewee is thanked for agreeing to the meeting.
- The purpose of the research, its funding and progress to date are briefly outlined.
- The interviewee is given an assurance regarding confidentiality.
- The interviewee's right not to answer questions is emphasised and the interview could be terminated at any time by the interviewee.
- The interviewee is told about the use intended to be made of the data collected during and after the project.
- The offer of any written documentation to the interviewee promised in advance of the meeting should be emphasised.

- The interviewer describes the process of the interview, such as the approximate number and range of questions to be asked and the time is was likely to take."

The researcher thus adhered to the guidelines of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003). The researcher furthermore maintained appropriate body language, avoided leading questions, and kept personal opinions and preconceived notions in check (Neville 2005). An audio voice recorder was used to record each interview, after the permission of the interviewee was granted.

Remenyi (2012: 129) asserts that generalisability is an issue which may be problematic with case study research. It is believed that case study research will result in varying degrees of generalisability (Remenyi 2012:129). Although due to the sample size, the findings from the interviews will not be able to be generalised to a population, for the purpose of the current research, use will be made of "internal generalisation". As such Maxwell (2005: 115) asserts that within case study research, the findings and recommendations may be generalised within the setting or group under study.

As previously stated, although the in-depth interviews were the primary source of data of the study, use was made of organisational and participant observation. This data collection method will be briefly discussed below.

4.4.2.2   Observation

Typically, case studies use multiple data sources. Different data sources require different approaches and techniques, and often reveal different kinds of insights to the researcher (Rowley 2001: 23). Gillham (2000: 2) notes that multiple sources of data are a key characteristic of a case study. In this regard, the researcher made observations of the organisation's operational activities, as well as observations during the interviews with the participants. Remenyi (2012: 94) states that observing individuals within an organisation, as well as the way the organisation is structured and operates is a useful source of data. Observation is believed to provide important details and insights into the research, which are important for the triangulation of data (Remenyi 2013: 199). To this end, researchers need to be aware of this opportunity, and record their impressions as soon as possible (Remenyi

2012: 94). Remenyi (2013: 197) asserts that observation can play an important supplementary role in interviews, and researchers should be aware of this potential information which may be collected during interviews. For the purposes of this study, the researcher was given time by managers within the organisation to observe general operational activities before the interviews. Moreover, notes were taken during the interviews in order to record certain non-verbal gestures and cues which provided important insight into the participants' true feelings and perceptions. This focus was maintained throughout the collection process (Remenyi 2013: 197).

4.5   DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative research concerns itself with words and observations. Qualitative data analysis refers to the process of searching for patterns and themes in order to bring order and understanding to the data. The process requires creativity, order and a systematic approach (Taylor-Powell & Renner 2003: 1). It is a dynamic, insightful and innovative process of inductive reasoning, assessment and theorising. The examination of qualitative data continues throughout the research process and is not a disconnected, self-contained phase (Basit 2003: 143-144).

Interviews were captured by means of audio voice recordings, the most common method of recording interviews. Maintaining voice recordings of interviews prevents difficulties occurring later in the research process. It allows the researcher to re-listen to interviews, allows for direct quotations of interviewees, and provides permanent records (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006: 318). Each interview was then transcribed by using MS Word. The recordings and the complete transcribed interviews will be stored with the research supervisor for a period of five years.

The personal interviews, in a transcribed format, were subjected to content analysis in order to identify patterns and themes from the participant's responses. In order to achieve this, the data needed to be in a form which could be analysed. Qualitative content analysis involves compressing large amounts of text into fewer categories, enabling systematic processing (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1278). Content analysis has been defined as "a research method for

the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon 2005: 1278). It is deemed one of the most commonly used approaches to examine qualitative data. It allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective, yet scientific way (Zhang & Wildemuth 2009: 1). Content analysis is a coding method whereby raw data are converted into a standardised, systematic form. Coding is defined as a method of combining data into themes and categories, and then assigning appropriate coding units in such a way that the responses can be grouped into a limited number of categories, and therefore provide units of meaning to data (Struwig & Stead 2001: 169). Simply put, coding involves subdividing the information at hand, and assigning appropriate meaningful categories. Coding data makes it simpler to work with the information, identify patterns and ultimately come to conclusions (Struwig & Stead 2001: 169).

The qualitative data collected for this study were analysed manually, making use of Tesch's (1990) model of content analysis, as well as the researcher's own understanding of qualitative data analysis. Due to the nature and size of this study, manual analysis is deemed an appropriate method of analysis (Basit 2003: 152-153).

4.5.1   The organisation of the process of data analysis

As mentioned previously, data were manually analysed for this study, based on Tesch's (1990) eight-step method of analysis. Verbatim transcripts were firstly prepared from audio recordings of the interviews. The transcripts were then thoroughly read through, in order for the researcher to get an understanding of the interviews and to become familiarised with the data. The researcher then randomly selected a transcript, and analysed it individually. Major themes and categories in the interview were then identified. This process was followed for each transcript, and similar themes and ideas were clustered together. Themes comprised the topics which were included in the interview guide, as well as unique topics which emerged from the interviews. Themes were subsequently abbreviated as codes, which were written next to the relevant sections in the transcripts. The researcher then established the most descriptive phrasing for the list of themes and transformed them into categories. Each category was then supported by quotations identified in the transcripts. Data relating to each category were grouped together and analysed.

A distinction can be made between bottom up and top down coding. Bottom up coding occurs when themes which are used for coding emerge following an examination of the transcripts. Top down coding on the other hand is used if theoretical themes, which have been derived from the literature, are used for coding purposes (Symon & Cassell 2012, cited in Remenyi 2012: 74). The use of both bottom up and top down coding will likely be used by researchers as their understanding grows (Remenyi 2012: 74).

The top down codes were identified from the literature review in Chapters Two and Three as well as questions and topics in the interview schedule. These codes were as follows:

- Open communication
- Leadership
- Supervisory support
- Job security
- Opportunities for training and development
- Compensation
- Promotional opportunities
- Shared values
- Levels of commitment

In addition, bottom up codes emerged when the researcher found new themes following the examination of the transcripts created. These codes were as follows:

- Employee benefits
- Recognition
- Trust

Once the codes have been identified, they can be grouped into broader themes by making use of sub-codes. This is known as hierarchical coding (Remenyi 2012: 76). For the purposes of this research, hierarchical coding was used as follows:

- Factors influencing commitment
    - Open communication
    - Leadership
    - Supervisory support
    - Job security
    - Opportunities for training and development
    - Compensation
        - Employee benefits
    - Promotional opportunities
    - Shared values
    - Recognition
    - Trust

- Levels of commitment
    - Emotional attachment
    - Obligation
    - Implications of leaving
    - Commitment ratings

4.6   QUALITATIVE QUALITY CRITERIA

The terms validity and reliability are quality criteria used in traditional positivistic research (Pitney & Parker 2009: 61). While the terms validity and reliability are essential criteria for quality in positivistic paradigms, the terms credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are deemed essential for ensuring quality in interpretivistic research (Lincoln & Guba 1985, cited in Golafshani 2003). The aforementioned quality criteria are therefore integrated in the discussion on validity and reliability.

Validity is defined as the degree to which the data accurately measure what they were intended to measure (Collis & Hussey 2003: 58; Neville 2005: 26). Struwig and Stead (2001: 143) state that the validity of research is more difficult to address in qualitative research than in quantitative research, as there are no commonly accepted guidelines for testing it. Collis and Hussey (2003: 59) state that the validity of qualitative research needs to be a high priority for the researcher. In this study, the researcher made use of respondent validation, in order to give the researcher greater confidence in the validity of the findings. In order to achieve this, the findings were discussed and validated with the five of the 20 participants, who were given the opportunity of comment on the researcher's interpretations of their personal interviews (Collis & Hussey 2003: 279). The validity of the research was further strengthened through the use of data triangulation, namely the use of organisational and participant observation, and well as in-depth interviews (Pitney & Parker 2009: 63).

Reliability is defined as the degree to which the data collection method will yield consistent findings if replicated by others (Collis & Hussey 2003: 58; Neville 2005: 26). In qualitative research the term "dependability" is believed to refer to the concept of reliability within quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba 1985, cited in Golafshani 2003: 601). The dependability of the research encompasses the concepts of consistency, confirmability, credibility and transferability, which are associated with qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba 1985, cited in Golafshani 2003: 601). The term confirmability refers to an evaluation of whether or not the findings represent a "credible" interpretation of the data, and concerns itself with the degree to which the findings could be confirmed or corroborated by others (Pitney & Parker 2009: 63). Qualitative data therefore need to be able to be tracked to the source, and the logic used to interpret the data must be clear (Mertens 2010: 260). Confirmability was addressed in this study by ensuring the consistency in data gathering and processing by making use of an interview guide (Appendix A), and ensuring the research process was made accordingly (Collis & Hussy 2003; Shenton 2004: 71).

The term credibility refers to the measure of how well the study's findings are supported by the data collected, and refers to the plausibility of the findings (Pitney & Parker 2009: 63). The credibility of the research is associated with the "trustworthiness" of the research, a crucial aspect to ensure dependability in qualitative research (Golafshani 2003: 601; Pitney & Parker 2009: 63). In order to address the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, use was made of data triangulation, and a substantial amount of time spent in the organisation

(Lincoln & Guba 1985, cited in Golafshani 2003; Pitney & Parker 2009: 63). The researcher further ensured that the design, collection, preparation and analysis of the data were handled with the utmost integrity, in order to support the credibility of the findings. Credibility was further addressed by adopting well-recognised research methods and regularly debriefing the researcher's supervisor (Shenton 2004: 73).

The transferability of the research is another important factor for qualitative research quality (Lincoln & Guba 1985, cited in Golafshani 2003; Pitney & Parker 2009: 67-68). The burden of ensuring appropriate transferability is on the reader; however the researcher needs to provide sufficient details in order for the researcher to be able to make such a judgement (Pitney & Parker 2009: 67-68). Thick descriptions and research details should enable the reader to make such a decision regarding applying the findings to another setting (Mertens 2010: 259; Pitney & Parker 2009: 67-68). The research procedure of this study has thus been clearly documented in order to increase its potential transferability.

4.7   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Mack et al. (2005: 9) state that whenever conducting research on people, the well-being of the participants must be of top priority. Remenyi (1998: 110) refers to three categories which need to be considered in research ethics, namely the collection of data, processing of data and using the findings. In order to ensure the collection of data is done in an ethical manner, the informed consent of participants is vital for the research (Mack et al. 2005: 10). Informed consent is defined as a mechanism for ensuring that participants understand what it means to participate in the study, so they can make an informed, conscious, and deliberate decision on their participation (Mack et al. 2005: 10). Information regarding the research and participation needs to be clearly explained to participants in a language they can understand and potential participants must be free from coercion or undue influence to participate by the researcher or fellow participants (Mack et al. 2005: 10). The researcher carefully explained the expectations and ethical aspects of the research verbally to potential participants, prior to their agreeing to participate. It was verbally explained to potential participants that participation was completely voluntary, and that should they choose to participate, the interview would take place at a time most convenient to them. It was further explained that

the interview would be audio recorded, but that a pseudonym would be decided on prior to the interview, in order to protect the participant's confidentiality. Potential participants were made aware of the fact that they would receive no payment for their participation. The researcher therefore ensured voluntary participation in the research, and ensured the confidentiality of all the participants (Mack et al. 2005: 11; Remenyi 2013: 152). Participants were also made aware that the data gathered would be used for research purposes only and that the data would be kept by the supervisor. Once agreeing to participate, participants were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix B).

Remenyi (1998: 111) asserts that as the processing of qualitative data is intricate and subjective in nature, the researcher must be careful to remain balanced, giving appropriate importance to statements and opinions, while not being influenced by personal bias. The researcher therefore took great care in maintaining a balanced approach, and not being influenced by personal bias and predetermined opinions. Lastly, in order to ensure good ethical practice, the research findings were only used for academic purposes, as well as for compiling a report of the findings and recommendations for the organisation being studied (Remenyi 1998: 112).

The research and its ethical aspects were further discussed with relevant management in the participating organisation, and the research complied with all ethical requirements of the Department of Management Human Research Ethics Committee at Rhodes University.

4.8 SUMMARY

The details specific to the research design and methodology followed in this study were presented in this Chapter. Specific reference was made to the research paradigm, population, sample, sampling procedure, data collection methods, data analysis methods and research ethical considerations.

The Chapter discussed the use of the case study method, a research methodology within the interpretivist paradigm. The current research focused on a large Chinese multinational organisation with operations in South Africa, which formed the case study for the research.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher collected data by means of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 20 South African employees working in four branches of the organisation. In order to supplement the interview data, the researcher made use of participant and organisational observations. The employees interviewed were in technical, supervisory and managerial positions. With the aid of the organisation's regional manager, participants were selected by means of purposive sampling. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and the data were analysed manually, making use of Tesch's (1990) model of content analysis. Coding techniques were used to group top down and bottom up codes by means of hierarchical coding.

The researcher made every effort to ensure a high level of ethics and qualitative quality. The findings of the research are presented in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5
RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this Chapter, the findings of this research will be presented and discussed. The findings of the empirical investigation will be presented by referring to question themes and questions posed during the interviews.

As previously discussed in Chapter Four, the main source of data was interviews with 20 employees in the organisation being studied. The researcher also made use of organisational and participant observations, in order to try and gain a greater understanding and insight into the participants' responses. The findings will be supported by quotations from the transcribed interviews, as well as references to the researcher's observations when necessary.

As it was important to obtain a broad spectrum of employees, participants included technical, supervisory and managerial employees. Biographical details were presented in Chapter Four, Table 4.4. Participants included four managers, three supervisors, and thirteen technical employees. Six participants were female, and fourteen were male. With regard to race, ten participants were Black, seven White, two Coloured and one Indian. The participants were interviewed using an interview guide (Appendix A). The questions posed in the interview guide were constructed on the basis of the first two objectives of this study, namely:

- To identify and describe key factors influencing local employee commitment.
- To identify and describe current commitment levels amongst local employees.

Based on the structure of the interview guide, this Chapter will be divided into two distinct sections. Section 5.2 will discuss the findings pertaining to the proposed eight factors influencing organisational commitment, as identified in the theoretical framework (Chapter Three, Figure 3.1). Section 5.3 will discuss the findings relating to the participants' perceived commitment to the organisation. The Chapter will be brought to a close by reflecting on the researcher's organisational observations in Section 5.4.

5.2 FINDINGS PERTAINING TO THE PROPOSED FACTORS INFLUENCING COMMITMENT

For each of the proposed eight factors influencing organisational commitment which comprise the theoretical framework, a number of questions were developed, as explained in Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2.1. The number of questions posed relating to each factor varied according the perceived complexity of the topic, as well as the researcher's own interests. In order to address the first objective of this study, which aimed to identify and describe key factors influencing local employee commitment (Chapter One, Section 1.2), the findings pertaining to the above mentioned eight factors influencing organisational commitment will be discussed in this section.

5.2.1 Open communication

In order to address the matter of open communication within the organisation, the participants were firstly asked how they would define open communication (question 2.1.1 in the interview guide), in order to gauge whether the participants had an adequate understanding of the concept. The participants were then asked to elaborate on how they perceived open communication in the organisation (question 2.1.2 in the interview guide).

Following an analysis of the interview data, the researcher was satisfied that the participants had an adequate understanding of the concept of open communication. Of the 20 participants, fifteen believed communication in the organisation to be open, with the remaining participants having a neutral or mixed view on the matter. When analysing the interview data from participants who believed communication to be open, the categories, (a) "open door policy" and (b) "feedback" emerged. Although none of the participants explicitly highlighted communication in the organisation to be closed, the negative intrinsic category of (c) "irregular communication" emerged. These categories will be discussed below.

(a) Open door policy

Participants noted that the organisation's perceived open communication was greatly aided by management's "open door policy" (P1; P2; P3; P5; P12; P16). Participants stated they felt they have the freedom to speak directly to managers in the organisation. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P3	White, Male	Technical

"If I am having problems, I can be open with the management, and they will listen and hear the problems. They are very kind in that they will always take the time to listen to any employee. Even if it's not really their department, they will try help where they can" (P3).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P16	White, Female	Manager

"There is a free environment for them to speak up to a superior, and voice a complaint or an issue that has come up. Maybe something that is making the work they are trying to do difficult. Although there are structures, any employee knows they can go straight to the top management if they have not managed to resolve an issue with their immediate supervisor. That manager will then make time for them, make the time that is needed, and resolve the matter" (P16).

Such feelings were noted by employees across hierarchical levels. The findings therefore indicate that an open environment in the organisation is of great importance to its management and employees. The management are perceived to be making a conscious effort to listen to employees, enable employees to freely communicate with them, and take the time to resolve issues which have been raised. The findings indicate that the ability to freely communicate with all levels of management has a positive influence on employee's perceived open communication in the organisation.

(b)   Feedback

The findings indicated that the feedback given to participants by managers, seemed to aid in the participant's positive feelings regarding open communication in the organisation (P7; P9; P10; P16). This is demonstrated by the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P7	Black, Male	Technical

"It is open here…we also get the information we need from the top, if something is not running how it should be, they let us know. They will tell us how they want to correct it. And if everything is running how it should, they will tell us so, and tell us to 'keep it up' or maybe give us small changes they think we should make. These communications from them can often save everyone a lot of time and effort. It gives us the environment we need to work properly, and do our job" (P7).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P10	Coloured, Male	Technical

"They also give us feedback and updates on the work we are doing. This helps us a lot in our working environment, because we are all on the same page. We can't have proper communication if they not giving us feedback" (P10).

Participants demonstrated that the organisation's management provided feedback which gave the employees a sense of direction and motivation. The findings further indicate that the feedback participants received from managers influenced their positive feelings regarding the organisation's open communication. The researcher attributed this to the fact that the employees feel more involved in the organisation when they receive feedback and have direct communication with the senior managers. It was generally felt that it is important for the managers to communicate openly and honestly and share adequate information regarding the organisation's operations and performance.

(c) Irregular communication

Although the large majority of participants believed communication was open in the organisation, with no participants directing stating they felt it was closed, the negative category of "irregular communication" emerged which is perceived to hamper the sense of open communication with certain participants (P11; P13; P17; P19; P20). This is demonstrated in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P11	White, Male	Technical

"I see communication as open here…but what I do feel is that, uhm, it doesn't happen often enough. When we all communicate with management, and management with us, it really help the situation, and issues gets fixed. But there are no set dates or times we can meet with management, say once a week. And they don't update us enough, only when they feel like it. So this can cause problems when we think we all working together, but actually a lack of communication has happened" (P11).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P20	White, Male	Manager

"They don't talk to us often enough. There needs to be more regular talking amongst all of us here. People often sit with their problems, they know they can talk to a supervisor, but they chose not to. People here must really, really be encouraged to open up more" (P20).

The findings indicate that a number of employees believe the lack of regular communication, is hampering effective open communication in the organisation. Participants felt that formal, regular meetings need to be arranged with all levels of employees, in order to table and discuss any issues which may arise. The findings further indicate that employees need to be strongly encouraged to voice any concerns, and take advantage of the perceived open culture in the organisation. Although the findings indicate the managers recognise the importance of open communication in the organisation, managers may need to communicate with their staff on a more regular basis. P13, a female manager, indicated that management may already be

aware of this concern: "We are perhaps guilty of not meeting and talking to employees often enough" (P13).

To summarise, participants were perceived to generally show an adequate understanding of the concept open communication. The majority of participants believed communication in the organisation to be open, highlighting the ease with which employees can approach managers as well as the beneficial feedback provided by the organisation's management. Although no participants perceived communication in the organisation to be closed, certain participants highlighted communication as irregular.

5.2.2   Leadership

In order to address the broad issue of leadership, the participants were asked four questions relating to the matter. Participants were firstly asked their opinion of how knowledgeable the organisation's leadership were (question 2.2.1 in the interview guide). The participants were then asked to elaborate on the leadership style of the Chinese managers (question 2.2.2 in the interview guide), as well as the leadership style of the South African managers (question 2.2.3 in the interview guide). The participants were lastly asked to explain if they felt a need for a change in the organisation's leadership (question 2.2.4 in the interview guide). The findings relating to the above mentioned questions will be discussed below.

5.2.2.1   How knowledgeable the organisation's leadership were

Of the 20 research participants, fifteen had positive feelings with regard to how knowledgeable the organisation's leadership were, while five participants had neutral feelings or no comment on the matter. None of the participants openly demonstrated any negative feelings in this regard. Although fifteen participants demonstrated positive feelings, only fourteen provided answers comprehensive enough to be categorised as shown in Table 5.1. This is applicable to multiple sections in this Chapter, as certain brief or vague responses were not able to be categorised. The positive feelings expressed by the participants with regard to their perceptions of how knowledgeable the organisation's leadership were may be categorised according to the following keywords derived from the data: (a) "knowledgeable",

(b) "skilled", and (c) "experienced". The knowledge categories and participants are shown in Table 5.1, and then discussed below.

Table 5.1: Positive perceptions of how knowledgeable leaders were

Category	Participants
(a) Knowledgeable	P2; P3; P6; P12; P13; P15
(b) Skilled	P1; P5; P12; P13; P14; P18
(c) Experienced	P1; P4; P9; P16; P20

(a) Knowledgeable

Six participants regarded the organisation's leadership as being knowledgeable. This is highlighted by the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P13	White, Female	Supervisor

"We have a very good, skilled management team. They have really done wonders in setting up the South African division, something they can be proud of. They are very knowledgeable in what they do, yes. They have the smarts and know what they are doing" (P13).

The general feeling amongst the participants was that the organisation's leadership had the knowledge to manage the organisation efficiently. Such feelings by P13 were attributed to the manager's specialised knowledge of the industry and their products. The researcher further noted the respectful tone participants (P3; P13; P15) used when discussing the organisation's leadership. This was particularly the case when participants discussed the organisation's Chinese leaders. A possible reason for this may be due to the Chinese leaders' seniority. The participants generally felt it to be necessary for the leaders to be knowledgeable about the organisation's operations.

(b)   Skilled

Participants perceived the organisation's leadership to be skilled in their work tasks. This is highlighted by the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P14	Black, Male	Technical

"The managers know what they are doing here. They perform well, and know a lot. They are very skilled in what they do. They seem to have a talent for their jobs, which makes them very good managers." (P14).

The general feeling of the participants was that the organisation's leaders had the skills to manage the organisation efficiently. Both P14 and P19 attributed these perceived skills to the multiple university degrees held by the leaders.

(c)   Experienced

Participants perceived the organisation's leaders to have experience in their work functions, which positively contributed to their feelings regarding the leaders' knowledge. This was attributed to certain leaders' international experience in various leadership roles (P1; P4; P16). This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P4	Coloured, Male	Technical

"They do great work and I respect them. They work all over the world and have lots of experience, so they know what they doing here. They have proven themselves with years of experience in different manager jobs" (P4).

P1, a female manager, also commented on an individual leader's international experience, and his success working within European branches of the organisation. She believed this to be a contributing factor to his success in his current position at the South African head office. Participants generally felt that the organisation's leaders had 'not only the theoretical knowledge' (P20), but also the experience to enable them to lead effectively. This perceived working experience is believed to greatly influence the positive feelings of the employees towards the organisation's leadership. P20, a male manager commented in this regard: "…we won't have respect for some inexperienced leader who doesn't have the skills for the job."

5.2.2.2   Leadership style of the Chinese managers

The participants contributed valuable information regarding the leadership styles of the Chinese managers, with all 20 of the research participants commenting on the matter. Although certain responses were too vague to be categorised, three keywords emerged from the data when participants discussed the management style of the Chinese managers, namely (a) "diligent", (b) "committed" and (c) "stern". The Chinese managers' leadership styles, as categorised according to diligent, committed and stern, are shown in Table 5.2, and then discussed below.

Table 5.2: Leadership style of Chinese managers

Category	Participants
(a) Diligent	P5; P6; P10; P14; P16
(b) Committed	P12; P14; P16
(c) Stern	P1; P2; P3; P5; P11; P12

    (a)   Diligent

Participants believed the style of the organisation's Chinese managers incorporated a sense of diligence and hard work. These feelings are best highlighted by the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P5	White, Male	Supervisor

"They are so particular about their work, always working very hard and diligently. Very particular and diligent. But this rubs off us on, as more junior managers and then on the rest of the staff as well. We don't want to disappoint them, we want to match their level" (P5).

Participants (P5; P6; P10; P14; P16) viewed the Chinese managers' leadership style in a favourable light, and discussed the diligence with which they believed such leaders worked. P5 viewed the perceived diligence of the Chinese as a source of inspiration for the staff, promoting diligence and an efficient work ethic among the rest of the employees.

(b) Committed

Participants believed the style of the organisation's Chinese managers demonstrated commitment to their job as well as the organisation. These feelings are best highlighted by the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P14	Coloured, Male	Technical

"They are deeply committed to the work they do, and the company. What is best for the company will always take priority for them. If the Chinese head office orders something, they will make sure it's done quickly and properly. They will not let anybody drag the company down, we must all pull our weight" (P14).

Participants (P12; P14; P16) perceived the Chinese managers to be deeply committed to the organisation. P14 described how the Chinese managers would often place the needs of the organisation above their own, and how they encouraged others to be as committed to the organisation.

(c) Stern

Participants believed the style of the organisation's Chinese managers incorporated a stern and serious attitude. These feelings are best highlighted by the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P2	Black, Female	Technical

"They seem very serious. They are nice people and everything, but serious. They will not take rubbish from an employee. You know with them that the work they give you must be done. They don't tolerate people who just want to mess around; they make it clear we are here to work" (P2).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"They have their way of doing things. They make the decisions and pass it down to the rest of us, that is just how it is. They will listen to us if we speak up, but generally how they want it done is how it will be done" (P19).

Participants (P1; P2; P3; P5; P11; P12) described the stern manner in which they believe the Chinese managers lead the organisation. The findings suggest that the Chinese managers lead with a sense of authority, and are quick to reprimand employees if it is believed they are not performing their work tasks efficiently.

It is evident that the Chinese managers maintain a diligent and high work ethic, which is believed to have a positive influence on the work behaviour of certain employees. It has further been demonstrated that the Chinese managers are perceived to be deeply committed to the organisation, taking their responsibilities in the organisation seriously.

5.2.2.3   Leadership style of the South African managers

All 20 of the research participants commented on the leadership style of the South African managers. Following the analysis of the interview transcripts, two categories emerged from the data when participants discussed the matter, namely (a) "relaxed", and (b) "open". The South African managers' styles, as categorised according to relaxed and open are shown in Table 5.3, and then discussed below.

Table 5.3: South African managers' leadership style

(a) Relaxed	P3; P5; P12; P17; P19
(b) Open	P6; P10; P17; P19; P20

(a)   Relaxed

Participants believed the style of the organisation's South African managers demonstrated a relatively relaxed attitude. These feelings are best highlighted by the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P3	Black, Female	Technical

"I think they South African managers have a better understanding of us, because we come both from the same country. So the South African managers you will find will be generally more relaxed and friendly. They let us to be a bit more flexible in how we do things, and talk to them more informally about work and decisions" (P3).

The findings suggest that the participants (P3; P5; P12; P17; P19) perceived the South African managers to demonstrate a relaxed leadership style. P3 explained that the South African managers are believed to be more relaxed and friendly, as compared with the Chinese managers, and allow the employees to have greater flexibility in how they chose to perform their work tasks.

(b)   Open

Participants believed the style of the organisation's South African managers emphasised openness and transparency. These feelings are best highlighted by the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P10	White, Male	Technical

"I will see the South African managers that come from here, more than the Chinese. They are good people, ja. They have been here for a long time, and know the work they must do. They treat us like equals and often involve us in decisions that we must make together as a team. I like that. They are very open about everything that is going on in the company" (P10).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P17	White, Male	Supervisory

"The South African managers have a relatively close relationship with the staff. It is more personal; we work together to achieve the goals which are, are set to us. We don't forcefully dictate to anybody, we discuss and work as a supportive team" (P17).

The findings suggest that the participants (P6; P10; P17; P19; P20) perceived the South African managers to demonstrate an open and transparent leadership style. P10 explained how he perceives that the South African managers' leadership style incorporates a sense of equality and openness.

The above findings pertaining to the "relaxed" and "open" leadership style of the South African managers indicate that the South African managers practise what may be best described as a participative and transparent leadership style. This is seen to involve a close, open and supportive relationship with the staff. It is important to note however that the majority of the junior and mid-level managerial positions are filled by South Africans, with Chinese managers filling the senior positions. The average employee would therefore have more interaction with the South African managers on a day-to-day basis. This may therefore

lead to closer informal relationships with the employees, which may in turn lead to "openness" and "transparency".

5.2.2.4   Change in leadership

The participants felt strongly about there being no need for a change in the organisation's leadership. Of the 20 participants, 17 expressed there to be no need for a change in the organisation's leadership (P1; P2; P3; P4; P5; P6; P7; P9; P10; P11; P13; P14; P15; P16; P18; P19; P20), with three expressing neutral views (P8; P12; P17). These feelings are best highlighted by the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P11	White, Male	Technical

"Uhm, I think the management is fine as is. Everyone is quite happy with things on both sides. Personally I do not see a need. Considering the successful path currently, and how happy China is with the progress here, I think a change in leadership will not happen, and is not necessary anyway" (P11).

The findings therefore indicate that although the management styles of the Chinese and the South Africans appear to differ, the overall result seems to demonstrate that the employees are satisfied with the current leadership. This is clearly indicated with no participants demonstrating a need for a change in leadership in the organisation. A possible factor to bear in mind when considering this positive result could be the participant's possible reluctance to directly state a need for leadership change, even in a confidential interview, as it may be perceived to unnecessarily jeopardise one's position. The researcher however observed no such indicators while conducting the interviews.

To summarise, the majority of the participants had favourable perceptions of the overall level of knowledge of the organisation's leadership. Managers were described as "knowledgeable", "skilled" and "experienced". The leadership styles of the Chinese managers were related to "diligence", "commitment" and "sternness". The leadership styles of the South African

managers were highlighted by the keywords "relaxed" and "open". The finding in this regard demonstrated a possible transparent and participative leadership style. The findings lastly revealed that the participants seem to view their leaders in a favourable light, and therefore see no need for a change in leadership.

5.2.3 Supervisory support

In order to address the issue of supervisory support, the participants were asked three questions. Participants were firstly asked to elaborate on their relationship with their supervisor (question 2.3.1 in the interview guide). Participants were then asked if they felt they could rely on their supervisor during difficult times (question 2.3.2 in the interview guide). Lastly participants were asked if they felt there are areas in their relationship with their supervisor they felt needed improvement (question 2.3.3 in the interview guide). The findings relating to these three questions will be presented below.

5.2.3.1   Supervisor relationship

All of the 20 participants responded to this question. The findings were encouraging. Of the 20 participants, sixteen demonstrated that they have a positive relationship with their immediate supervisor (P1; P2; P3; P4; P5; P6; P7; P8; P9; P10; P13; P14; P15; P16; P18; P20). The remaining four participants demonstrated neutral opinions (P11; P12; P17; P19). None of the participants directly expressed negative opinions. Through the analysis of the interview data from participants who expressed positive opinions, two positive categories emerged, namely (a) "friendship" and (b) "support". These categories will be discussed below.

(a)   Friendship

Four participants (P4; P7; P16; P20) indicated that they consider their relationship with their supervisor to be more than just a working relationship, and to involve a level of mutual friendship. Participants indicated that they could often confide in their supervisors with

personal matters, and some of them would socialise with their supervisor out of the work environment. Comments in this regard are highlighted below:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P7	Black, Male	Technical

"It's is not just that I am his junior, and he is more senior. It's not such a formal thing, we chat like buddies. Yes, I do respect him like a boss, and I know my place, because at the end of the day that's how it is. But because we have this kind of friendship between us, it benefits my work I think, because it's a more positive environment, and I want to be here" (P7).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P20	White, Male	Manager

"I have a good relationship with him. I see him not just as one of my bosses, but also as a friend. He's a good person. He will often advise me on things, if I'm having problems with money or any kind of stress, he will show an interest in it, and be willing to take the time for me. We often meet up outside of work, have a drink or something. It's not just about work with us" (P20).

The researcher observed the cheerful body language when certain participants discussed their supervisors (P4; P7; P20). The findings suggest that a number of the participants have positive and beneficial relationships with their supervisors. Such relationships are perceived to be beneficial to the participants who feel closer to their supervisors, and as a result, the organisation.

(b) Support

A number of participants demonstrated the encouragement and support they felt from their supervisors while performing their work (P1; P2; P6; P14; P20). This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P6	Black, Male	Technical

"My supervisor is very supportive of me, and the rest of the team. We can always talk to him about any problems that come up, and he will guide us through the problem if he is able to help. Having a supervisor who is really willing to help you is good for the team" (P6).

P6 explained the perceived support he and others receive from their supervisor greatly aid them in performing their work tasks. The findings suggest that the support received from supervisors is greatly appreciated by employees, and has a positive effect on their perceptions of their job and the organisation. Although it is a supervisor's job to support his juniors, many of the supervisors are perceived to "go beyond" (P20) what is required of them, in order to support and encourage the staff.

5.2.3.2   Dependability on supervisor

Of the 20 participants, 17 demonstrated clearly that they felt they could rely on their supervisor when times got difficult (P1; P2; P3; P4; P5; P6; P7; P8; P9; P10; P13; P14; P15; P16; P17 P18; P20). The remaining three participants had neutral views (P11; P12; P19). The positive opinions are highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P4	Coloured, Male	Technical

"I feel I can rely on him, and I know the team feels the same. He will not sell us out, if someone makes a mistake, he will take it as his own mistake and take responsibility for it. That's how it should be. So we know we can rely on him, and we work well to make sure we don't put him in any, like tough spots" (P4).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P14	Black, Male	Technical

"I can really trust him to assist me with any work issue. He has told me lots of times that I must just ask for help, and he is there. It's a nice feeling to know he is looking out for me, and he has proven that he is there for me with many things in the past" (P14).

The findings indicate that the large majority of participants feel they can rely on their supervisors during difficult times. The organisation is perceived to give the supervisors the freedom they need to assist their teams with small matters. Supervisors are "encouraged by senior management" (P17) to become close to their teams and help them ensure they feel comfortable in completing their work tasks. The organisation is perceived to be effective in supporting supervisors, and giving them the power and freedom to keep employees happy. The perceived support extended by the superiors is believed by the researcher to often cross into personal matters, building close ties between supervisors and employees.

5.2.3.3   Areas of improvement in the relationship with the supervisor

Of the 20 participants, twelve felt that there were no areas in their relationship with their supervisor that needed improvement (P2; P4; P5; P6; P7; P9; P10; P13; P14; P16; P18; P20). Two categories however emerged from those who suggested areas for improvement (P1; P3; P8; P12; P15; P19), namely (a) "slow to act" and (b) "communication". These two categories will be discussed below.

(a)   Slow to act

Certain participants (P3; P12; P19) indicted that they felt although supervisors listened to their concerns and suggestions, they were slow to take action. This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P12	Black, Male	Technical

"They always listen to us, but they are slow when it actually comes down to doing what is needed. This can cause problems. An example is if for example we tell them we are unhappy with these certain parts, and we would prefer working with another one. They will hear us, and even agree we are right, but it will take weeks and weeks for them to actually speak to management, and change the part order. This can be frustrating" (P12).

P12 described how the perceived slow manner in which certain matters are dealt with by supervisors, has led to feelings of aggravation in the past. The findings suggest that the slow speed at which some supervisors were perceived to take action is an area of frustration for some of the employees. Participants indicated that although they appreciate the supervisor's willingness to listen and address issues, they believed matters were not resolved quickly enough. The speed with which some matters were dealt with in the past, is believed to hamper internal performance.

(b) Communication

Participants (P1; P3; P8; P12; P15; P19) felt that communication is an area which can be improved upon. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P8	Black, Male	Technical

"The only thing I can really say is sometimes there is a lack of communication between us. Reports and feedback from things we requested is sometimes too slow. If communication is better from all the supervisors and management, we will all understand each other a lot better" (P8).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P12	Black, Male	Technical

"Communicating with supervisors can be slow for us sometimes. They need to speed things up. There should be meetings in the morning with each other where any issues can be brought

up, and then another brief meeting at the end of work, to discuss the progress which has or has not been made. And I know this can be very frustrating for a branch who is trying to get help or information for head office; that can take them ages. They sometimes don't even reply to emails from the guys, or it takes days. The branch manager there then needs to make a decision himself, which maybe the customer isn't happy about" (P12).

P1, a manager also highlighted communication as an area which needed improvement, particularly in smaller branches. She highlighted she has irregular physical contact with her supervisor who is based at the head office. P1 explained that they would often communicate via email, which often resulted in delayed replies. This in turn would result in a matter not being resolved as efficiently as it could have.

The findings suggest that the organisation may potentially need to create an environment in which communication flows between supervisors and subordinates are made easier. Feedback from the supervisors was sometimes described as delayed by certain participants. The need for regular face-to-face meetings with the supervisors was highlighted, in order to regularly raise any issues which may arise, as well as discuss the resolution of these issues (P20). P1 and P20 further highlighted the communication difficulties experienced by branch managers, who wish to communicate with their supervisors at the head office. Email correspondence between the branches and head office was described as often slow and tedious, sometimes affecting the customer service standards at the branches (P1; P19).

In summary, the large majority of the participants demonstrated that they have a positive relationship with their supervisors. Supervisors were perceived to demonstrate friendship and emotional support to their subordinates. Furthermore, the majority of participants felt they could rely on their supervisors during difficult times. When discussing areas for potential improvement, participants highlighted that certain supervisors were perceived to be slow to take action after an issue had been raised and were perceived not to communicate regularly or effectively enough with their subordinates.

5.2.4   Job security

In order to address the issue of job security, participants were asked their perception of their long and short-term job security n the organisation (question 2.4.1 in the interview guide). Of the 20 research participants, 14 indicated that they were confident about their current short and long-term position in the organisation (P2; P3; P4; P5; P7; P8; P9; P10; P11; P12; P13; P16; P18; P20), while three indicated they did not feel a sense of security (P1; P6; P14). The remaining three participants did not comment or expressed neutral views on the matter (P15; P17; P19).

The participants who expressed a negative view on their job security expressed concerns that the organisation would simply decide to "pack up [and leave]" (P1; P6). This is highlighted by the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P1	Coloured, Female	Manager

"There is basically no security. The thing about them, if they feel they going to pack up and leave, then they are going to go. Look I've been here for 5 years, right. But what bothers me, is they will hire transport, but they will not buy. So why would they do that? Not have their own assets, you understand?" (P1)

These participants (P1; P6; P14) seemed to feel that the organisation lacked solid foundations and roots in the country. Both P1, a female manager, and P6, a male technical employee expressed concerns about the lack of fixed assets in the organisation. Both participants perceived this as evidence of a lack of a firm commitment to the country's future operations. The researcher observed that P1 and P6 showed signs of distress when discussing the matter.

Fourteen of the 20 participants however, seemed to have a different view on their job security in the organisation. The participants seemed to feel confident in both their short and long-term positions. It emerged that a possible explanation for this confidence was a result of the fact the organisation is expanding both internationally and in South Africa in particular. This is highlighted by the following two quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P3	White, Male	Technical

"I think we are safe. If someone goes they normally did it to themselves or they quit or got a better job. The company seems to be growing, so as long as I do my work and look after myself, I think I am safe here" (P3).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P12	Black, Male	Technical

"I have not seen many people leave here…if we happy to stay, they will keep us on…as long as we do our work. We are increasing our manufacturing output, so it is more time to take people on, than lose them. I think they are doing well in this country, and it opens doors to other countries in Africa to sell" (P12).

The explicit keywords "growing" (P3; P19), "expanding" (P9; 20), and "success" (P20) were highlighted by the participants with regard to the organisation's current situation. Reference was made to the fact that the organisation is enjoying growth in sales, is expanding its product range, and is investing in an additional manufacturing and assembly plant in South Africa. The researcher further observed a sense of pride and excitement among the participants (P3; P9; P20) when discussing the organisation's current growth. This indicates that organisational growth and success may play an important role in many of the participants' feelings of job security.

To summarise, fourteen of the participants expressed a sense of job security in the organisation. Such feelings were often attributed to the fact that the organisation is currently expanding its operations, and enjoying success in the South African market. Three of the participants did however highlight negative feelings with regard to their job security, indicating the organisation lacked solid foundations and roots in the country.

5.2.5   Opportunities for training and development

In order to address the issue of opportunities for training and development in the organisation, the participants were asked three questions. Participants were firstly asked to describe the training and development opportunities in the organisation (question 2.5.1 in the interview guide). Participants were then asked if they felt they were able to learn from each other, and if so how this occurred (question 2.5.2 in the interview guide). Participants were lastly asked to describe the training and development opportunities that they would like to see in the organisation (question 2.5.3 in the interview guide). The findings relating to each of the above mentioned questions will be discussed below.

5.2.5.1   Description of current training and development opportunities

All of the 20 participants commented on the current training and development opportunities in the organisation. Fourteen of these participants expressed negative views on their current training and development opportunities (P1; P2; P3; P6; P7; P8; P9; P10; P12; P14; P15; P17; P19; P20), with six of the participants maintaining neutral views on the matter (P4; P5; P11; P13; P16; P18). None of the participants expressed positive views on the matter. The negative views are highlighted by the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P2	Black, Male	Technical

"Ja, like I said now…there is really not much. Maybe the main guys in the head office get training and stuff, but we really don't get much. They don't invest in training from what I can see" (P2).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P15	Black, Male	Technical

"There are not many opportunities for that here. Things are kept relatively simple in the fact that people will most often stay in the position they are in…so training doesn't happen often here" (P15).

The training and development opportunities in the organisation thus emerged as a concern for the majority of the participants, which led to many negative feelings on the matter. Through the analysis of the data, it become evident to the researcher that once an employee was appropriately trained to fill their position, future opportunities to train and develop into new positions were perceived by certain employees to "simply not be there" (P19). A number of participants (P1; P9; P19) believed a cause of this situation was the fact that the organisation was perceived to hire employees who already hold the skills to do the job, instead of training those who are already in the organisation to fill these positions. In this regard, P1 described how the technical employees at the smaller branches were only Chinese nationals, as it was deemed easier for the organisation to bring in qualified technicians from China, rather than training and employing South Africans.

5.2.5.2   Learning from one another

Of the 20 participants, twelve indicated that they felt they are able to learn from each other in the organisation (P1; P3; P5; P7; P8; P11; P12; P13; P14; P16; P19; P20), while three indicated they were not able to (P6; P10; P17). The remaining five participants had neutral views on the matter (P2; P4; P9; P15; P18). Through the analysis of the data, the categories (a) "collaboration" and (b) "mentorship" emerged from the participants who expressed that they are able to learn from each other in the organisation. Those who highlighted that they are not able to learn from others in the organisation did not provide any insight as to why they felt that way. The positive categories are demonstrated with Table 5.4, and are then discussed below.

Table 5.4: Learning from one another - positive categories

Category	Participants
(a) Collaboration	P1; P3; P8; P19; P20
(b) Mentorship	P11; P19; P20

(a)   Collaboration

The participants described informal collaboration in the organisation, in which employees would work together, share ideas, and learn from one another. This is illustrated by the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P1	Coloured, Female	Manager

"So the Chinese guy who you see is our technician. So he will teach you how the boards look and fit, and what is wrong there. And we will show him the South African way to do the work. If he doesn't understand English, we will explain to him what is happening and all that" (P1).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"We learn from each other here. Nobody sits by themselves with a problem. We always come together, and discuss things. We are all different, and therefore have different skills and abilities. So it's important that we can learn and share. Although there is no set time and place that we do this, it happens all the time. Management doesn't tell us we must do this, it just happens. New guys can learn from the old guys, and even the old guys can learn from the new ones. We all have something new and different to offer" (P19).

Although such collaboration is not perceived to be a formal training strategy in the organisation, or necessarily encouraged by management, employees and supervisors seem to

take it upon themselves to arrange such collaboration. As participants came from a variety of training, working and cultural backgrounds, they demonstrated that they would work together, and discuss work issues, in order to learn from one another and gain different perspectives. P1 described how the employees would informally gain technical skills from the Chinese technician at the branch, and how in turn, they would assist him with his English, South African culture and working etiquette.

(b)   Mentorship

Participants further described an informal mentorship programme within the organisation. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"A way which we learn from each other, is through the mentorship of the new staff who comes here. New staff, or technicians who are maybe starting with new work they haven't done before, will work under the wing of a more experienced person. This makes things a lot easier for them, and for us, because we know they are learning the right things from the start. The managers expect them to just walk in and know how everything works, obviously this won't happen" (P19).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P20	White, Male	Manager

"What we do is we look after the new guys, and teach them how things are done, and we show them what we know. Mistakes we have made in the past they can avoid. Nobody asks us to do this or anything, but we do it because we must - it is important" (P20).

Through such mentorship, participants believed they were able to gain experience, skills and learn from one another. Although the organisation recognises the skill and seniority of more experienced members of staff, the organisation does not practise a formal mentorship

programme with new employees in the organisation. Certain supervisors and senior employees however take it upon themselves to ensure new employees are able to learn from the experiences of others and are guided into their position with the assistance of one or multiple mentors. Such mentorship is perceived to be of great benefit to new employees.

5.2.5.3   Changes in training and development

Of the 20 participants in this study, ten offered their viewpoints on the possible changes to the training and development that they would like to see in the organisation (P2; P3; P4; P6; P8; P9; P10; P11; P19; P20).   Three of the participants believed that changes were not necessary (P12; P16; P17), while seven participants had a neutral response or had no comment on the matter (P1; P5; P7; P13; P14; P15; P18). Two categories emerged from the responses of those who highlighted the changes in the training and development that they would like to see, (a) "formal courses" and (b) "internal exposure". The categories are shown in Table 5.5, and then discussed below.

Table 5.5: Changes in training and development

Category	Participants
(a) Formal courses	P2; P6; P10; P11; P20
(b) Internal exposure	P3; P4; P8; P9; P19

(a)   Formal courses

Participants highlighted a need for the organisation to send employees to formal, accredited courses at colleges, or alternatively to subsidise employee's part-time studies, which are relevant to his or her job. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P2	Black, Female	Technical

"Well…if they can maybe send us to a technical college or something for a period of time, and pay for us to get through a course…it is, it's something I would really like to see" (P2).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P10	Coloured, Male	Technical

"A friend of mine works for a state company, and they pay for you to study at college part-time, give you study leave if you need it. Now that is awesome. But you see, they really massive. They tell them there, this is our home for life. Because there are just so many areas they can grow. That is why they like employees to study, because they are planning on keeping them in the business for a long time. If we could get a study allowance or study leave here, it would really be amazing" (P10).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P11	White, Male	Technical

 "I think more invested opportunities would be good. Like external training programs that are outside the business, that we can go to. I feel like we have the same knowledge just circulating around the business. We could learn more new things I think if we incorporated more outside training. Then hopefully we can also earn a piece of paper that means something, and it can benefit us forever" (P11).

Participants expressed a need for the organisation to focus on employee training and provide opportunities for employees to take part in accredited courses presented externally to the organisation. Such investment in the employees was perceived to be of great importance to these participants. P10 highlighted training opportunities he was aware of in another organisation, and demonstrated signs of disappointment that the organisation under study offered no such opportunities. P2 indicated that if the organisation was willing to invest in the employees in such a way, it would have great significance to the employees and would be a sign of the value the organisation placed in them. This, in turn, he believed would build commitment to the organisation.

(b) Internal exposure

Participants demonstrated that they would like to see more internal training and development of employees through job rotation, and exposure to other employees, managers and departments within the organisation. This is highlighted by the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P3	White, Male	Technical

"If they can maybe send us to other departments. Then we can learn how they work. Maybe then it will open up other opportunities for us. I don't want to sit in the technical side all the time. I want to learn new things and move up" (P3).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P4	Coloured, Male	Technical

"But if they can train us in something new. Train us as to how to be a manager or a supervisor. Show us and train us in other areas of the business. Then they can see who has the talent for it, and who will be the best option for the future" (P4).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P8	Black, Male	Technical

"A programme for new people who come in, they need to learn how the company work…and that kind of a thing. They need to work and see the whole business, not just a piece of it. Work under different managers, and with different employees. Then their eyes are more open, and they have a better understanding of what other do" (P8).

P9 explained that the ability of employees to rotate within the organisation will give the employees a better understanding of the work others do in the organisation, expose them to something new, as well as potentially open doors for career advancement into other departments in the organisation. The category of "internal exposure" is therefore deemed of great importance to some of the participants, as it is seen as an important opportunity to

"learn" (P3; P8; P9), and develop oneself. The researcher noted that these feelings were only experienced by technical employees in the organisation, who often seemed to feel stagnant in their departments and positions.

In summary, the large majority of the participants held negative views on training and development opportunities in the organisation. The organisation is perceived to only provide limited initial training, and not provide any training which would enable an employee to grow in the organisation. The organisation is further perceived to prefer hiring employees who already hold the skills required, even if this means hiring Chinese nationals to work in South Africa. The majority of participants however highlighted a working culture which enables employees to learn from one another. When discussing the changes to the training and development opportunities that they would like to see, two key suggestions emerged from the participants: the promotion of employees taking part in accredited courses and the introduction of job orientation and rotation programmes.

5.2.6 Compensation

In order to address the matter of compensation in the organisation, the participants were firstly asked their perception of compensation in the organisation (question 2.6.1 in the interview guide). Participants were then asked to explain whether they felt there is a fair relationship between workload and compensation in the organisation (question 2.6.2 in the interview guide). Lastly, participants were asked to elaborate on whether they felt there is a fair relationship between employee's skills and compensation received (question 2.6.3 in the interview guide). The findings relating to the above mentioned questions will be discussed below.

5.2.6.1   Perceptions pertaining to compensation

Of the 20 participants, eleven had negative views on compensation in the organisation (P1; P2; P6; P8; P10; P12; P14; P15; P17; P19; P20), with seven participants believing compensation to be fair and reasonable (P3; P4; P5; P9; P11; P13; P16). The remaining two

participants chose not to comment on the matter (P7; P18). Findings relating to the negative perceptions will firstly be discussed, followed by the findings relating to those who believed compensation to be fair.

5.2.6.1.1 Negative perceptions

When discussing the reasons for their negative perceptions relating to compensation in the organisation, two categories emerged from the data, namely (a) "inadequate remuneration", and (b) "employee benefits". These categories will be discussed below.

(a) Inadequate remuneration

All eleven of the participants who expressed negative views on compensation in the organisation believed the remuneration offered to simply be inadequate to meet their financial needs. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P8	Black, Male	Technical

"I would really like to see more pay, if I am 100% honest. Remember…if you really value someone, you will pay them properly. I think the pay can be better here. The company is doing well here, they need to put a bit more of the profits into the employees, instead of sending it all back to China" (P8).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P15	Black, Male	Technical

"…it's really not a nice salary…. I think they could pay more, so it matches the effort we put in to our work. It needs to be higher in my eyes" (P15).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"They don't pay us enough here. They don't pay the average worker enough for him to meet the financial needs in his life. You can't raise a family, pay food, rent, school fees and everything else, on what some of the people earn here. It's just not enough" (P19).

With more than half of the participants expressing that the compensation offered by the organisation was insufficient, it is perhaps an important area for management to consider addressing. The findings suggest that the organisation may potentially not be managing issues relating to compensation effectively. The researcher further observed the disgruntled tone a number of participants (P1; P8; P19) used when answering this question. The researcher further noted that more complaints were received from the lower level employees, with supervisory and managerial employees seeming more content with their compensation. P1, a manager, demonstrated strong negative feelings on the matter, believing the compensation received by her lower level staff to be insufficient: "…it's ridiculous. It's basically below the bread line" (P1).

(b) Employee benefits

A number of employees raised the issue of employee benefits when discussing their dissatisfaction with the compensation offered (P1; P6; P10; P19; P20). This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P1	Coloured, Female	manager

"Maybe if they would start implementing benefits and medical aids, you understand. We have got nothing of that. If you walk out this door, then that is it. There is no provident fund, nothing…. Maybe you will still have leave days they will still pay out, but that is basically it - no benefits whatsoever" (P1).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P6	Black, Male	Technical

"But things like pension is important. Some people have been here for a long time…not like me…and they still sitting without this stuff. Why man? I think they need to change that. We don't want to work our whole life, and sit with a state pension" (P6).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"They need to bring in employee benefits here. Not just for management and certain people, but for everyone. We all work hard here, and it's important we can all be taken care of if we get sick and when we need to retire. These are benefits all employees deserve, and it bugs me it's not the case here…only top managers get pension and medical aid. Not even my supervisor gets." (P19).

The findings indicated a number of employees were disgruntled with the fact that employee benefits are not offered to all staff members. It emerged that only senior managerial employees received employee benefits, most notably a pension fund and medical aid contributions. Despite the fact that no direct question was raised on the matter, the issue was repeatedly brought up by participants. P19, a male technical employee, explained that is was an issue to so many employees as it "means more than just not having the money you want now. It is something that affects your future, your family's future, and the health and safety of your family who need good healthcare." P10, a male technical employee, noted that the lack of basic benefits was causing him to lose respect for the organisation, which was perceived by the researcher to negatively affect his commitment. He commented: "Why must I sit here, dedicate my life to this job, and they can't even make provisions for our retirement one day? And what if my kids get sick? I can't afford medical aid for all of us, not from my salary." The findings therefore indicate that the organisation is perhaps overlooking the matter of employee benefits, or underestimating the value employees place on them.

5.2.6.1.2 Fair perceptions

Despite the fact that eleven of the participants who responded to the question relating to perceptions of compensation in the organisation believed compensation to be inadequate (P1; P2; P6; P8; P10; P12; P14; P15; P17; P19; P20), with no participants demonstrating any positive feelings, seven of participants described the compensation received as fair and reasonable (P3; P4; P5; P9; P11; P13; P16). This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P5	White, Male	Supervisor

"I think our compensation in this company is fine. It's enough to cover our costs and keep coming back to work here" (P5).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P11	White, Male	Technical

"The money we receive here to certainly nothing impressive and everyone would say they need more. But I think most people battle, no matter where you work. I would say the compensation here to fair for us" (P11).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P12	Black, Male	Technical

"I get enough. My bills get paid on time and I can look after the people I need to."

The findings indicate that although the majority of those who commented were dissatisfied, it is clear that certain participants found their compensation satisfactory. Those who found their compensation to be satisfactory were diversified across the organisation, and did not only represent senior level employees. Perceptions pertaining to compensation can be assumed to be highly influenced by personal situations and expectations. This is touched on by P9: "It all depends on the person you see. I can be earning the same as another person, but if that person

has kids to feed, and more pressures in his life, he will see the salary as very different to me" (P9).

5.2.6.2 Workload and compensation received

Of the 20 participants, eight participants were of the general opinion that workload and compensation received in the organisation were aligned (P3; P5; P10; P11; P13; P14; P17; P20). These general views were however not elaborated upon. Eight of the participants (P1; P2; P4; P6; P8; P12; P15; P19) however raised issues which will be categorised as (a) "insufficient compensation" and (b) "carrying the load". The remaining four participants held neutral views or did not comment on the matter. The categories will be discussed below.

(a) Insufficient compensation

A number of participants felt that the compensation they received was not adequately aligned with their workload (P1; P2; P6; P8; P15; P19). This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P6	Black, Male	Technical

"I think management sometimes underestimates how much we do, which means pay can maybe become unfair, and they don't even realise it" (P6).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P8	Black, Male	Technical

"I don't think so. I work very hard, and feel I deserve more than what I am seeing. The relationship is not there in my eyes. Management must sit and look closely at these things" (P8).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"I don't feel we earn enough to make what work we put in, no. We work long hours, and it can be very hard and tiring work. It sometimes doesn't feel right. After a long day, you feel you should be able to take home more to your family, not peanuts" (P19).

The findings indicate that many participants perceived that the work they put into the organisation was not adequately aligned with the compensation received. This led to many negative feelings, with three of the participants appearing particularly disgruntled to the researcher (P6; P15; P19). These participants felt they should either have less of a workload, or receive higher compensation. As technical employees are not rewarded for performance or output, some of the participants felt that their hard work was not noticed or rewarded. The findings indicate that the organisation may not be doing enough in the eyes of many employees, in effectively evaluating and rewarding performance and workload.

(b) Carrying the workload

A number of participants felt that although compensation was evenly distributed, the workload was not (P4; P6; P12; P19). This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P4	Coloured, Male	Technical

"I get the feeling though that sometimes, people keep their head down, and keep to themselves. But actually they aren't doing so much work, while others carry the load and do so much more work, for the same pay. They need to keep a closer eye on things like that, and those who work harder must be recognised for it, in my view" (P4).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"I do think that some people do more work than others, and management doesn't care or doesn't notice, just as long as the work gets done. If the work gets done, then they have done their job. But this is really not fair on the people who must sit and do more work than those around them. This can make me very cross at those that aren't doing what they must, and for management who isn't doing their job in watching it" (P19).

The findings indicate that the management in the organisation may not be effectively supervising the distribution of the workload. This is perceived often to result in certain employees working harder than others, in order to ensure the work tasks are completed on time. This is seen as unfair by certain participants and is believed by the researcher to potentially be a cause of conflict in the organisation.

5.2.6.3 Employee skills and compensation received

Of the 20 participants, twelve indicated that there was a fair relationship between employee's skills and compensation received (P2; P4; P5; P6; P7; P9; P11; P12; P13; P16; P17; P20) . Five of the participants can be seen to have held negative views (P3; P8; P10; P15; P19), with the remaining three participants holding neutral views (P1; P14; P18). Those who believed the relationship to be fair are highlighted by the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P2	Black, Female	Technical

"Not one person here can just walk away without it causing problems…they will be missed you see, because we are all important here and all have some skills that is needed" (P2).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P5	White, Male	Supervisor

 "People have different skills in different areas. To say one person is better or more skilled will not be a fair comment. We all work together and all have different skills and experiences

we bring to the business. So our skills might not all be the same, but everyone has some skills that earns them their pay. So it's a fair relationship" (P5).

The findings indicate that the majority of the participants felt that there was a fair relationship between an employee's skills and compensation received. This indicated participants felt their co-workers had the skills required to do their jobs effectively. An issue which however arose with five of the participants was the matter of previous training and education (P3; P8; P10; P15; P19). It emerged that technical employees received the same remuneration, this despite the fact that certain employees are perceived to be better trained or educated. This is seen in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P10	Coloured, Male	Technical

"But I have a diploma, paid a lot of money for it, and worked hard for it. Okay, it is not some fancy engineering degree, but the course I did was really not easy. My dad paid all that money himself. I am glad I did it, and it has really helped me…but I don't see any more money than other people, even if they don't have a matric. So that is not so fair" (P10).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P15	Black, Male	Technical

"Again ja I think it just needs to be higher, because I am a qualified technician…so ja. I have all the skills to do the work. Some of the people here aren't qualified, but get the same" (P15).

The participants indicated concerns regarding their previous training and education not being fully recognised by the organisation, often leading to feelings of frustration. The participants felt it of importance that the organisation's leadership consider revaluating employee compensation, and perhaps take into consideration the employees' background, skill set, experience and qualifications.

To summarise, eleven of the 20 participants had negative perceptions pertaining to their compensation, highlighting that they believed their compensation to be inadequate and that it needed to be revised so as to include employee benefits. Seven of the 20 participants did however believe their compensation to be fair and reasonable. When discussing their workload and the compensation they received, eight of the participants believed the relationship to be fair, with eight perceiving it to be unfair. Twelve of the participants believed the relationship with employee skills and compensation to be aligned. Certain participants did however highlight that they felt their previous training and educational qualifications were not sufficiently reflected in their compensation packages.

5.2.7   Promotional opportunities

In order to address the matter of promotional opportunities, participants were asked to explain their promotional opportunities, and their feelings in that regard (question 2.7.1 in the interview guide). Of the 20 participants, fifteen demonstrated a negative outlook on their promotional opportunities in the organisation (P1; P2; P3; P4; P6; P7; P8; P9; P10; P13; P14; P15; P16; P18; P19), with the remaining five expressing neutral feelings on the matter (P5; P11; P12; P17; P20). None of the participants expressed positive outlooks. Following the analysis of the interview transcripts, two categories emerged from the data when participants discussed the causes of their negative outlook on their promotional opportunities: namely (a) "limited positions" and (b) "ambiguity". The categories are demonstrated in Table 5.6, and are then discussed below.

Table 5.6: Negative categories for promotional opportunities

Category	Participants
(a) Limited positions	P1; P3; P6; P8; P9; P13; P19
(b) Ambiguity	P2; P4; P10; P19; P20

(a) Limited positions

Participants expressed that the limited number of senior positions available within the organisation caused negative feelings relating to their promotional opportunities. This is highlighted by the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P9	Black, Male	Technical

"We can get promoted. But it doesn't happen often. There are lots of us here in technical…but how many positions are management? Not many at all. So this can be a problem, and something which worries me…because I want a change and I want to grow" (P9).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P13	White, Female	Management

"There is not a lot of movement inside the company, and there aren't that many senior positions available. The company is also not that large. So it can take a long time to get a promotion, and many people may never see a promotion if they stay with us. Not because they don't want to give them one, but because there isn't one to give" (P13).

These feelings may possibly be intensified for employees working in the smaller branch offices, due to their size and limited number of positions. P1, a female manager, commented in this regard and explained that the promotional opportunities in the smaller branches were very limited due to their size, causing employees to remain in their current positions indefinitely. She highlighted that, as a result, she was not expecting smaller branch employees to receive any future promotions. The researcher observed that certain participants appeared particularly disgruntled when discussing promotional opportunities (P1; P3; P19). A possible reason for the lack of promotional opportunities in the organisation can be that the organisation's senior management are Chinese employees. This is perceived to greatly hamper the South African employee's ability to receive future promotions.

(b)   Ambiguous career path and promotional opportunities

A number of participants commented on the lack of clarity with regard to their future careers as being a cause of negative feelings relating to their promotional opportunities in the organisation. This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P4	Coloured, Male	Technical

"The problem is we don't know what our path is. We don't know what opportunities there are for us in the future, they don't explain anything like this to us. It does not feel like there is a career here" (P4).

The general feeling of the participants was that they were unsure of their future path in the organisation, which often led to feelings of frustration and discomfort. The findings therefore indicate that, due to the high number of participants who highlighted the ambiguity of their promotional opportunities, the organisation may not be managing employee's careers and orientation into the organisation effectively.

To summarise, the majority of participants demonstrated concern for their future careers, many of whom indicated a desire to progress in the organisation but felt that they were unable to do so. Two categories emerged from the data as causes for such feelings, notably the limited number of senior positions available in the organisation, as well as the ambiguity surrounding employees' career paths.

5.2.8   Shared values

In order to address the topic of shared values, participants were firstly asked to highlight their understanding of the values of the organisation (question 2.8.1 in the interview guide). Participants were then asked to explain their personal alignment with the organisation's values (question 2.8.2 in the interview guide), and how they experience the implementation of these values (question 2.8.3 in the interview guide). Lastly, participants were asked to explain any changes in how they would like the organisation's values to be managed

(question 2.8.4 in the interview guide). The findings relating to the above mentioned questions will be discussed below.

5.2.8.1 Understanding of the organisation's values

All 20 of the participants gave an indication of their understanding of the organisation's values. The participants' responses to their understanding of the organisation's values were diversified, as the organisation seemed to have no clear set of values, or formal value statement. Key value categories however emerged from the data and are shown in Table 5.7 below, and then discussed below.

Table 5.7: Perceived organisational values

Value	Participants
(a) Quality	P1; P4; P5; P6; P13; P19; P20
(b) Service	P5; P6; P11; P13; P14; P16; P17
(c) Results	P2; P3; P8; P9; P12; P20

(a) Quality

A number of participants highlighted quality as an important value for the organisation. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P4	Coloured, Male	Technical

 "They tell us quality is everything here. If we send out a unit that is not perfect quality, there will be huge problems, my friend" (P4).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P20	White, Male	Manager

"Quality is definitely one of their most important values. They will never want to send out a product that isn't of its best possible quality. They budget for lots of testing and quality control in order to make sure this happens" (P20).

The organisation appeared to be focused on high quality standards. Participants commented that the organisation is highly focused on maintaining and constantly improving quality standards, and breaking away from the stigma of being a "cheap Chinese brand" (P19). P1, a female manager, confirmed the high importance placed on quality, and discussed how the organisation cancelled a contract with a Chinese company which previously produced some of its products, in order to open and run a South African manufacturing plant, which would ensure higher quality standards. The findings therefore indicate that quality is a core value of the organisation, and its leadership takes great care to ensure high quality standards are met.

 (b)   Service

A number of participants perceived service to be a key value of the organisation. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P5	White, Male	Supervisor

"Service is important, and giving our customers the best service possible is important. This is why the company has established their own service centres in major cities. Our competition cannot say that. If they have problems with their units, they don't care…just get the retailer to send it off to a repair shop. Our service is important, we fix any units at our own centres, and make sure its back in the customers hands as quickly as possible" (P5).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P17	White, Male	Supervisor

"When I think about the values here, service is definitely something that comes to mind. The managers here take service very seriously. Customer service is very important, and the managers make sure that the service centres around are set up so that any complaints or faults gets fixed very quickly. When I came in, I was told customer service is the most important thing. If service is good, they will come back. I think we one of the best companies when it comes to service for the customers" (P17).

The findings indicate that service is a core value of the organisation. The organisation has, at great expense, invested in service centres in major South African cities. The organisation is the only one in its industry to have set up such centres across the country, ensuring customer complaints and repairs are dealt with faster than competitors. These centres prove the organisation's commitment to customer service, and ensure that customer service remains a high priority.

(c)   Results

The third category which emerged from the data was that of results. The term "results" is used to broadly refer to sales, manufacturing output and general organisational performance. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P9	Black, Male	Technical

"The company wants to see sales, sales, sales. They set high goals and want us to achieve them. They want us to make the production targets, and what will keep the standards high" (P9).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P12	Black, Male	Technical

"The company is very results driven. It's important to them that we see results from our work. They want increased sales every year. And we are getting this. But to be able to see physical achievements they can take back to head office is very important" (P12).

The findings suggest that the organisation is results driven, and indicates that results are a core value in the organisation. The organisation appears to encourage employees to "push themselves" (P12) in order to constantly improve results and organisational performance.

5.2.8.2   Alignment with values

Of the 20 participants, 12 participants felt their values were aligned with those of the organisation (P1; P2; P4; P5; P11; P12; P13; P16; P17; P18; P19; P20), while eight participants had mixed feelings on the matter (P3; P6; P7; P8; P9; P10; P14; P15).

The participants who highlighted an alignment with the organisation's values are demonstrated in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P5	White, Male	Supervisor

"I agree with them. To establish ourselves as more than a 'Chinese brand', we need these things. I have high standards in my personal life, therefore I agree with a company that has high standards in the work place. Who will want to work for a company that just doesn't care about their customers? Not me! I take pride in my personal life, and pride in the work I do" (P5).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P20	White, Male	Manager

"I feel like the values are the same between myself and he company. I am also a very results driven person. I don't want to waste my own time, and the company's time. I will push for

results. And if the results are there for the company, it is obviously good for all the employee's too. Their success is ours too" (P20).

The findings revealed that these participants felt a general alignment with the organisation's values, often demonstrating an understanding of the importance of the perceived organisational values which were highlighted in Table 5.7.

Based on the eight participants who had mixed views regarding their alignment with the organisation's values, a key category emerged, namely "employees". Four of the eight participants expressed that the organisation needs to place greater value on their employees (P3; P6; P8; P14). This is highlighted in the following quotations from two of the participants:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P6	Black, Male	Technical

"They need to remember that although the customer is king, employees are just as important. We need to be valued. We need to be valued if we going to feel committed. It must work both ways. I think we often get overlooked and forgotten about; nothing can happen without us. Everything starts with the employees who are at work behind the scene all the time" (P6).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P8	Black, Male	Technical

"They need to remember that it's more than just a business though, it's like a home for many people. We have put years and years into this place. I think they can forget about us sometimes, and just put money and business things first. They need to value us the same as they do profits" (P8).

The findings suggest that a number of participants feel unappreciated in their positions, and often overlooked by the organisation's management. The organisation may not be doing enough to ensure employees understand their importance in the organisation. The

organisation may need to formally recognise the importance of employees, and ensure it is highlighted in a formal set of organisational values.

5.2.8.3   Implementation of organisational values

Of the 20 participants, 17 commented on the matter of the implementation of the organisation's values. These responses will be aligned with the perceived organisational values, as identified in Table 5.7. The participant's experiences regarding the implementation of each of the identified values are highlighted below.

(a)   Quality

Participants (P4; P6; P13; P20) indicated that the organisation was effective in implementing the perceived value of quality. The organisation reportedly has strict "quality controls" (P20) in order to ensure product quality remains at the highest possible standard. The organisation only uses tested parts of a high standard, and ensures employees are accountable for the standard of their products. All employees are believed to be made aware of the importance of quality standards in the organisation. P20 further highlighted the use of "international inspectors" in order to do random sampling and testing of the products leaving the assembly line. These tests are used to compile quality reports, which are analysed by the organisation's Beijing head office.

(b)   Service

Participants (P3; P5; P8; P11; P16; P17) indicated that the organisation successfully implemented the perceived value of service. This is done with the use of "national service centres" (P11), "extended service warrantees" (P17) on products, and the use of "efficient and friendly staff" (P11). These strategies are believed to ensure that service standards remain an important value for the organisation.

(c) Results

Participants felt the organisation has been successful in implementing its perceived results orientated value (P3; P9; P12; P20). This is done with the use of a "driven sales team", strict "manufacturing targets" (P12), "performance reviews" (P20) and effective "marketing strategies" (P12). A participant commented in this regard:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P20	White, Male	Manager

"The company is all about its results. They want to see on paper what you have achieved in a given amount of time. If they can't see that, there will be problems. They have strict targets for the sales teams, and for the manufacturing supervisors. Those targets are actually a minimum for them, they want to see initiative to beat those targets" (P20).

5.2.8.4   Changes in how the organisation's values are managed

Of the 20 participants, thirteen indicated that they did not see a need for a change in how the organisation's values are managed (P1; P5; P7; P8; P9; P10; P11; P12; P13; P15; P16; P18; P20). Six of the participants indicated a need for change (P2; P3; P4; P6; P14; P19), while one participant did not comment on the matter (P17). The findings from those participants who indicated that they would like to see a change, once again revealed the category of "employees", as discussed in Section 5.2.8.2.   Participants highlighted the need for the organisation to refocus its values, so as to clearly demonstrate the value it places on all of its employees (P2; P3; P4; P6; P14; P19). In order to avoid repetition, the category will not be discussed, as no new findings were revealed.

In summary, the participants highlighted three perceived core organisational values, namely quality, service and results. The majority of the participants felt that their personal values were aligned with those of the organisation. The majority of the participants felt that the organisation's values have been successfully implemented, with most of them believing the organisation should not change how the organisation's values are managed. A number of

participants did however indicate a need for the organisation to focus its values so as to place greater importance on employees.

5.3   FINDINGS PERTAINING TO PERSPETIVES ON COMMITMENT

The second objective of this study aimed to identify and describe current commitment levels amongst local employees in the organisation being studied (Chapter One, Section 1.2). In order to address this objective, the participants were first asked to provide their definition of commitment (question 3.1 in the interview guide (Appendix A)). Questions were then posed with the intention of gaining an understanding of the participant's perceived levels of commitment, which will be broadly compared to Meyer and Allen's (1991) three component model of commitment. This was done through question 3.2 in the interview guide, which attempted to gain an indication of the participant's perceived affective commitment, question 3.3 which attempted to gain an indication of the participant's perceived normative commitment, as well as question 3.4 in the interview guide, which attempted to gain an indication of the participant's perceived continuance commitment to the organisation. The participants were then asked how they would rate their commitment (question 3.5 in the interview guide).

The interview was brought to a close by once again addressing the first objective of this study (Chapter One, Section 1.2), as well as the third objective, namely to propose recommendations to improve local employee commitment and its implications for the appropriate management of human resources (Chapter One, Section 1.2). Participants were given a chance to reflect on the interview, and discuss what they believed the organisation could do to enhance their commitment (question 3.6 in the interview guide). The interviewees were lastly asked which factors they considered to be the most significant in influencing their commitment (question 3.7 in the interview guide). The findings relating to the above mentioned questions will be discussed below.

5.3.1 The understanding of the concept commitment

The question regarding the participants' understanding of commitment (question 3.1 in the interview guide) attempted to gain insight into how the participants viewed and defined commitment. This was done so as to ensure that participants had an understanding of what the concept meant, and to further understand what the concept meant to them personally. All 20 of the participants answered the question regarding their understanding of commitment. Participants generally demonstrated a strong understanding of the concept. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P10	Coloured, Male	Technical

 "Okay, it is like, if you are committed to something, you are dedicated to it and respect it. If you have commitment to something, then you can see it is important and valuable to you. If you are committed, like I am, you will be passionate about your work. You care about the business's success; you make it a part of you" (P10).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P13	White, Female	Supervisor

 "If you show a commitment to your boss or your company, it means you have committed to doing your best that you can do, and working hard in the job they have put you in. You want to stay there" (P13).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P16	White, Female	Manager

 "It is like a 'want', you want to be somewhere, or with someone or doing something. It is related to loyalty. If you are loyal to something, you will be committed to it. A commitment to a company will mean you will do more than they even ask of you, if it will help the company" (P16).

The researcher was satisfied that all of the participants demonstrated a sufficient understanding of the concept. Participants generally understood the concept to involve a "devotion" (P19), "dedication" (P10) and "loyalty" (P16) to the organisation. It was generally believed to involve wanting to remain employed by the organisation (P13), and caring about the organisation's success (P10).

5.3.2 Levels of commitment

Questions were posed with the intention to gain an understanding of the participants' perceived levels of commitment to the organisation. Participants were first asked to elaborate on whether they felt emotionally attached to the organisation and "part of the family" (question 3.2 in the interview guide). Participants were then asked if they felt an obligation to their co-workers and the organisation to continue working for the organisation (question 3.3 in the interview guide). Participants were then asked to describe the implications leaving the organisation would have for them personally (question 3.4 in the interview guide). Lastly, the participants were asked to rate their own commitment to the organisation (question 3.5 in the interview guide). The findings relating to these questions will be discussed below.

5.3.2.1   Emotional attachment

All of the participants responded to the question relating to their emotional attachment to the organisation. The findings were very positive. Of the 20 participants, sixteen stated that they felt an emotional attachment to the organisation and "part of the family" (P1; P2; P3; P4; P5; P6; P7; P8; P9; P10; P13; P14; P15; P16; P18; P20). Three participants expressed neutral views on the matter (P11; P12; P17), with only one participant who was perceived to not be emotionally attached to the organisation (P19). The emotional attachment perceived by the participants is demonstrated in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P10	Coloured, Male	Technical

"Yes I am. Like my supervisor sees me as a kid. And I have lots of friends here, really I do. So it is like a family in a way, I guess. It is nice to be a part of everything here" (P10).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P16	White, Female	Manager

"Yes, very much. I am very emotionally involved with the company and its people. After you work at a place for long enough, it becomes a part of you. You get to know the people you work with on a personal level, and then the job and the people become a part of your life" (P16).

The findings indicate that the large majority of the participants demonstrated a clear and strong emotional attachment to the organisation, possibly demonstrating high levels of affective commitment. Participants described how it was "more than just work" (P20), and described an emotional attachment to their colleagues in the organisation, as well as an "attachment to the brand" (P10). P1, a female manager, described how their branch operated as a "family", and was seen as a close "click" by the head office. The researcher observed a sense of pride in her when she described the closeness, friendship and bond between the branch employees. This mentality is perceived by the researcher to greatly promote her commitment to the organisation as a whole.

P19, a male technical employee, was the only participant who did not demonstrate an emotional attachment to the organisation. He highlighted that he saw it as "just a job" in which he could receive a salary, and did not feel a strong attachment to the organisation.

5.3.2.2   Obligation to continue

All 20 of the participants responded to the question relating to their obligatory feelings to the organisation. The responses were relatively mixed, with eleven participants highlighting that

they to some extent, felt an obligation to the organisation and/or their co-workers to continue working for the organisation (P1; P2; P4; P5; P8; P9; P13; P14; P15; P16; P20). Seven of the participants demonstrated they did not feel an obligation to continue working for the organisation (P3; P6; P7; P10; P12; P18; P19), with the remaining two participants expressing neutral views on the matter (P11; P17).

Of the participants who highlighted that they felt an obligation to continue working for the organisation, three of these participants (P5; P15; P20) indicated that they felt grateful to the organisation for giving them the opportunity to work there. This is seen in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P15	Black, Male	Technical

"Yes I do feel that way in a way. If I got offered a better job somewhere else, and wouldn't just take it without thinking hard about it first. This company gave me work and an opportunity when I wouldn't find work anywhere else. That means something for me." (P15).

The findings suggest that these participants (P5; P15; P20) felt a moral obligation to the organisation, based on the fact that the organisation provided them with full-time work when they needed it. P15 indicated that he would therefore be hesitant in leaving the organisation, even if he was offered a comparatively better job elsewhere.

P1, a female manager, provided further insight into her obligatory feelings to remain with the organisation. She explained that when she was diagnosed with cancer, the organisation's head office committed to assisting her wherever possible. The organisation made a vehicle and a driver available to her for as long as she needed it, and agreed to pay for any treatment that was required. She explained that she has not been the only employee to benefit from the organisation in such a way, and highlighted that many of her co-workers were assisted by the organisation when they were in a difficult situation. The perceived generosity was given as "a gift" (P1) by the organisation. The researcher observed that she took great pride in discussing the perceived kindness of the organisation, which seemed to greatly promote her organisational commitment.

Three participants further highlighted their co-workers as an important factor in influencing their obligatory feelings to remain with the organisation (P8; P13; P20). This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P13	White, Female	Supervisor

I feel very close with the people I work with. I wouldn't want to quit my job today and never see them again. Most of us have worked together for a long time, and this means something. There's a history…we work well and rely on each other" (P13).

The findings suggest some of the participants consider their relationship with their co-workers as an important factor in remaining with the organisation. P13 emphasised that the employees often rely on each other, and have enjoyed a long-standing working relationship together. The employees are perceived to work well together as a team, and show support for one another (P8). This in turn is perceived by the researcher to promote their sense of commitment to the organisation as a whole.

The participants who highlighted that they did not feel an obligation to continue working for the organisation (P3; P6; P7; P10; P12; P18; P19) generally believed that the organisation and the co-workers would cope without them, and they remain with the organisation because they wish to do so. This is seen in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P3	White, Male	Technical

"No I would not say it's an obligation. I stay because I know it's the best for myself. I must look after myself, and my family. A small obligation yes, because I understand I am needed here. But if a better job was given to me, I would not say 'no' because I have an obligation to stay here for the rest of my life. But I will stay because I know it's the best thing for me now" (P3).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"I don't feel an obligation to be here. If I get something better, everyone will understand. It won't be an issue with anyone" (P19).

The participants (P3; P6; P7; P10; P12; P18; P19) were perceived to feel no major psychological contract to continue working for the organisation. The participants were furthermore believed to be able to place their own needs above those of the organisation. These participants were perceived to demonstrate less normative commitment than those who stated they felt an obligation to continue working for the organisation.
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5.3.2.3   Implications of leaving

All 20 of the participants responded to the question pertaining to their perceived implications of leaving the organisation. The implications perceived by the participants can be categorised into (a) "new employment", and (b) "missing job".

(a)   New employment

Nine of the participants (P2; P3; P4; P5; P6; P9; P12; P14; P19) highlighted that the ability to find replacement employment would be a serious implication of leaving their current position in the organisation. This is seen in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P9	Black, Male	Technical

"It is not easy to find work these days. You can't just leave and assume that there will be a job waiting for you outside. You must think carefully about these things. Millions of people are fighting for jobs in South Africa" (P9).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P12	Black, Male	Technical

"Well I would have to find another job. This can take a long time, and then how can I meet all my expenses in this time? I can't just take a break from work, and take a break from my family and all the expenses I have. I am already under lots of stress there. I don't know how I would cope with that" (P12).

The findings suggest that the participants were generally concerned about their ability to find new employment, should they choose to leave the organisation. P12 emphasised his financial obligations, and how difficult it would be to meet these obligations should he not find work immediately after leaving the organisation. The researcher noted the stressful tones certain participants exuded while discussing the matter (P4; P9; P12). The participants' lack of confidence in finding alternative employment is perceived by the researcher to increase their continuance commitment to the organisation.

(b) Missing the job

A number of participants (P1; P4; P10; P13; P16; P20) highlighted that an implication for them leaving their job would be the fact that they would miss their work. This is seen in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P17	White, Male	Supervisor

"I would miss coming here, and being a part of the business. I would also miss everyone I work with. I feel I have a future here in this company, so I would not be in a hurry to leave" (P17).

These participants generally felt that they would miss their working environment, as well as the people they worked with. This is perceived by the researcher to increase their commitment to the organisation.

5.3.2.4   Perceptions on levels of commitment

The findings relating to the participants' perceived levels of commitment were very positive. All 20 of the participants responded to the question. Although the responses were often brief, the findings revealed insight into how the participants viewed their own commitment. Participants' perceived commitment levels will be categorised according to the following categories, (a) "strong", (b) "moderate" and (c) "weak". This is demonstrated in the following Table 5.8, and then discussed below.

Table 5.8: Commitment levels

(a) Strong	P1; P2; P3; P4; P5; P6; P7; P8; P9; P13; P14; P15; P16; P18; P20
(b) Moderate	P10; P11; P12; P17
(c) Weak	P19

(a)   Strong commitment levels

Fifteen out of the 20 participants suggested that they perceived their commitment to the organisation to be strong. This is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P15	Black, Male	Technical

"I am committed and loyal to the company. I definitely, I would definitely say that" (P15).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P16	White, Female	Manager

"Highly committed. The company is very important to me, and I take a lot of care when I do my work. So yeah, it is high. And I think the people around me would agree with that, and acknowledge that I am committed to my work. I will never do the minimum" (P16).

The findings suggest that although certain participants may have raised issues or concerns in the interview, the large majority of the participants still highlighted that they felt they were deeply committed to the organisation.

(b)   Moderate commitment levels

Four of the 20 participants indicated that they felt a moderate commitment to the organisation. This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P12	Black, Male	Technical

"I am definitely committed here. If I'm honest maybe not as much as some of the managers, but obviously they will be more committed. I you say I must rate my commitment, let's say maybe six or seven maybe out of ten" (P12).

Although these participants did not demonstrate that their commitment was as high as the participants discussed in the previous category, the participants still demonstrated a healthy degree of commitment to the organisation.

(c)   Weak commitment levels

Only one participant demonstrated a weak commitment to the organisation (P19). This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"I'm not sure how to rate it. If I am straight with you, I'll actually say I'm not truly committed. There have been challenges here for me, and I would probably change my job if I could find something else" (P19).

The findings suggest that P19 experienced a lower level of commitment to the organisation than the rest of the participants. The researcher observed his slightly disgruntled body language when answering the question. The participant indicated that he was relatively unhappy working in the organisation, and would seriously consider leaving the organisation, should another job become available elsewhere.

5.3.3   Enhancing commitment levels

The participants were asked to please explain what they felt the organisation could do to enhance their commitment levels (question 3.6 in the interview guide). Three key categories emerged from the data, namely (a) "compensation", (b) "training" and (c) "recognition". These categories are demonstrated in Table 5.9, and then discussed below.

Table 5.9: Enhancing commitment categories

(a) Compensation	P1; P2; P6; P8; P12; P14; P17; P19
(b) Training	P7; P10; P11; P17
(c) Recognition	P3; P4; P9; P15; P20

(a)   Compensation

The topic that was raised the most by the participants when responding to this question was that of compensation, being highlighted by eight participants (P1; P2; P6; P8; P12; P14; P17; P19). This is demonstrated by the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P12	Black, Male	Technical

"They need to address the issues of salaries. Lots of people here aren't happy with what they earning. People will be a lot more committed to their work if they earning more, and earning what they think they must be earning. They say we are, but I don't feel we earning a market related wage. The must look at the whole package, and give everyone the benefits they need too" (P12).

Eight participants raised the issue of compensation. P12 felt that the organisation needs to re-evaluate their salaries, and feels the current salaries received by the organisation's employees are not market related. P17, a male supervisor, felt strongly about the fact that if the organisation's employees were earning what they thought was fair, they would be more committed to the organisation. The issue relating to the lack of employee benefits was once again raised (P17; P19). The findings suggest that employee benefits are of great importance to these participants, who feel the inclusion of these benefits to their salary package would increase their commitment to the organisation.

(b) Training

Four participants (P7; P10; P11; P17) indicated that they felt increased training opportunities in the organisation would increase their commitment. This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P11	White, Male	Technical

"Some training, increased opportunities for us to learn and train would help us to all be more committed. If we can train with the company, we will respect it more. The training can be inside the company with trainers, or even at a college, but giving us this opportunity to train and learn new things will build us. I know lots of the guys want it" (P11).

The findings suggest that P11 felt strongly that an increase in training opportunities in the organisation would increase his, and other employees' commitment. The participants generally felt that increased training would create future opportunities, which they might not

otherwise have. The creation of such future opportunities would then in turn promote the employees' confidence in themselves and their future in the organisation (P17).

(c) Recognition

The third category which emerged was that of recognition. Five participants (P3; P4; P9; P15; P20) believed that increased recognition from the organisation and its management would increase their commitment to the organisation. This is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P9	Black, Male	Technical

"They need to recognise employees who are doing well, and give them a chance. Sometime I feel people go unnoticed here. It's not a good feeling when you work really hard on something, and get nothing for it. So some kind of recognition for the staff would make the staff work better, and I'm sure make them committed. If it's just a thank you, or a small bonus, or some kind of promotion for those who have worked hard for a long time. Any reward is better than nothing" (P9).

The findings suggest that P9 feels employees often go unnoticed in the organisation. He feels that should the organisation recognise the efforts and accomplishments of its employees more regularly, it would have a positive effect on their feelings and commitment to the organisation. Possible ways to recognise employees, as suggested by the participants, include the implementation of performance bonuses (P3; P20), non-monetary rewards, such as extra leave days (P17), promotions (P20), and simple words of gratitude from the managers (P4; P20).

5.3.4 Factors which influence levels of commitment

The final question of the interview guide asked the participants to explain the factors they felt influenced their commitment to the organisation (question 3.7 in the interview guide). All 20 of the participants answered the question, with some of the participants highlighting what

they believed to be the most important factor to them, and others highlighting multiple factors. Table 5.10 below demonstrates the factors highlighted by the participants. The factors will then be discussed below. In order to avoid repetition, factors which have been previously discussed will not be discussed in detail, unless new findings emerged from the question.

Table 5.10: Factors influencing participants' levels of commitment

Factor	Participants
(a) Compensation	P2; P6; P8; P9; P10; P14; P15; P19
(b) Promotional opportunities	P4; P6; P7; P9; P17; P19
(c) Training and development	P2; P7; P10; P17
(d) Leadership	P8; P13; P16
(e) Job security	P5; P11; P14
(f) Recognition	P3; P11; P15; P20
(g) Trust	P1; P2; P3; P10; P13

    (a)   Compensation

Compensation was the factor highlighted most frequently by participants in response to this question. This aspect is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P19	Black, Male	Technical

"Our salaries will always be the thing that changes our commitment here. Life is not just about money, but it is why we work. Lots of the people here feel they aren't earning enough for the work they do, and aren't getting the benefits they need. So its obvious it will affect their commitment to wanting to stay here" (P19).

The findings suggest that participants generally felt that the compensation they received greatly influenced their commitment to the organisation. Certain participants once again

highlighted that they felt their compensation to be inadequate, and should be revised so as to include employee benefits such as medical scheme and pension fund contributions.

(b) Promotional opportunities

The opportunity to receive a future promotion was the second most frequent factor highlighted by the participants. This aspect is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P6	Black, Male	Technical

"My career is important to me. I want to move forward in my career. Being able to get a promotion in the future, to management or wherever it may be, definitely influences my commitment now" (P6).

Participants generally felt that a clear career path, with known promotional opportunities in the future would positively influence their commitment to the organisation. Six participants (P4; P6; P7; P9; P17; P19) once again however highlighted that they felt there were limited promotional opportunities in the organisation, and their potential career path was ambiguous.

(c) Training and development

The findings suggest that the training and development opportunities in the organisation are a determinant of the participants' commitment to the organisation.

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P17	White, Male	Supervisor

"I think there is high commitment with the staff. But I know employees sometimes feel like they not getting a lot back from the company, and want to move forward a bit. If there are more training opportunities and ways for them to grow themselves as employees, it will

prove the company values the staff, and I think it will increase their commitment and general happiness here" (P17).

Although only four of the participants (P2; P7; P10; P17) highlighted training and development as a factor they consider to influence their commitment, these participants were perceived to feel strongly on the matter. The participants believed that training and development opportunities for the employees will show a commitment on behalf of the organisation, and will therefore positively affect the employee's feelings about the organisation.

(d) Job security

The findings suggest that the perceived job security of the participants in the organisation influences their commitment to the organisation. This aspect is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P5	White, Male	Supervisor

"Job security is very important. Like I said, I am feeling secure…but if I wasn't, it would be a different story. I can't imagine it being easy to be completely committed to a company, like I am, if you feel your job is constantly on the line" (P5).

Three participants (P5; P11; P14) generally felt that the perception that they have a permanent, secure position in the organisation has a positive influence on their commitment to it. Participants generally felt that committing to the organisation is easier "if they commit to us first" (P11). The findings suggest that the majority of participants felt secure in their current positions.

(e) Leadership

The findings suggest that the leadership of the organisation is a strong determinant of the participant's organisational commitment. This aspect is highlighted in the following quotation:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P13	White, Female	Supervisor

"The managers and leaders here will always have an influence on the people here, and how they feel about their jobs. The top managers are really very good here, and inspire people to do their jobs properly. The fact that they are hard working and committed, no doubt changes how employees commit" (P13).

The participants generally felt that how the leaders of the organisation conduct themselves, and how committed they are perceived to be to the organisation, influences employee's organisational commitment. Participants felt that the perceived strong leadership of the organisation inspired them to work harder and be more committed to both the organisation and its leaders (P13; P16).

(f) Recognition

The findings suggest that recognition is an important determinant of organisational commitment. This is demonstrated in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P3	White, Male	Technical

"Gratitude like I say. Just saying 'thank you…good work'. Extra pay for those who have worked very hard. Any kind of a 'thank you', would be appreciated. It doesn't need to only be money or something like that. Just them taking the time to recognise your hard work is enough." (P3).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P15	Black, Male	Technical

"Recognition from the company is important, and I think that should be linked to rewards and help with your career. People sometimes say that they are unnoticed in this company. Its important that we get more than just our salary at the end of the month. Id like to see the managers being thankful, and rewarding those who have done very well. Days off or some other little bonus. It would boost the good feelings towards the company" (P15).

Recognition, a factor which was not included in the theoretical framework, emerged as an important factor influencing participant's commitment to the organisation. Four participants (P3; P11; P15; P20) highlighted that any recognition or gratitude from the organisation and its management would stimulate their positive feelings towards the organisation, and inspire them to work harder. Recognition and associated rewards from the organisation were perceived by the researcher to be of great importance to these participants. Participants suggested that such recognition could be as simple as words of gratitude (P3), or could perhaps include non-monetary rewards such as additional paid leave (P15). The researcher feels that such recognition from the organisation may boost the self-esteem, confidence and ultimately commitment of certain employees.

    (g)   Trust

The findings suggest that the perceived trust the participants have in other employees as well as the organisation's management, influences their commitment to the organisation. This aspect is highlighted in the following quotations:

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P2	Black, Female	Technical

"How you feel about those you work with will change things. Can you trust those around you to do their work, and have your best interests in their heart? You need to be able to trust your

co-workers and your managers. If you living in a world with no trust, there won't be much commitment" (P2).

Participant	Race, Sex	Job category
P10	Coloured, Male	Technical

"You need to be able to have confidence in the company, and everyone you working with. We all rely on each other, so if someone isn't doing their part, it will affect everyone. You need that confidence that everyone can do their work, and that they can trust you to be left alone and do your own work." (P10)

Five of the participants (P1; P2; P3; P10; P13) highlighted that the trust they have in their co-workers and the management of the organisation affects their commitment. Although trust was not included in the theoretical framework, the factor was clearly of great importance to these participants. It was generally felt that as the employees all rely on one another to do their work efficiently, doubt in the abilities of others to do their work would negatively affect the working environment and commitment in the organisation. The participants further believed it of importance for the leaders of the organisation to trust them to perform their jobs independently, as it assists in developing a sense of autonomy.

5.3.5   Summary of the findings pertaining to perceptions on commitment

All the participants in this study showed a sufficient understanding of the concept of commitment. Sixteen (16) of the 20 participants indicated that they felt an emotional attachment to the organisation and felt "part of the family". This may be perceived as a possible indicator of high levels of affective commitment amongst these participants. More than half of the participants further demonstrated that they felt an obligation to continue working for the organisation. This may be perceived as a possible indicator of high levels of normative commitment amongst these participants. Nine of the participants further described their ability to find new employment as a possible implication for them leaving the organisation. This may be perceived to be a possible indicator of high levels of continuance commitment amongst these participants. When directly asked to rate their commitment, the findings concurred with the above perceptions relating to high commitment levels. The large

majority of participant's commitment levels can be regarded as "strong", with four of the participant's commitment levels being regarded as "moderate", with only one being regarded as "weak".

When asked what the organisation could do to enhance their commitment, participants responses were focused on increasing compensation, increasing training opportunities for employees, and increasing the recognition the employees receive from the organisation and its management. When asked which factors they believed influenced their commitment, seven key factors emerged from the responses. Five factors were included in the study's theoretical framework, namely compensation, promotional opportunities, job security, leadership and training and development. Two factors however emerged which were not included in the theoretical framework, namely recognition and trust.

The proceeding section will contribute to the triangulation of data by briefly highlighting certain organisational observations which were noted by the researcher, while spending time in the organisation.

5.4   REFLECTIONS ON ORGANISATIONAL OBSERVATIONS

As discussed in Chapter Four, Section 4.4.2.2, the researcher was given an opportunity by managers to spend time in different branches of the organisation.

The researcher generally noted pleasant and cheerful attitudes in the branches, as employees seemed to function quickly and effectively. While spending time at one of the smaller branches, the researcher observed the importance certain employees place on customer service, concurring with Section 5.2.8.1, in which service was identified as a key value of the organisation. While the researcher was at the branch, an irritable customer arrived with a defective product he had purchased. Despite the fact that the customer could not provide proof of the purchase, and that it may have been out of its warranty, a manager ensured a technician saw to the product immediately. The technician proceeded to fix the product in the workshop, while the customer was invited into the manager's office for a cup of coffee, while they waited for the product to be repaired. The customer appeared pleased with the

"unexpected" level of good service he received, and appeared delighted to have his product repaired free of charge in under 20 minutes.

The researcher furthermore observed the perceived closeness of the employees, particularly in the two smaller branches, as it was evident that they had developed a bond over time. Such findings concur with the feelings of P1, who described employees in her branch as a close "family" or "click" (Section 5.3.2.1).

At the manufacturing facility however, the branch employing the greatest number of employees, the technical employees appeared focused on their work tasks, demonstrating less enjoyment, as compared with the other three branches. In a particular section in the facility, the researcher perceived a great sense of tension amongst employees, who had recently been reprimanded by a manager for not meeting their morning target. Such a finding concurs with the importance the organisation places on results, as discussed in Section 5.2.8.1. It was felt by the researcher that technical employees in the manufacturing facility were not able to exercise the freedom perceived in the other branches. Moreover, it was perceived that such employees worked under highly time sensitive conditions, which may have resulted in increased levels of stress.

While spending time with a manager in the manufacturing facility however, the researcher observed the ease with which employees came into his office to discuss a variety of matters as they arose. Such an observation concurs with the "open door policy" in the organisation, as discussed in Section 5.2.1.

5.5   SUMMARY

In this Chapter, the findings of this research were presented and discussed. The findings of the empirical investigation were presented by referring to question themes and questions posed during the interviews. The findings were supported by quotations from the transcribed interviews, as well as references to the participant observations during the interviews when appropriate. The organisational observations were also highlighted.

Based on the structure of the interview guide, the Chapter was divided into two distinct sections. Section 5.2 discussed the findings pertaining to the proposed eight factors influencing organisational commitment, as identified in the theoretical framework. The factors were separately discussed under Sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.2.6, 5.2.7 and 5.2.8 - each concluding with a summary of the key findings. Section 5.3 discussed the findings relating to the participants' perceived commitment to the organisation. Each interview question posed under this section was discussed under separate subheadings 5.3.1, 5.3.2.1, 5.3.2.2, 5.3.2.3, 5.3.2.4, 5.3.3 and 5.3.4. A summary pertaining to this section was provided in Section 5.3.5. Lastly, the organisational observations were discussed under Section 5.4.

In the concluding Chapter that follows, the summarised findings relating to this Chapter are discussed in relation to the theoretical perspectives outlined in Chapter Two and Chapter Three, and their potential value is assessed. The final research objective of providing pertinent conclusions and recommendations to the organisation is accomplished.

CHAPTER 6
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter Six is the final chapter of this study report. This Chapter will provide a summary of the most significant findings, discuss such findings with the literature presented in Chapters Two and Three, and highlight limitations relating to the research. Based on the findings, recommendations will be made to the organisation studied. Suggestions will then be made for future research and the potential value of this research will be highlighted. Prior to providing the summary and conclusions relating to the findings of this research, the research objectives will be restated and an overview of the research design and methodology employed will be given.

As stated in Chapter One, the primary aim of this research was to conduct a literature and empirical study into the levels of and factors influencing the organisational commitment of South African employees in a selected Chinese organisation. More specifically, in order to achieve the primary aim of this research, the following objectives were stated, namely:

- To identify and describe key factors influencing local employee commitment.
- To identify and describe current commitment levels amongst local employees.
- To propose recommendations to improve local employee commitment and its implications for the appropriate management of human resources in a Chinese organisation in South Africa.

To achieve the above mentioned aim and objectives, a single case study approach, which is located within the phenomenological research paradigm, was used (Collis & Hussey 2003: 66). A large multinational Chinese organisation, with operations in South Africa, agreed to participate in this study. The research made use of a descriptive case study design in order to cover the depth and scope of the case studied (Collis & Hussey 2003: 68). The participants of this study were selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique (Welman & Kruger 2001: 63). With the assistance of the organisation's regional manager,

appropriate participants across hierarchical levels in the organisation, were selected. Data were collected by means of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 20 participating employees. Moreover, although the interview transcripts were the primary source of data, the collection process was enriched with the use of organisational and participant observations. Such observations are believed to provide important details and insights into the research, which are important for the triangulation of data (Remenyi 2013: 199). In order to assist with the interview process, an interview guide was developed.

The researcher analysed the data using content analysis, which involves compressing large amounts of text into fewer categories, enabling systematic processing (Hsieh & Shannon 2005: 1278). The qualitative data collected for this study were analysed manually, making use of Tesch's (1990) model of content analysis, as well as the researcher's own understanding of qualitative data analysis. In order to achieve the research objectives, the detailed findings of this research study were shaped around the interview guide (Appendix A), and relevant sections were grouped together for simple interpretation (Chapter Five).

As stated in Chapter Four (Section 4.4.2.1), the findings of the research will not be able to be generalised to a population. For the purpose of the current research however, use will be made of "internal generalisation". As such Maxwell (2005: 115) asserts that within case study research, the findings and recommendations may be generalised within the setting or group in which the research is taking place, namely the organisation under study. The burden of ensuring appropriate transferability to another setting is on the reader (Pitney & Parker 2009: 67-68)

6.2   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The main summarised findings of this research study and conclusions are presented according to the first two objectives as follows:

Objective 1:

- Factors influencing commitment

Objective 2:

- Current levels of commitment

6.2.1 Factors influencing commitment

In order to address the first objective, namely to identify and describe key factors influencing local employee commitment, a theoretical framework was developed. The framework comprised eight factors deemed to influence organisational commitment. Additionally, the findings revealed two factors which were not included in the theoretical framework, which appear to have an influence on organisational commitment in the organisation. The findings pertaining to the eight factors influencing organisational commitment, as included in the theoretical framework, will firstly be discussed, followed by the findings pertaining to the new factors identified through the empirical research.

6.2.1.1 Factors identified in the theoretical framework

(a) Open communication

Fifteen of the 20 participants believed communication in the organisation to be open, with the remaining participants having a neutral or mixed view on the matter. Three communication categories emerged from the data:

- Open door policy (P1; P2; P3; P5; P12; P16)
- Feedback (P7; P9; P10; P16)
- Irregular communication (P11; P13; P17; P19; P20)

Participants described an open door policy in the organisation, and highlighted that they felt they have the freedom to speak directly to managers, and discuss any problems they may

have. The findings indicate that an open environment within the organisation is of great importance to its management and employees. The managers are perceived to be making a conscious effort to listen to employees, enable employees to freely communicate with them, and take the time to resolve issues which have been raised. The findings suggest that the ability to freely communicate with all levels of management has a positive influence on the participants' perceived open communication in the organisation.

Participants demonstrated that the organisation's management provided feedback which gave the employees a sense of direction and motivation. It was evident that the feedback participants received from managers influenced their positive feelings regarding the organisation's open communication. This was attributed to the fact that the employees feel more involved in the organisation when they receive feedback and have direct communication with the senior managers. It was generally felt that it is important for the managers to communicate openly and honestly and share adequate information regarding the organisation's operations and performance.

The findings indicated that a number of participants believed a lack of regular communication was however hampering effective open communication in the organisation. Although the findings suggested that the managers recognised the importance of open communication, managers may need to communicate with their staff on a more regular basis.

Communication in the organisation therefore appears to be open, with employees being able to easily approach and receive feedback from managers. This is a positive finding for the organisation, as Rego and Cunha (2006: 19-20) emphasise the importance of interaction with and feedback to employees. Moreover, open communication, as described in the organisation may positively influence organisational commitment, as asserted by Haugh and McKee (2003: 144) as well as Rego and Cunha. (2006: 19). Communication is however believed to be irregular in the organisation. Devries (2007: 42) as well as Rego and Cunha (2006: 19) highlight that if communication is irregular, it may lead to misunderstandings and negatively affect the employees' levels of commitment to the organisation. As the organisation's senior management are Chinese employees, the researcher believes that a possible explanation for the lack of perceived regular communication with employees may be attributed to the high power distance in Chinese culture (Hofstede 2001). The Chinese culture is believed to place importance on lines of authority and positions within the hierarchy. It therefore promotes

listening to one's superiors and not questioning decisions (Basabe & Ros 2005: 191; Hofstede 2001). Senior managers may therefore feel it unnecessary to regularly communicate organisational circumstances and decisions with lower level employees. The organisation should however be encouraged to ensure communication with all employees takes place on a more formal and regular basis.

(b) Leadership

Participants generally had positive feelings regarding how knowledgeable the organisation's leadership were, and demonstrated great faith in their leaders, describing them as "knowledgeable" (P2; P3; P6; P12; P13; P15), "skilled" (P1; P5; P12; P13; P14; P18), and "experienced" (P1; P4; P9; P16; P20).

The participants contributed valuable information regarding the leadership styles of the Chinese managers. The Chinese managers' leadership style was generally seen in a favourable light, and Chinese managers were described as "diligent" (P5; P6; P10; P14; P16), "committed" (P12; P14; P16) and "stern" (P1; P2; P3; P5; P11; P12). Participants described the diligence with which they believed Chinese managers worked, and described them as deeply committed to the organisation. This is an important finding, considering that Chawla and Renesch (2006: 96) assert that if employees perceive leaders to be committed and dedicated, it will build general employee commitment to the organisation. Such a finding also concurs with the perceived collectivist nature of Chinese culture (De Mooij & Hofstede 2010: 89; Hofstede 2001), which often results in high levels of loyalty and normative commitment to organisations (Chen 2009: 17). Moreover, participants believed the style of the organisation's Chinese managers incorporated a stern and serious attitude, and it was indicated they lead with a sense of authority, and are quick to reprimand employees if it is believed they are not performing their work tasks efficiently. Once again this finding concurs with Hofstede's (2001) work, in which he identifies the high power distances, and the importance of respecting one's superiors and lines of authority in Chinese culture.

The findings relating to the South African managers however, revealed a leadership style contrary to that of the Chinese managers. The South African managers were described as "relaxed" (P3; P5; P12; P17; P19), and "open" (P6; P10; P17; P19; P20). Participants

believed the general style of the organisation's South African managers demonstrated a relatively relaxed, social and friendly attitude, which emphasised openness and transparency. The findings indicate that the South African managers practise what may be best described as a participative and transparent leadership style. This is seen to involve a close, open and supportive relationship with the staff. This may in turn lead to a strong commitment to the organisation, as leadership styles involving participation and social interaction between the leader and the employees may positively influence employees' commitment to an organisation (Gaertner 1999: 482; Morris & Sherman 1981; Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56-58). It is important to note however that the majority of the junior and mid-level managerial positions were filled by South Africans from a variety of sub-cultures, with Chinese managers filling the senior positions. The average employee would therefore have more interaction with the South African managers on a day-to-day basis. This may therefore lead to closer informal relationships with the employees, which may in turn lead to "openness" and "transparency". The researcher however feels that South Africa's lower power distance culture (Hofstede 2001), as compared with China, contributed to this management style. Another positive finding for the organisation was the fact that participants generally felt strongly about there being no need for a change in the organisation's leadership

The findings therefore indicate that although the management styles of the Chinese and the South Africans appear to differ, the overall result seems to demonstrate that the employees trust in, and are satisfied with the current leadership. This favourable finding may positively influence employees' commitment, as there is deemed to be a link between the employee's trust in their leadership and their abilities, and their commitment to the organisation (Cook & Wall 1980; Kruger & Rootman 2010: 68; Rego & Cunha 2006: 6). The importance of leadership was demonstrated when participants were asked at the end of the interview to reflect on the factors they felt were the most important in influencing their commitment, and certain participants (P8; P13; P16) specifically highlighted the importance of leadership. This finding concurs with a significant body of literature which has identified the link between leadership and organisational commitment (Davenport 2010: 278-279; Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 40; Morris & Sherman 1981; Pierce & Dunham 1987: 164; Vallejo 2009: 138; Yiing & Ahmad 2009: 56-58).

(c) Supervisory support

Participants generally highlighted a positive relationship with their immediate supervisors, the majority of whom were South African. Certain participants (P4; P7; P16; P20) indicated that they consider their relationship with their supervisor to be more than just a working relationship, and to involve a level of mutual friendship. Participants indicated that they could often confide in their supervisors with personal matters, some of whom would socialise with their supervisor out of the work environment. Such social ties with their superiors may result in employees being more emotionally attached to the organisation, thus increasing affective commitment, and resulting in employees being less willing to sever ties with it, as asserted by Davenport (2010: 278-279).

A number of participants demonstrated the encouragement and support they felt from their supervisors while performing their work (P1; P2; P6; P14; P20). The finding suggests that the support received from supervisors is greatly appreciated by employees, and has a positive effect on their perceptions of their job and the organisation. Moreover, the large majority of participants felt they can rely on their supervisors during difficult times. The organisation is perceived to give the supervisors the freedom they need to assist their teams with small matters.

Although the majority of the participants felt that there were no areas in their relationship with their supervisor that needed improvement, certain participants (P3; P12; P19) indicted that they felt that although supervisors listened to their concerns and suggestions, they were slow to take action. The findings suggest that the slow speed at which some supervisors were perceived to take action is an area of frustration for some of the employees. Participants (P1; P3; P8; P12; P15; P19) further noted that regular communication is an area which can be improved upon. The findings suggest that the organisation may potentially need to create an environment in which communication flows between supervisors and subordinates are made easier, as feedback from the supervisors was occasionally described as delayed.

The general positive feelings regarding supervisory support may positively influence employees' commitment, as the perceived level of effective supervisory support experienced by employees is deemed to have an influence on their organisational commitment (Aube et al. 2007; Bagraim 2004: 241; Finegan 2000; Venter et al. 2010). Issues pertaining to slow

and irregular communication should however be investigated and addressed by the organisation in order to maximise employees' perceptions of the supervisory support they receive.

(d) Opportunities for training and development

The majority of the participants expressed clear negative views on their current training and development opportunities in the organisation. The findings suggested that once an employee is appropriately trained to fill their position, future opportunities to be trained and develop into new positions were perceived by certain employees to "simply not be there" (P19). A number of participants (P1; P9; P19) believed a cause of this situation was the fact that the organisation was perceived to hire employees who already hold the skills to do the job, instead of training those who are already in the organisation to fill these positions. In this regard, P1 described how the technicians at the smaller branches were only Chinese nationals, as it was deemed easier for the organisation to bring in qualified technicians from China, rather than training and employing South Africans. Such a finding could have a negative implication for the employees' commitment to the organisation, considering that the training and development of employees is important for providing opportunities for employee advancement, and may be perceived as a demonstration of the value the organisation places in its employees, ultimately building organisational commitment (Meyer & Allen 1997: 69).

The findings revealed however that the majority of participants felt they are able to learn from each other in the organisation. Participants described an informal collaboration in the organisation, in which employees would work together, share ideas, and learn from one another. Although such collaboration is not perceived to be a formal training strategy in the organisation, or necessarily encouraged by the organisation's management, employees and supervisors seem to take it upon themselves to arrange such collaboration. Moreover, participants further described an informal mentorship programme in the organisation. Through such informal mentorship, participants believed they were able to gain experience, skills and learn from one another.

Participants highlighted two changes in the current training and development opportunities in the organisation that they would like to see. Participants firstly expressed a need for the

organisation to send employees to formal, accredited courses at colleges, or alternatively to subsidise employee's part-time studies, which are relevant to his or her job (P2; P6; P10; P11; P20). Secondly, participants indicted that they would like to see more internal training and development of employees through job rotation, and exposure to other employees, managers and departments in the organisation (P3; P4; P8; P9; P19). The ability of employees to rotate in the organisation was perceived to give employees a better understanding of the work others do in the organisation, expose them to something new, as well as potentially open doors for career advancement into other departments in the organisation. The researcher noted that these feelings were only experienced by technical workers in the organisation, who often seemed to feel stagnant in their departments and positions.

The importance of training and development opportunities was highlighted by certain participants (P2; P7; P10; P17) who stated that it directly influences their commitment to the organisation. Such a finding concurs with the literature which highlights opportunities for training and development as having an influence on organisational commitment (Jiang & Klein 2000; Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 40; McElroy 2001; Meyer & Allen 1997: 69). Due to the negative feelings many participants shared regarding the opportunities for training and development in the organisation, this is perhaps an important area of consideration for the organisation.

(e) Compensation

The majority of participants held negative views pertaining to the compensation received from the organisation, although a number of participants did believe their compensation to be fair and reasonable.

All participants who expressed negative views regarding their compensation believed the remuneration offered to simply be inadequate to meet their financial needs (P1; P2; P6; P8; P10; P12; P14; P15; P17; P19; P20). The researcher noted that more complaints were received from the lower level employees, with supervisory and managerial employees seeming generally more content with their compensation. Moreover, the findings indicated a number of employees were disgruntled with the fact that employee benefits are not offered to all employees. It emerged that only senior managerial employees received employee benefits,

most notably a pension fund and medical aid contributions. Despite the fact that no direct question was raised on the matter, the issue was repeatedly brought up by participants. The findings therefore indicate that the organisation is perhaps overlooking the matter of employee benefits, or underestimating the value employees place on them.

Seven of the participants did however describe the compensation received as fair and reasonable (P3; P4; P5; P9; P11; P13; P16). The findings therefore indicate that although the majority of those who commented were dissatisfied, it is clear that certain participants found their compensation satisfactory. Those who found their compensation to be satisfactory were diversified across the organisation, and did not only represent senior level employees. Perceptions pertaining to compensation can be assumed to be highly influenced by personal situations and expectations. Such employees may have higher levels of commitment as it is asserted that employees who perceive their compensation to be "good" or "fair" are more likely to be committed to the organisation (Higginbotham 1997).

Eight of the participants (P1; P2; P4; P6; P8; P12; P15; P19) raised issues relating to employees' workload and the compensation received from the organisation, feeling they were inadequately aligned. As technical employees are not rewarded for performance or output, some of the participants felt that their hard work was not noticed or rewarded. Furthermore, a number of participants felt that although compensation was evenly distributed, the workload was not (P4; P6; P12; P19) and felt that the management in the organisation may not be effectively supervising the distribution of the workload.

The findings indicated that the majority of the participants felt that there was a fair relationship between employee's skills and compensation received. This indicated participants felt their co-workers had the skills required to do their jobs effectively. An issue which however arose with five of the participants was the matter of previous training and education (P3; P8; P10; P15; P19). It emerged that technical employees received the same remuneration, this despite the fact that certain employees are perceived to be better trained or educated, often leading to feelings of frustration.

The importance regarding compensation was highlighted as it was the factor most frequently mentioned during the interviews as having an influence on organisational commitment. Such a finding concurs with the literature, as compensation is believed to be of great importance to

most employees (Hoyt & Gerdloff 1999; Lesabe & Nkosi 2007: 40). Moreover, the influence compensation has on organisational commitment is well documented in literature (Chen 2009: 17; Farris 2000; Higginbotham 1997; Hoyt & Gerdloff 1999; Kochanski & Ledford 2001). As the majority of participants had negative perceptions pertaining to their compensation and the lack of standard employee benefits for employees, along with the importance participants place on their compensation, compensation should remain an important consideration for the organisation in attempting to influence employees' commitment. Chen (2009: 16) asserts that Chinese employees in a multinational organisation have been found to feel obligated to demonstrate loyalty and commitment to their employer, despite the fact that their compensation is substantially less than their Western counterparts. The Chinese organisation under study may therefore be underestimating the influence of compensation on the commitment of the culturally different South African employees.

(f) Job security

Three participants (P1; P6; P14) expressed negative views relating to their sense of job security, and felt that the organisation lacked solid foundations and roots within South Africa. Concerns were raised during the interviews regarding the lack of fixed assets in the organisation. This was perceived by these participants as evidence of a lack of a firm commitment to future operations in the country.

Fourteen of the 20 participants however, seemed to have a different view on their job security in the organisation. The participants seemed to feel confident in both their short and long-term positions. It emerged that a possible explanation for this confidence was a result of the fact the organisation is expanding both internationally and within South Africa. Reference was made to the fact that the organisation is enjoying growth in sales, is expanding its product range, and is investing in an additional manufacturing and assembly plant in South Africa. Job security was also highlighted by certain participants (P5; P11; P14) as having an important influence on their commitment to the organisation.

To conclude, there were conflicting opinions amongst the participants regarding their sense of job security in the organisation. Although the participants who expressed negative views

were in the minority, they may have been exposed to certain aspects in the organisation others might not have been, or could themselves be falsely guided by the often negative perceptions of Chinese organisations in the media. The perceptions of such employees may need to be addressed by the organisation, as it is believed that employees who perceive their jobs to be insecure will often be less motivated to perform their work tasks (Klandermans et al. 2010: 560). The researcher however feels that such feelings may be misguided, as the organisation is currently expanding its operations in South Africa. The findings indicate that the growth and success that the organisation is currently experiencing plays an important role in the majority of the participant's positive feelings regarding their job security. The findings imply that, despite varying opinions on their job security, it is an important aspect in influencing commitment in the organisation, concurring with the literature (Buitendach & De Witte 2005: 27; Yousef 1998).

(g) Promotional opportunities

Of the 20 participants, fifteen demonstrated a negative outlook on their promotional opportunities in the organisation, with five expressing neutral feelings on the matter. Two categories emerged from the data as causes for such feelings:

- Limited number of senior positions available (P1; P3; P6; P8; P9; P13; P19)
- Ambiguity surrounding employees' career paths (P2; P4; P10; P19; P20)

Participants asserted that the limited number of senior positions available in the organisation caused negative feelings relating to their promotional opportunities. Participants employed in smaller branches of the organisation seemed to feel even more strongly on the matter, and believed their career growth opportunities to be very limited or non-existent. A possible reason for the lack of promotional opportunities in the organisation can be attributed to the fact that the organisation's top management are Chinese employees. The researcher believes this negatively impacts on the South African employees' perceptions regarding their possible career growth. This concurs with Bräutigam (2011b) who highlighted that certain Chinese organisations may reserve managerial, supervisory and skilled positions for Chinese nationals.

A number of participants commented on the lack of clarity with regard to their future careers as being a cause of negative feelings relating to their promotional opportunities in the organisation. The general feeling of the participants was that they were unsure of their future path in the organisation, which often led to feelings of frustration and discomfort. Moreover, when participants were asked to reflect on factors they believed influenced their commitment, promotional opportunities was the second most frequently highlighted factor, being mentioned by six participants (P4; P6; P7; P9; P17; P19).

The findings suggest that promotional opportunities are important to the participants and may have a strong influence on their commitment, which concurs with the literature (Chen 2009: 18; Lok & Crawford 2004: 321; McCormick & Ilgen 1985: 314; Moorhead & Griffen 1992). The perceptions of promotional opportunities in the organisation were however generally negative. The majority of participants demonstrated concern for their future careers, and many indicated a desire to progress in the organisation, but felt that they were unable to do so. Such perceptions may, in turn, be negatively affecting employees' commitment to the organisation (Giffords 2009; Iqbal 2010: 17; McCormick & Ilgen 1985: 314). The findings suggest the organisation is possibly not managing perceptions relating to promotional opportunities effectively. As South Africa is deemed to be a more individualist society, placing greater value on self-actualisation and personal success (Hofstede 2001), the Chinese organisation under study may be underestimating the value of promotional opportunities to their South African employees, as compared to their Chinese employees.

(h)   Shared values

The participants' responses relating to their understanding of the organisation's values were diversified, as the organisation seemed to have no clear set of values, or formal value statement. Three perceived organisational value categories however emerged from the data, namely:

- Quality (P1; P4; P5; P6; P13; P19; P20)
- Service (P5; P6; P11; P13; P14; P16; P17)
- Results (P2; P3; P8; P9; P12; P20)

The findings revealed that the majority of participants felt a general alignment with the perceived organisational values, often demonstrating an understanding of the importance of the perceived organisational values of quality, service and results. Such a finding may be beneficial to the organisation, as it has been asserted that if the organisation shares noncontroversial values which are easy for employees to relate to, such as product quality, this may result in employees establishing a close relationship with the organisation (Coetzee 2005: 5.12).

Certain participants however asserted that the organisation needs to place greater value on their employees (P2; P3; P4; P6; P8; P14; P19). The findings suggest that a number of participants feel unappreciated in their positions, and often overlooked by the organisation's management. The organisation may not be doing enough to ensure employees understand their importance to the organisation.

In conclusion, the participants generally felt an alignment with these perceived values of the organisation. Moreover, the majority of the participants felt that the perceived organisational values have been successfully implemented, with most of them believing the organisation should not change how the organisation's values are managed. This is an important finding due to the fact that shared values are deemed to have a strong influence on employee commitment (Hyde & Williamson 2000; Posner & Schmidt 1993; Venter et al. 2010). As a number of participants indicated a need for the organisation to place greater importance on employees, the organisation may need to refocus its values in order to avoid employees feeling underappreciated. To this end, the organisation may need to formally recognise the importance of employees, and ensure this is highlighted in a formal set of organisational values.

6.2.1.2   New factors influencing commitment

The findings revealed two new factors which were highlighted by the participants as having an influence on organisational commitment. These factors were not previously included in the theoretical framework, and therefore brought new insight into factors influencing commitment in the organisation under study. The two identified factors were Recognition and Trust.

(a) Recognition

Recognition, a factor which was not included in the theoretical framework, emerged as an important factor influencing the participant's commitment to the organisation. Participants (P3; P11; P15; P20) highlighted that any recognition or gratitude from the organisation and its management would stimulate their positive feelings towards the organisation, and inspire them to work harder. Recognition and associated rewards from the organisation were perceived by the researcher to be of great importance to these participants. Participants suggested that such recognition could be as simple as words of gratitude (P3), or could perhaps include non-monetary rewards such as additional paid leave (P15). The researcher feels that such recognition from the organisation may boost the self-esteem, confidence and ultimately the commitment of certain employees.

Monetary compensation is clearly important to the participants (as discussed in Section 6.2.1.1: e), but non-monetary recognition is evidently also of importance. If the organisation is not in a position to offer increased compensation to employees, Kochanski and Ledford (2001) assert that recognition in the form of non-monetary rewards, such as time off, are believed to promote employee commitment. Zaitouni, Sawalha and Sharif (2011: 110) assert that recognition is required in an organisational environment in order to motivate employees and encourage favourable work outcomes. Moreover, praise and appreciation from managers and co-workers have been found to positively influence organisational commitment (Kruger & Rootman 2010: 68; Park, Erwin & Knapp 1997). The finding therefore concurs with the literature in this regard. As the South African individualist culture is deemed to place greater value on reward and self-actualisation than Chinese culture (Hofstede 2001), the organisation should therefore ensure that all employees in the organisation feel recognised and appreciated.

(b) Trust

Five of the participants (P1; P2; P3; P10; P13) highlighted that the trust they have in their co-workers and the management of the organisation influences their commitment. Although trust was not included in the theoretical framework, the factor was clearly of great importance to these participants. It was generally felt that as the employees all rely on one another to do

their work effectively, doubt in the abilities of others to do their work would negatively affect the working environment and commitment in the organisation. The participants further believed it of importance for the leaders of the organisation to trust them to perform their jobs independently, as it assists in developing a sense of autonomy. This finding concurs with the literature, as a trusting environment in an organisation is deemed valuable to all parties (Wong & Sohal 2002: 37). High levels of trust in an organisation will often lead to high levels of employee commitment to the organisation (Kwon & Suh 2005: 27; Wong & Sohal 2002: 37). Managers therefore need to display signs of trust in their employees, in order to build morale and commitment, as suggested by Venter et al. (2010: 21).

Based on this finding, the organisation should promote an environment in which the organisation and its leadership are seen as trustworthy by the employees. As South African culture is deemed to have lower levels of power distance than Chinese culture (Hofstede 2001; Thomas & Bendixen 2000), South African employees may believe it more necessary for their leaders to "earn" their trust, as compared to the more naturally committed and loyal Chinese employees (Chen 2009; Randall 1993). Moreover, managers within the organisation should be encouraged to trust employees in the organisation, when appropriate, in order to boost employees' morale, sense of autonomy, and ultimately commitment to the organisation.

Based on the above findings, Figure 6.1 presents a conceptual model of the most pertinent factors influencing the organisational commitment of local employees in the organisation under study.

Figure 6.1: Factors influencing the organisational commitment of local employees
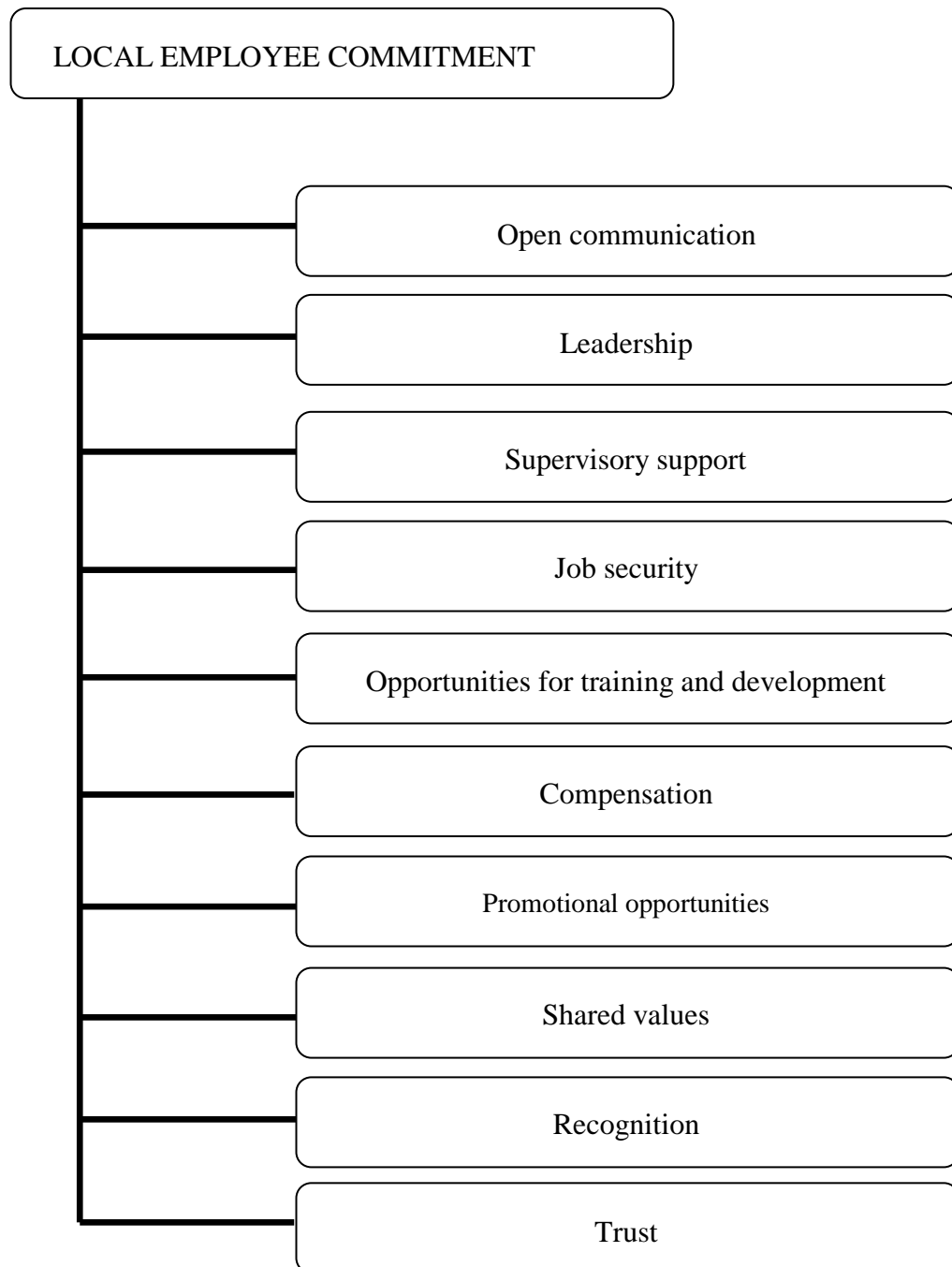
Source: Researcher's own construction

6.2.2   Levels of commitment

The second objective of this study sought to identify and describe current commitment levels amongst local employees in the organisation under study (Chapter One, Section 1.2). Questions were posed with the intention to gain an understanding of the participant's perceived levels of commitment, which will be broadly compared to Meyer and Allen's (1991) three component model of commitment. Participants were also asked to discuss how they perceived their own commitment. The findings relating to the participants' levels of commitment will therefore be discussed under four sections:

- Emotional attachment (Affective commitment)
- Obligation to continue (Normative commitment)
- Implications of leaving (Continuance commitment)
- Perceptions regarding commitment

6.2.2.1   Emotional attachment

The findings relating to the perceived emotional attachment of the participants to the organisation were positive. Of the 20 participants, sixteen stated that they felt an emotional attachment to the organisation and felt as if they were "part of the family". Only one participant was perceived to not be emotionally attached to the organisation, and perceived his job as merely a source of income.

The findings indicate that the large majority of the participants demonstrated a clear and strong emotional attachment to the organisation, possibly demonstrating high levels of affective commitment (Meyer & Allen 1991). Participants described how it was "more than just work" (P20), and described an emotional attachment to their colleagues in the organisation, as well as an "attachment to the brand" (P10). Randall (1993) as well as Clugston, Howell and Dorfman (2000) found that the levels of affective commitment were higher in cultures with lower levels of power distance (such as South Africa). This could possibly be an explanation for the high perceived levels of affective commitment in the organisation, as employees are able to build stronger emotional connections with superiors.

6.2.2.2   Obligation to continue

The findings in this regard were relatively mixed, with eleven participants highlighting that they to some extent, felt an obligation to the organisation and/or their co-workers to continue working for the organisation (P1; P2; P4; P5; P8; P9; P13; P14; P15; P16; P20). Seven of the participants demonstrated they did not feel an obligation to continue working for the organisation (P3; P6; P7; P10; P12; P18; P19).

Of the participants who highlighted that they felt an obligation to continue working for the organisation, three of these participants (P5; P15; P20) indicated that they felt grateful to the organisation for giving them the opportunity to work there. The findings suggest that these participants felt a moral obligation to the organisation, based on the fact that the organisation provided them with full-time work when they needed it. The finding concurs with Aamodt (2004: 323) who described the influence such obligatory feelings may have on employees' commitment. Moreover, the findings suggest some of the participants consider the relationship with their co-workers as an important factor in remaining with the organisation.

The seven participants, who highlighted that they did not feel an obligation to continue working for the organisation, generally believed that the organisation and their co-workers would cope without them, and they would remain with the organisation because they *wish to do so*, not because they *ought to do so*. The participants were perceived to feel no major psychological contract to continue working for the organisation. The participants were furthermore believed to be able to place their own needs above the organisation's needs. These participants may therefore be perceived to demonstrate less normative commitment than those who stated they felt an obligation to continue working for the organisation (Meyer & Allen 1991). The finding concurs with Randall (1993) and Chen (2009) who found normative commitment to be lower within individualist cultures (such as that of South Africa), but higher within collectivist cultures (such as China). The lower levels of perceived normative commitment, as compared with the perceived affective commitment in this study, can also be explained by Clugston et al. (2000), who found that cultures with lower power distances (such as that of South Africa) may have lower levels of normative commitment compared to cultures with higher power distances (such as that of China).

6.2.2.3 Implications of leaving

When participants discussed the possible implications of leaving the organisation, two key categories emerged, namely the ability to find new employment and missing their job at the organisation.

Nine of the participants (P2; P3; P4; P5; P6; P9; P12; P14; P19) highlighted that their possible lack of ability to find replacement employment would be a serious implication for leaving their current position in the organisation. Employees who believe that they may have difficulty in finding new employment, may not want to leave their current job, and therefore increase their continuance commitment (Aamodt 2004: 323; Meyer & Allen 1991).

Six participants (P1; P4; P10; P13; P16; P20) highlighted that a reason for them not leaving their job would be the fact that they would miss their work at the organisation. These participants generally felt that they would miss their working environment, as well as the people they worked with. This is perceived by the researcher to possibly increase their continuance commitment to the organisation. Such findings concur with the literature, as any situation which increases an employee's perceived costs of leaving the organisation has the potential to increase continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen 1991). As the majority (fourteen of the 20 participants) highlighted at least one serious personal implication for them leaving the organisation, this may indicate potentially high levels of continuance commitment in the organisation. Such a finding would concur with Randall (1993) who found that individuals within a culturally individualist society, such as South Africa, may have high levels of continuance commitment, as both concepts emphasise a cost-benefit approach to decision making.

6.2.2.4 Perceptions regarding commitment

The findings relating to the participants' own perceived levels of commitment were very positive. Fifteen of the participants (P1; P2; P3; P4; P5; P6; P7; P8; P9; P13; P14; P15; P16; P18; P20), the large majority, can be perceived as having a strong commitment to the organisation, clearly identifying with the organisation and its goals. Four of the participants (P10; P11; P12; P17) demonstrated a moderate commitment to the organisation, and only one

participant (P19) demonstrated a weak commitment. The findings suggest that although certain participants may have raised issues or concerns in the interviews, the large majority of the participants still highlighted that they felt they were deeply committed to the organisation. Only a single participant indicated that he was relatively unhappy working in the organisation, and would consider leaving the organisation, should another job become available elsewhere.

In conclusion, the large majority of the participants indicated that they felt an emotional attachment to the organisation and "part of the family". This may be perceived as a possible indicator of high levels of affective commitment amongst these participants. This is a highly positive finding for the organisation, considering affective commitment is considered as the most desirable form of commitment for an organisation, and is strongly correlated with positive work performance (Coetzee 2005; Yiinh & Ahmad 2009: 56). More than half of the participants further demonstrated that they felt an obligation to continue working for the organisation. This may be perceived as a possible indicator of high levels of normative commitment amongst these participants. The majority of participants further described their ability to find new employment, or missing their job, as implications of their leaving the organisation. This may be perceived to be a possible indicator of high levels of continuance commitment amongst these participants. When directly asked to rate their commitment, the findings concurred with the above perceptions relating to high commitment levels, with the large majority of participants demonstrating strong commitment to the organisation.

The general findings relating to the levels of commitment in the organisation were thus positive for the organisation. Despite certain issues being raised by the participants during the in-depth interviews, the large majority of the participants seem to remain committed and loyal to the organisation.

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH

Limitations pertaining to this research are noted below.

- In order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, and at the request of the organisation's regional manager, the participants were not categorised according to the branch in which they are employed. The researcher acknowledges that a comparative analysis of employee's commitment amongst the different branches may have been of interest.

- Although the study aimed to research organisational commitment amongst South African employees only, the researcher acknowledges that in-depth interviews with senior Chinese managers may have provided greater insight. Despite the researcher's efforts, such interviews were not possible.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section will provide recommendations to the organisation as well as for future research. This section addresses the final research objective, namely to provide recommendations to improve local employee commitment, and its implications for the appropriate management of human resources in a Chinese organisation in South Africa. With regard to current practices in the organisation, managerial recommendations will be put forward in order to attempt to positively influence employees' organisational commitment. Recommendations are presented based on the findings, referring to the factors deemed to influence commitment in the organisation (Figure 6.1).

(a) Open communication

- It is recommended that top management promote a culture in which employees feel comfortable to communicate openly. Managers and supervisors need to be encouraged to provide more regular feedback to employees, and to ensure communication with employees is dealt with promptly.

- All levels of management need to communicate openly, honestly and regularly with employees, and share information regarding organisational operations and performance.

(b) Leadership

- As the South African employees may be accustomed to lower power distances and less authoritarian leadership styles, top management should be encouraged to practise leadership styles involving participation and appropriate social interaction with employees. All levels of management should be encouraged to engage with employees, and demonstrate their abilities and trustworthiness as leaders in the organisation.

(c) Supervisory support

- It is recommended that supervisors maintain the levels of support to employees, as perceived in the organisation. Top management needs to however encourage supervisors to be more decisive and faster to take appropriate action. To this end, communication flows between supervisors and employees need to be improved. There is a demand amongst employees for increased contact and communication with supervisors.
- It is recommended that the organisation consider implementing formal face-to-face meetings between supervisors and employees on a more regular basis, in order to discuss and resolve any issues which may arise as quickly as possible.

(d) Opportunities for training and development

- Training and development is an issue in the organisation which requires addressing by top management, and should be discussed with all levels of employees. A need for increased training opportunities for employees is evident. Top management should

consider increasing internal training opportunities, or provide for external opportunities with training providers. Such training should be relevant to employees' current positions, and potential career growth and development in the organisation.

(e) Compensation

- Top management needs to ensure the salaries offered to employees are market-related. Employees should be compensated fairly, based on position, responsibility and qualifications. To this end, it is recommended that top management consider rewarding those who offer expertise and applicable qualifications to their jobs, as a fair job grading system does not currently seem to be in place.
- A clear reward system should be put in place. Such rewards offered can be non-monetary in nature, and may include extra time off. Performance appraisals should be undertaken annually, in order to ensure a working standard is maintained throughout the organisation
- There is a strong desire for employee benefits for all employees. Top management should consider addressing the matter, and consider subsidising employees' medical scheme and pension fund contributions. If the organisation is not in a position to do so, it is recommended that a financial services consultant be brought in to make employees aware of affordable retirement and healthcare plans which they can consider for themselves.

(f) Job security

- It is recommended that employees are kept up to date with the organisation's performance, operations and general financial standing, in order to promote a sense of job security.
- Organisational successes in South Africa and abroad should be shared and celebrated with employees.

(g) Promotional opportunities

- The generally negative perceptions regarding promotional opportunities in the organisation are an issue which requires addressing by top management. Career growth opportunities need to be made transparent to all employees, and local employees need to be made aware of managerial positions in the organisation which are open to South African candidates.
- Top management should consider grading certain levels of employees, in order to formally recognise the seniority of employees who perhaps hold greater experience or qualifications.

(h) Shared values

- It is recommended that top management compile a formal set of organisational values or a value statement. Such values should include noncontroversial values, which are easy for employees to identify with, such as quality, service and results. The values should be explained to current employees, and should be incorporated into the orientation training of new employees, as employees need to understand and identify with them.
- It is recommended that the organisation include the importance it places on its employees within its identified values.

(i) Recognition

- It is recommended that the leadership in the organisation formally recognise the efforts and achievements of employees. Loyal and hardworking employees should be publically appreciated and rewarded in the organisation, as the South African individualist culture values reward and self-actualisation.

(j) Trust

- Leaders should conduct themselves in a manner which will build trust in the organisation. Leaders need to be open, honest and share their values with employees.
- Employees should be trusted, when appropriate, to do their work with a degree of freedom and independence.
- Employees should be given the chance to meet each other in more informal work gatherings, in order to get to know each other.

With regard to future research it is recommended that:

- Future research should broaden the sample so as to include multiple Chinese organisations in South Africa. A comparative analysis between the organisations can then be done.
- The three-components of organisational commitment were only broadly addressed by this research. As the three components of commitment have different impacts on the work-related behaviour of employees, future research should attempt to gain greater insight.
- It is recommended that future research address the perceptions of Chinese employees in similar organisations. A comparative analysis between Chinese and South African employees can then be done.
- Due to the qualitative nature of this study, the findings cannot be generalised. It is recommended that future researchers consider a quantitative study, with a large representative sample across South Africa. The conceptual model demonstrated in Figure 6.1 may then be empirically tested.

6.5   VALUE OF RESEARCH

Despite the importance of Chinese organisations and their operations in South Africa, very little research has been done on individual and organisational issues in Chinese organisations operating in Africa (Jackson 2012: 182). Furthermore, the importance of studies on

organisational commitment theory in developing countries, across cultures and in multinational organisations has been highlighted (Chen 2009; Cheng & Stockdale 2003).

This research is believed to be the first of its kind to provide insight into matters relating to organisational commitment in a Chinese multinational organisation in South Africa. The research therefore provides valuable findings to the organisation under study, and a theoretical basis for further commitment research in South Africa.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1) MISCELLANEOUS

1.1) If you have worked for other organisations in the past, please state how you consider working for this organisation in comparison?

1.2) Please can you explain whether you feel the organisation sufficiently understands the local culture?

1.3) Please can you describe whether you feel generally happy with your working conditions?

1.4) Can you please elaborate on whether you think it is easy for Chinese organisations to operate in South Africa?

2) QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE FACTORS COMPILING THE THEOETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1) OPEN COMMUNICATION

2.1.1) How would you define open communication?

2.1.2) Please elaborate on how have you experienced open communication within this organisation?

2.2) LEADERSHIP

2.2.1) What is your perception of the knowledge of the organisation's managers?

2.2.2) Please describe the leadership style of Chinese managers in your organisation.

2.2.3) Please describe the leadership style of South African managers in your organisation.

2.2.4) Do you feel that there a need for change in the leadership of the organisation? Please explain

2.3)   SUPERVISORY SUPPORT

2.3.1) Please elaborate on your relationship with your supervisor?

2.3.2) Please can you explain whether you feel you can rely on your supervisor when times get difficult?

2.3.2)   Please elaborate on whether there are areas in your relationship with your supervisor that you feel need improvement?

2.4)   JOB SECURITY

2.4.1) What is your perception of the security of your short and long term position at this organisation?

2.4.2) Can you please describe what would make you feel more secure in your current position?

2.5)   OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

2.5.1) Please can you describe the training and development opportunities in this organisation?

2.5.2) Please elaborate on whether you feel you are able to learn from each other within the organisation. If so, how does this occur?

2.5.3) Please highlight the training and development opportunities that you would like to have in the organisation?

2.6)   COMPENSATION

2.6.1) What is your perception pertaining to compensation within the organisation?

2.6.2) Could you please explain whether you feel there is a fair relationship between employee's workload and the compensation received in this organisation?

2.6.3) Please elaborate on whether you feel there is a fair relationship between employee's skills and compensation received in this organisation?

2.7)   PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

2.7.1) Please explain your promotional opportunities in this organisation, and your feelings in this regard?

2.8)   SHARED VALUES

2.8.1) Please highlight your understanding of the values of the organisation

2.8.2) Please explain your personal alignment with the organisation's values?

2.8.3) Please elaborate on how you experience the implementation of the values in the organisation?

2.8.4) Would you like to see any changes in how the organisation's values are managed? Please explain.

3)   COMMITMENT

3.1)   What is your understanding of commitment?

3.2)   Please elaborate on whether you feel emotionally attached to this organisation, and "part of the family"?

3.3)   Please describe whether you feel an obligation to your co-workers and the organisation to continue working here?

3.4)   Please describe what the implications of leaving this organisation would to yourself?

3.5)   Please explain how do you rate your commitment to this organisation?

3.6)   Please explain what the organisation could do to enhance your level of commitment.

3.7)   Please explain which factors you consider to be the most important in influencing your commitment to this organisation?

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

RHODES UNIVERSITY
Department of Management

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: The perceptions of organisational commitment within a selected Chinese organisation in South Africa: A case study approach.
Researcher's name: Steven Paterson
Research Purpose: The purpose of this research is to conduct a literature and empirical study into the levels of and factors influencing the organisational commitment of South African employees in a selected Chinese organisation.

- I have received information about this research project.

- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.

- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage.

- I understand that my participation in the research project is done on a voluntary basis.

- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.

- I understand that I will receive no payment for participating in this study.

- The interview will be audio-recorded, but I will choose a pseudonym before data are recorded so my real name will not be on the recording, nor will it appear on transcriptions.

- This consent form will be kept in a safe place by the project supervisor Prof. Lynette Louw. The supervisor will also keep a copy of the audio recordings and once data have been transcribed, the student researchers will be instructed to erase any other copies.

- After the research is completed, data may be used for presentations or journal articles. However, information or data will not be traceable to me personally.

Name of participant: ....

Signed .... **Date** ....
I have provided information about the research to the research participant and believe that he/she understands what is involved.

Researcher's Signature and Date..