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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SELF-CONSTRUAL, SOCIAL COMPARISON AND JOB SATISFACTION WITH ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG YOUNG WORKING ADULTS IN MALAYSIA

WONG SWEE MUN

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By

WONG SWEE MUN

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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SELF-CONSTRUAL, SOCIAL COMPARISON AND JOB SATISFACTION WITH ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG YOUNG WORKING ADULTS IN MALAYSIA

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Organizational commitment among young working adults has significant influence on the high employee turnover rate. Recent research found that Malaysian employees showed highest turnover rate among seven countries being surveyed. In addition, loyalty towards the organization also found decreased among young working adults. The purpose of this study aimed to examine the relationships between self-construal, social comparison, job satisfaction and organizational commitment among young working adults in Malaysia. The present study also determined the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationships between self-construal with organizational commitment and between social comparison with organizational commitment. A total of 420 young working adults in Malaysia aged between 21 to 30 years (M=26.30 years, SD=1.82) participated in the present study with 96.7% response rate. All data were collected using self-administered questionnaires via online survey. The revised version of Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), Self-Construal Scale (SCS) and Social Comparison Scale were used to assess young working adults' perception on each variable. SPSS software was used for analysis the data. Descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation and regression analysis were also used in this study. Results showed that there were more young working adults who claimed themselves as interdependent self (n=196) than independent self (n=188). In addition, findings from Pearson's correlation analyses showed that self-construal ($r = .29$, $p<.001$), social comparison ($r = .52$, $p<.001$) and job satisfaction ($r = .40$, $p<.001$) were significantly positive correlated with organizational commitment. The findings also indicated that self-construal, social comparison and job satisfaction were significantly associated with all three organizational commitment constructs, namely affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Hence, regression analyses were performed when all variables showed significant relationships. On the other hand, two series of regression equations were performed to assess the mediating effect of job satisfaction between self-construal and social comparison on organizational commitment. The findings showed that there was a significant partial mediation on the influence of self-construal on organizational commitment through job satisfaction. Also, there was a significant partial mediation on influence of social comparison on organizational commitment through job satisfaction. Therefore, job satisfaction considered as an important factor which may enhance organizational commitment

level of young working adults in Malaysia. Theoretically, the present findings underlined the role of self-perceptions in influencing the attitudes on job and organizations that they worked with among young working adults as a whole. Practically, the findings implied that organizations should take into account young working adult's perspectives on their current job in order to create committed workforce.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
Sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah sarjana sains

**HUBUNGAN ANTARA TAFSIRAN DIRI, PERBANDINGAN SOSIAL DAN
KEPUASAN KERJA DENGAN KOMITMEN ORGANISASI DI KALANGAN
PEKERJA DEWASA MUDA DI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

WONG SWEE MUN

July 2015

Pengerusi   : Profesor Madya Haslinda binti Abdullah, PhD
Fakulti   : Ekologi Manusia

Didapati komitmen terhadap organisasi di kalangan pekerja dewasa muda mempunyai
pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kadar pusing ganti pekerja. Kajian baru mendapati
bahawa kadar pusing ganti pekerja Malaysia adalah tertinggi antara tujuh negara yang
dikaji. Di samping itu, kesetiaan terhadap organisasi juga didapati semakin
berkurangan di kalangan pekerja dewasa muda. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk
mengkaji keberkesanan hubungan antara tafsiran diri, perbandingan social, kepuasan
kerja dan komitmen organisasi di kalangan pekerja dewasa muda di Malaysia. Kajian
ini juga ingin mengkaji keberkesanan pengaruh kepuasan kerja yang berperanan
sebagai perantara terhadap hubungan antara tafsiran diri dengan komitmen organisasi
serta hubungan antara perbandingan sosial dengan komitmen organisasi. Seramai 420
pekerja dewasa muda di Malaysia berusia antara 21 hingga 30 tahun (M = 26.30 tahun,
SD = 1.82) telah mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini dengan 96.7% kadar balas.
Semua data yang dikumpul melalui kaedah soal selidik yang ditadbir sendiri melalui
kaji selidik dalam talian. Versi baru Organizational Commitment Questionnaire
(OCQ), Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), Self-Construal Scale (SCS) dan Social
Comparison Scale telah digunakan untuk menilai persepsi pekerja dewasa muda pada
setiap pemboleh ubah. Perisian SPSS telah digunakan dalam penganalisan data. Ujian
statistik deskriptif, ujian korelasi Pearson dan kaedah regresi linear juga telah
digunakan dalam kajian ini. Hasil kajian ini mendapati bahawa terdapat lebih ramai
pekerja dewasa muda yang mendakwa diri mereka sebagai diri saling bergantung (n =
196) daripada diri bebas (n = 188). Di samping itu, keputusan daripada korelasi
Pearson menunjukkan bahawa tafsiran sendiri (r = .29, $p<.001$), perbandingan sosial (r
= .52, $p<.001$) dan kepuasan kerja (r = .40, $p<.001$) adalah berkaitan secara positif
dengan komitmen organisasi. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa tafsiran sendiri,
perbandingan social dan kepuasan kerja berkaitan dengan ketiga-tiga konstruk
komitmen organisasi, iaitu komitmen afektif, komitmen berterusan dan komitmen
normatif. Oleh itu, analisis regresi telah dijalankan apabila semua pembolehubah
menunjuk hubungan yang signifikan. Dua siri analisasi regresi telah dijalankan untuk
menilai kesan pengantara kepuasan kerja antara tafsiran diri dan perbandingan sosial
kepada komitmen organisasi. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa kepuasan kerja
yang menjadi pengantara mempunyai hubungan separa signifikan dalam

mempengaruhi hubungan antara tafsiran diri dengan komitmen organisasi. Keputusan juga menunjukkan bahawa kepuasan kerja mempunyai hubungan separa signifikan dalam mempengaruhi hubungan antara perbandingan sosial dengan komitmen organisasi. Oleh sebab itu, kepuasan kerja boleh meningkatkan kadar komitmen organisasi dalam kalangan pekerja dewasa muda di Malaysia. Secara teorinya, hasil kajian ini menjelaskan peranan persepsi diri dalam mempengaruhi sikap terhadap pekerjaan dan organisasi di kalangan pekerja dewasa muda secara keseluruhan. Dalam aspek praktikal, kajian ini mencadangkan supaya organisasi perlu mengambil perhatian terhadap perspektif pekerja dewasa muda bagi menghasilkan tenaga kerja yang komited.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on (10 July 2015) to conduct the final examination of Wong Swee Mun on her thesis entitled "Relationships Between Self-Construal, Social Comparison And Job Satisfaction With Organizational Commitment Among Young Working Adults In Malaysia" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

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This is to confirm that:
- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLalt	Comparison Level of Alternatives
Gen-X	Generation X
Gen-Y	Generation Y
HR	Human Resource
HRM	Human Resource Management
JSS	Job Satisfaction Survey
NEP	New Economic Policy
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
OCQ	Organizational Commitment Questionnaire
Ph.D	Philosophy of Doctorate
QWL	Quality of Work Life
SCS	Self-Construal Scale
SEM	Self-Evaluation Maintenance Model
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (Form 5)
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
STPM	Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (Form 6)
TCM	Three-Component Model
US	United States

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

People in today's world lived in an organizational society. Babies were newborn in an organization called hospital, spend most early years in their life to learn and studied in an organization called schools, and started to join the society and worked for the rest of their life called companies or organizations (Asgari & Dadashi, 2011). An organization was a system of at least two or more individuals who communicated with one another, shared a common goal and have desire to realize the goal (Demiray & Curabay, 2008). However in present days, organizations can no longer guaranteed 'a job for life' (Nehmeh, 2009) or what the Chinese mean 'a metal bowl' has made the conception of organizational commitment became more crucial. Therefore, it is essential to understand why employees, notably young working adults leave their current job based on their attitudes toward an organization.

In year 2000, youth population between the age group of 15 to 34 years was approximately 9.75 million, and they formed around 42.5% of the total population in Malaysia. Out of this number, 60% were young workers (Doraisamy, 2002). In 2014, the total youth population between age group of 21 to 30 years was approximately 6.06 million after rounding (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2014). Youths were important assets for a country and they represented part of the members in the organization. However, research found that job content, salary and promotion opportunities were significant psychological contract measures that helped explained young managers (aged between 21 to 30 years) high level of turnover intention compared to other age group (Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011).

Employee's turnover has become a vital issue because 2013/2014 Randstad World of Work Report found that almost seven out of 10 employees in Malaysia were prone to leave their jobs for better careers recently (The Malaysian Insider, 2014). Besides, 70% of the employers who participated in the survey acknowledged that employee's turnover was an existing problem for organizations in Malaysia. It is essential to keep employee turnover rate low because high turnover rate generally being harmful to the existing employees psychologically. In general, turnover rate which less than 5% on an annual basis was considered acceptable (Recruiter.com, 2014). This is because high turnover rate can be financially costly to an organization in the long run which often overlooked by the employers. Employees' turnover can have positive and/or negative impact to an organization. For some organizations, firing workers who were not performing well or at the desirable level could be viewed as beneficial to that organization. However, losing a valued employee could simply means reduced in organizational productivity while increased expenses related with hiring and training new employees as replacement (Riggio, 2009).

Turnover intention found to be the strongest predictor of actual turnover in future and organizational commitment served as the most important antecedent of turnover intention (Thatcher, Stepina & Boyle, 2003). Previously, organizational commitment referred as loyalty to company, which was associated with the acceptance of an organization's goals and values, a willingness to put effort on behalf of the organization, and a desire to remain in the organization (Riggio, 2009). For example,

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employees who exerted greater effort in performing work-related task, better work attendance, more willingness to engage in organizational citizenship behavior and higher employee retention were more likely to have high level of organizational commitment. More recently, organizational commitment was defined as a worker's attitudes and feelings about the entire work organization (Riggio, 2009).

Undoubtedly, organizational commitment should be highly valued in all kinds of organization. Organizational commitment has been studied in public and private sectors (e.g. Khan, Ziauddin, Jam & Ramay, 2010), local (e.g. Kuean, Kaur & Wong, 2010) and internationally (e.g. Shore & Martin, 1989). Studies on organizational commitment have been conducted from teachers (Aydin, Sarier & Uysal, 2011), nurses (AL-Hussami, 2008), call center personnel (Ahmad, Shahzad, Rehman, Ahmed Khan & Ullah Shad, 2010), managers (Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011; Nazem, 2011), physicians (Kuusio, Heponiemi, Sinervo & Elovaino, 2010) to airline crew (Chang, Lu, Su, Lin & Chang, 2010). Ample of researches concerning the antecedents and contributing factors for organizational commitment have been well published in the past 30 years. Those antecedents included gender (Aydin et al., 2011), job consistency (Hassanzadeh, Emami, Beiruti, Ghasemi & Fahimi, 2011), job satisfaction (AL-Hussami, 2008), job stress (Ziauddin, Khan, Jam & Hijazi, 2010), market orientation and role stressors (Chang et al., 2010), work-related psychosocial factors (Kuusio et al., 2010), leadership behavior (Tatlah, Ali & Saeed, 2011), organizational socialization (Afsanepurak, Seyed Hossini, Seyfari & Nasab, 2012), and quality of work life (Asgari & Dadashi, 2011). The relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention (Ahmad et al., 2010; Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011) as well as intention to remain in the organization (Dávila, Díz-Morales, Pasquini & Giannini, 2010) also been studied.

On top of that, employee's psychological well-being also helped fostered the development of organizational commitment where high level of psychological well-being enhanced employee's commitment to their organization (Grawitch, Trares & Kohler, 2007). Employee's well-being can be defined and conceptualized in several ways, such as meaningful work, the effective response to the work environment, the proportion between positive and negative affect that experienced at work, and others (Sirgy, 2012). Particularly, employees who perceived their work as meaningful found their work more satisfying. Besides, employees' well-being tends to increase when they experienced more positive affect in their workplace. Empirically, Grawitch and colleagues (2007) found that satisfaction towards an organization enhanced employee's well-being and affective commitment while reduced turnover intention. Rathi (2011) found similar findings in later years where employees with high level of psychological well-being showed higher affective and normative commitments to the organization. This could be explained where employees with high well-being perceived their working environment more positively than those with lower well-being, and the positive experiences helped yielding higher levels of affective and normative commitments.

When integrated with job satisfaction, psychological well-being also played a part in employee's turnover and absenteeism (Riggio, 2009). High job satisfaction was associated with increased employee's productivity, lower absenteeism and lower turnover. For instance, employees who have positive feelings about their jobs and

current work organizations were less likely absent from work and leave their current job compared to those with negative attitudes about their job (Riggio, 2009). Moreover, Sharma and Bajpai (2011) found that salary dissatisfaction decreased job satisfaction, while increased absenteeism and turnover intention. Bowling, Hendricks and Wagner (2008) did a meta-analysis on the relationship between positive and negative affectivity on satisfaction towards five job facets, namely work itself, supervision, co-workers, pay and promotion. They found that both positive affectivity ($\beta = .25$, $p<.01$) and negative affectivity ($\beta = -.21$, $p<.01$) showed stronger positive relationships with satisfaction with work itself than other facets. In addition, as consistent with previous prediction, Bowling and colleagues found that positive affectivity was strongly associated to satisfaction with promotion than negative affectivity where positive affectivity was related to pleasant stimuli; in this case, satisfaction towards work-related rewards like pay raise and promotions (Bowling et al., 2008). Likewise, past studies found that valuable and productive employees who did not receive work-related rewards were more likely to leave their job. Also, employees who perceived themselves as being treated unfairly in the organization were more prone to leave (Griffeth & Gaertner, 2001) as well.

Some employees feel insecure on their current job and hence fear of losing the job. Thus, it would lead them to lose in work motivation which in turn lost commitment to their job. In this case, these employees need to be assured that their jobs were secure, or else they may not exert much effort in achieving organization's objectives (Nehmeh, 2009). Research found that employee's work effort has a positive relationship with organizational commitment where the more committed the employee to an organization, the greater the effort exerted by the employee in performing task. This is because committed employees were more likely eager about their job, and they were more motivated to dedicate time and effort to accomplish the task given (Nehmeh, 2009). Baugh and Roberts (1994) illustrated that committed employees had high expectations on their performance and thus performed better. Besides, employees who were committed to their profession showed higher level of commitment to the organization. Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro (1990) found that employees who feel that they were cared by their organizations have higher levels of commitment. Besides, they were more conscious about their responsibilities, and have greater involvement in the organization.

Therefore, in order to stay committed, employees should feel valued and recognized by the organization (Nehmeh, 2009). Workers who feel that they have some influence within the organization were probably more satisfied with their current job and hence more committed to the organization (Riggio, 2009). Besides, involved employees in goals and task strategies formulation (Kuean et al., 2010) promoted greater commitment to an organization. Kuusio and colleagues (2010) revealed that work-related psychosocial factors such as high job demands, low job control, and poor colleague consultation were all significantly positively correlated to organizational commitment. In short, organizations must concerned with both the employee's job satisfaction and organizational commitment levels in order to maintain high-quality and loyal workforce.

In promoting the organizational commitment level among young working adults, it is important to study what other factors that contributed to the development of this

attitude. Past studies have documented that individual's self-perception (i.e. individual's self-construal) was linked with their attitudes and feelings toward the organization. Particularly, studies on Noordin (2009) indicated that Malaysian respondents were mainly collectivistic in nature regardless with the inculcation of individualism factor. Self-construal stressed the way individuals viewed themselves as independent from or related to others. Independent self-construal was defined as the way people conceived the self to be unique, independent and separate from social group (Franzoi, 2006). Interdependent self-construal, on the other hand, was defined as the way people conceived the self in terms of belongingness, connectedness and dependent on the social group which they belong (Franzoi, 2006). Oftentimes, independent self-construal was comprehended as individualistic while interdependent self-construal was comprehended as collectivistic. Research found that collectivists were more likely to develop organizational commitment compared to individualists (Wang, Bishop, Chen & Dow Scott, 2002) and youth with interdependent self-construal tend to believe that other people will stay committed to an organization (Marcotte, 2011) compared to those with independent self-construal.

On top of that, other self-perception such as social comparison was also found to have an association with organizational commitment. People socially compared for self-evaluation and they may generate either or both positive and negative feelings, such as happy, envy and frustration. In organizations, employees engaged in social comparison for motivation and self-evaluation in order to assess own performance with others' performance (e.g. Sweeney & McFarlin, 2004). Two components of social comparison which were upward social comparison and downward social comparison. Employees who employed upward comparison, they were comparing themselves with others who were better than them on certain ability. Employees who employed downward comparison, in contrast, they were comparing themselves with others who were worse than them on certain ability. Young workers who engaged in upward comparison were more likely to identify themselves with the organization and thus showed more commitment to the organization (e.g. Carmona, Buunk, Peiró & Dijkstra, 2005).

In brief, understanding young working adults' levels of organizational commitment and factors that fostered the development of organizational commitment was deem necessary to support the fact that young working adults with higher level of organizational commitment were more likely to stay with the organization and becoming a productive employees. Numerous factors may foster the development of organizational commitment. The present study, however, was specifically focused on two psychological variables, namely self-construal and social comparison. By comprehending these two factors, it helped gathered information of the influence on job satisfaction and commitment to the organization among young working adults.

1.1 Problem Statement

Organizations need efficient and committed staff to run them in all types of environment. From an economic perspective, a high turnover has significant negative impact on the productivity and profits of an organization (Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011) as well as bringing destruction to the organization in both forms of direct and indirect cost (Ali, 2008). For example, selection, recruitment and training of new

employees were direct cost while reduced morale and increased work pressure among existing employees were indirect cost incurred by an organization (Ali, 2008).

2013/2014 Randstad World of Work Report found that 70% of the employees in Malaysia planned to leave their jobs for better careers (The Malaysian Insider, 2014) which was the highest rate among seven countries being surveyed, namely China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, India, Australia and New Zealand. The survey was done via online questionnaire. The findings illustrated that uncompetitive salary, lack of recognition at the workplace, and lack of trust in senior leaders were the major factors that boost the decision to leave among Malaysian employees. In contrast, employees decided to stay with their current company when they have a strong sense of being valued and recognized as well as strong understanding on their roles in order to achieve organizational goals (The Malaysian Insider, 2014).

Young working adults or young workers who were in their 20s, also called as Generation-Y (Gen-Y) were adaptive to different employment conditions and they found changed jobs frequently especially for the entry level positions (Tee, 2014). According to Reed and Conisbee (2004), Gen-Y referred to individuals who were born from year 1977 to 1991. This generation emphasized on autonomy and seeks flexibility that they have control over their work task and when the job provided a work-life balance. However, they did not seemed to handling stress well compared to the elder workers and they were less attracted to benefits like bonuses and medical benefits. According to Department of Statistics Malaysia (2014), the young labour force participation rates were 17.3% and 33.8% for the age group of 15 to 24 years and 25 to 34 years respectively in year 2011. Gen-Y comprised more than half (51.5%) of the total employment in Malaysia compared to other age groups. Thus, they have significant influence on the organization's performance.

People criticized that employees nowadays were no longer loyal to their organizations as they used to be in the past. There was a common perception where loyalty towards the organizations was found decreased among younger generation or young working adults. Young working adults (Gen-Y) was characterized by having relatively lesser work experiences and unstable job tenure may experience lower level of organizational commitment and have higher intention to quit their job compared to the older counterpart. Young working adults tend to leave the organization when they received higher pay offered by other organization. Therefore, it became a challenge to the organizations to enhance a sense of commitment among young working adults and enhance the attachment and loyalty among their employees (Lo, Ramayah & de Run, 2010) nowadays.

Khalid, Mat Salim, Loke and Khalid (2011) examined the influence of demographic factors on job satisfaction in Malaysian utility sector. They found that older age cohorts reported greater satisfaction on pay, benefits, co-workers and nature of work than their younger counterparts. In particular, participants under the age group of above 55 years old reported more satisfaction on pay and promotion than age group of 25 to 34 years (Gen-Y). Besides, the same age group of participants also reported more satisfaction on co-workers and nature of work than participants who were less than 25 years old. Other studies (e.g. Kuean et al, 2010; Choong, Wong & Lau, 2011; Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011) merely mentioned the age group of participants without

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provided specific findings from each age group. Therefore, the lack of attention on the given age group (21 to 30 years old) highlighted a significant research gap that required further investigation.

An organization's success was highly depended on the commitment and participation of its employees. Organizations can help improved their employees' commitment by satisfying their needs, established mutual trust and created an appropriate organizational culture (Asgari & Dadashi, 2011). As employees became more committed to their organization, their retention rate increased, which in turn reduced operating costs (Liou, 2008). In contrast, when employees were dissatisfied at work, they tend to be less committed and will look for other opportunities to quit. Dissatisfied employees may create problems for their organizations instead of solving it. Research found that dissatisfied employees involved in counterproductive activities if they remained in the organization. The counterproductive activities included poor working performance, stealing, spreading rumors and sabotaged office equipment (Ali, 2008). Besides, when employees were not satisfied, they reported poorer mental health (Faragher, Cass & Cooper, 2005; Janyam, 2009) and modest physical health problems (Faragher et al., 2005).

On top of that, employees who perceived their needs were not fulfilled would lead to dissatisfaction towards job (Suhaime, Mahmud & Hasin, 2011) and this dissatisfaction was subsequently caused them thinking about quitting the current job. For example, employees first have the intention for job search where found other jobs that would provided them greater job satisfaction in future; followed by intention to leave; and ultimately lead to actual turnover. In contrast, employees who were satisfied with their current job and their coworkers were more likely to identify with the organizations, willing to put effort on its behalf (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 2010) and less likely to seek for other employment. Employee's involvement in their job was an antecedent to organizational commitment, and job satisfaction was said to have the largest effect on the commitment to an organization (Nehmeh, 2009; Bhatti & Nawab, 2011). Hence, organizational commitment and job satisfaction were important attitudes in examining employee's intention to leave and their overall contribution to the organization's performance (Lee & Ahmad, 2009). The present study was therefore interested on the effect of employee's job satisfaction on organizational commitment.

Job satisfaction has been examined in the literature to have influence on organizational commitment. Lok, Wang, Westwood and Crawford (2001) found that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between organizational subculture and organizational commitment. In particular, researchers found that only supportive ward subculture had a positive indirect effect on commitment which mediated by job satisfaction compared with innovative and bureaucratic ward subcultures. Besides, job satisfaction also mediated the relationships between psychological contract breach and organizational commitment (Antonaki & Trivellas, 2014) as well as between occupational stress and organizational commitment (Aghdasi, Kiamaneshb & Ebrahimb, 2011). Therefore, by looking at the potential mediating role of job satisfaction, the present study was designed to examine to what extent both psychological variables, namely self-construal and social comparison, and organizational commitment were related to each other when job satisfaction served as a mediator.

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Organizations were groups of people who worked interdependently toward desirable goals and people of all organizations have some degree of interdependence with each other (McShane & Von Glinow, 2010). Oftentimes, terms like individualism and collectivism were used at the societal level and individual level. Individualists cooperated with other colleagues or team members to attain group goals to the extent that the goal cannot be obtained by working alone. Individualists cooperated mainly for self-satisfaction. In contrast, collectivists cooperated as well as taking into account group interest than attaining personal goal. Hence, compared to individualists, collectivists were more loyal and committed to the organization while less likely left the social group (Rego & Cunha, 2009).

Traditionally, individualism and collectivism were conceptualized as opposite ends of a continuum. Yet, recent studies found that individualism and collectivism were two independent dimensions which can coexist in all individuals and all societies (Robert & Wasti, 2002). At the individual level, individualism and collectivism can be assessed as individual differences. Very often, people in the individualistic culture hold an independent view of self while people in the collectivistic culture hold an interdependent view of self. This is because individualist cultures fostered the development of an independent self-construal while collectivist cultures fostered an interdependent self-construal. Self-construal was part of self-concept where individuals viewed themselves as independent from or related to others.

By placing a high value on organizational commitment, individuals who hold collectivist orientation revealed more loyal and attached to a social group. Individuals who were attached to the organization tend to internalize the organization's value as their own and developed affective commitment to the organization (Angle & Lawson, 1993). At the cultural level, different individuals hold different degrees of collectivist or individualist orientations. It was expected that people in collectivist culture hold more collectivist orientation and people in individualist culture hold more individualist orientation (Wang et al., 2002). Wang and colleagues (2002) found that collectivist orientation was a significant predictor of affective commitment in China, a well-known collectivist country. This could be explained where group norms, beliefs and values were more salient to collectivists than individualists. Hence, collectivists were more likely to adopt organizational goals and values, and eventually more psychologically attached to the organization. In the West, Marcotte (2011) found that psychology undergraduates with an interdependent self were more likely to expect other people to stay committed to an organization than undergraduates with an independent self. While Marcotte (2011) examined the participants' perception of others' organizational commitment level, the present study however focused on participants' self-perception on commitment to the organization.

As mentioned earlier, young working adults (i.e. Gen-Y) highly valued work-life balance nowadays. 2013/2014 Randstad World of Work Report found that 51% of the employees across Asia Pacific, which included Malaysia intend to remain in their current role when they have high work-life balance. The survey also reported that 55% of Malaysian workers described themselves as collaborators. Thus, a flexible and collaborative workplace was more suitable for young working adults in Malaysia. In terms of self-construal, collaborative was highly associated with the conception of interdependent self-construal where individuals who hold an interdependent view of

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self emphasized cooperation and closed relationship with others. Therefore, it was assumed that more young working adults in the present study described themselves as interdependent self and hence more attached to the organization.

Social comparison also found to have an association with organizational commitment. A social comparison process was a process in which individuals learned about their abilities and attitudes by comparing themselves with other people (Aronson, Wilson & Akert, 2007) who was either better-off or worse-off. It was assumed that the way young working adults identified themselves with others who were either did better or worse than them have an impact on the commitment with respect to their organization. Carmona and colleagues (2005) examined the relationships between social comparison, organizational commitment and identification among Spanish and Dutch samples. Researchers found that Spanish workers who focused on similarities with others showed higher level of organizational commitment and identification when comparing with successful colleagues. Dutch workers, on the other hand, concentrated more on distances with others showed lower level of organizational commitment.

Therefore, the fundamental question of this research was whether there were relationships between self-construal and social comparison on organizational commitment among young working adults. Besides, young working adults particularly, have been regarded to be less satisfied with their current job but the true effect on organizational commitment was still unclear. In order to overcome the limitation of past studies in these areas, young working adults' satisfaction towards their current jobs as well as commitment to their organizations were explained. Besides, self-construal and social comparison were proposed as two independent constructs in determining the effect of job satisfaction that may lead to organizational commitment level.

1.2 Research Objectives and Research Questions

Given the importance of organizational commitment, the overall objective of the present study helped to understand how could enhance young working adults' level of commitment towards the organization. This study aimed to achieve the objective by extending the literature examined both independent constructs that influenced young working adults' job satisfaction level and their commitment to the organization.

The present study was interested in exploring the mediating role of job satisfaction for further understanding from a psychological perspective, which was to determine job satisfaction as an outcome of self-construal and social comparison as well as antecedent of organizational commitment.

1.2.1 General Objective

The aim of the present study was to examine the relationships between self-construal and social comparison on organizational commitment among young working adults in Malaysia when job satisfaction served as a mediator.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

Based on the general objective, the specific objectives of the present study were developed as follows:
1. To determine the relationships between self-construal, social comparison, job satisfaction and organizational commitment among young working adults.

2. To determine the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between self-construal and young working adult's organizational commitment.
3. To determine the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between social comparison and young working adult's organizational commitment.

Therefore, the present study sought to respond to the following research questions:
1. Were there significant relationships between self-construal, social comparison, job satisfaction on organizational commitment?

2. Would young working adults rated themselves as more interdependent self than independent self?

3. Would job satisfaction mediate the relationship between self-construal and young working adult's organizational commitment?

4. Would job satisfaction mediate the relationship between social comparison and young working adult's organizational commitment?

1.3 Research Hypothesis

This study aimed to investigate that job satisfaction served as mediator for both self-construal and social comparison on organizational commitment. And hence, job satisfaction would influence young working adult's organizational commitment level. In the meantime, self-construal and social comparison have direct effect toward job satisfaction. Therefore, in line with the research objectives, five hypotheses were formulated as follows:

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between self-construal and organizational commitment.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between social comparison and organizational commitment.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between self-construal and organizational commitment among young working adult.

H5: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between social comparison and organizational commitment among young working adults.

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1.4 Theoretical Framework

The aim of the present study was to determine the relationships between self-construal, social comparison, job satisfaction and organizational commitment among young working adults. Four theories were applied in the present study, which included Erikson's Psychosocial Theory (1950), Festinger's Social Comparison Theory (1954), Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) and Social Exchange Theory.

1.4.1   Erikson's Psychosocial Theory (1950)

Erikson's theory had a significant influence on the study of human development from infancy to late adulthood. In Erikson's theory, each period of life was characterized by a distinctive developmental issue or 'crisis' (Arnett, 2010). For example, the crisis in adolescence was identity versus role confusion. Erikson observed that some young adults took longer time to achieve identity formation. This is because when the development in any of the earlier stages was not well developed, identity confusion was then more likely to be the outcome of young adult development. Erikson also found that emerging adults seek for identity explorations in love, work and ideology (Arnett, 2010) during the stage of young adulthood.

There were eight stages of development in Erikson's Psychosocial Theory. Some researchers named it as Erikson's Stages of Development. According to Erikson's psychosocial theory of development, each individual shall pass through a series of eight stages across their lifespan. Intimacy versus isolation was the central issue of young adulthood. Developed intimacy was characterized by integrated the newly formed identity with another individual in an intimate relationship (Arnett, 2010). Isolation, on the other hand, was characterized by an inability to form a lasting intimate relationship. While most researchers described Erikson's theory of intimacy in terms of intimate relationship or love, the relationship between colleagues among young adults were often understudied.

Erikson's theory focused on how young adults developed an understanding of themselves as unique individuals. In different cultural context, the conception of self varied. While Freud focused on childhood experiences and unconscious desire, Erikson stressed the role of social and cultural influences. Erikson believed that the sense of self that was established during the identity versus role confusion stage played a vital role in forming strong and lasting relationships in later stage. When young adults successfully completed this phase of development, it will lead to strong attachment with others (intimacy). Failure to successfully complete the stage can result in a sense of isolation and loneliness (Arnett, 2010). Intimacy could also be characterized as maintained friendship, participation in social groups, opened and willingly to interact with others, and able to make commitments.

Self-construal has its origin from Erikson's Psychosocial Theory (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In Erikson's point of view, identity developed as a collaborative concept between the self and context, which was a balance between individual desires and socially attribute role (Guo, Schwartz & McCabe, 2008). As a feature of identity, self-construal was the extent to which individuals viewed themselves as independent from or related to others. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), people from

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individualistic cultures have an independent self-construal while people from collectivistic cultures have an interdependent self-construal. Cultures influenced individual's self-construal which in turn influenced all aspects of behaviors (Matsumoto, 1999). As a result, members of the same cultural group shared similar behavioral patterns.

Self-construal influenced our cognition, emotion and motivation (Matsumoto, 1999). Independent self-construal was linked with importance of autonomy, and competitiveness. Interdependent self-construal, in contrast, was linked with in-group loyalty, social sharing of emotions and lower power distance. Generally, Markus and Kitayama (1991) was lack of a valid and reliable measure in measuring individual's self-construal. However, Singelis (1994) did. Singelis has developed a self-construal scale to measure individual-level of self-construal. Hence, self-construal referred only to individual-level cultural identity and cannot be used at the cultural-level of analysis (Matsumoto, 1999).

Trust has become the most important part within a relationship and it has been widely used on individual level, between groups, within groups and organizations. When individuals successfully complete the stage of intimacy, it can lead to comfortable relationships and developed a sense of commitment. In organizations, trust was crucial in enhancing employee's commitment and realizing the organizational goals, and the confidence from employees was highly depended on the consistency between employer's behaviors and actions.

1.4.2   Festinger's Social Comparison Theory (1954)

Festinger's Social Comparison Theory (1954) stated that people learned about their abilities and attitudes by comparing themselves with other people (Aronson et al., 2007) who were closed to them. People socially compared because there was no standard measure to measure against and they experienced uncertainty about themselves (Aronson et al., 2007) when there was no specific benchmark to perform as a guide.
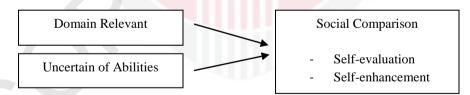

Figure 1.1. Social Comparison Theory

A comparison process was a combination of opinion and ability evaluation (Festinger, 1954). People would not compare their abilities with someone who was too divergent from them. This is because when other person's ability was either too far above or below from them, people may not be able to evaluate their ability accurately with that person (Festinger, 1954). Therefore, people preferred to compare themselves with someone who was similar to them. Two main components of social comparison which were upward social comparison and downward social comparison. When people

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engaged in upward social comparison, there were comparing themselves with others who were better than them on a particular ability or trait (Aronson et al., 2007; Baron, Branscombe & Byrne, 2008). On the other hand, downward social comparison occurred when people compared themselves with others who were worse or less capable than them on a particular ability or trait (Aronson et al., 2007; Baron et al., 2008).

In general, people referred to others as guidance for how much effort to exert and people who compared themselves with similar others tend to obtain information that closely related to them and for self-evaluation (Sweeney & McFarlin, 2004). At work, employees often employed the social comparison process to assess their own performance with others' performance. Hence, social comparison theory helped to understand worker's working performance which may lead to satisfaction with work outcomes when comparing with relatively others (Sweeney & McFarlin, 2004). In the past, social comparison research often focused on comparison in working performance that lead to job satisfaction. The present study, however, concerned whether comparing one's self-perceptions of social rank and relative social standing will lead to high or low level of organizational commitment among young working adults via job satisfaction.

Employee's perception of the social context was often constructed via social interaction with people who were working together and received feedbacks from them. A social comparison process occurred when employees evaluated and assessed their own performance with other's performance at work for self-enhancement. And these evaluations may evoke positive and negative feelings when they identified or contrasted themselves with those who were better-off or worse-off than them at work (Carmona et al., 2005). Hence, social comparison process may influence employee's well-being.

It was expected that how employees identified and contrasted their performance with colleague who was better or worse than them may have an impact on their level of commitment to the organization. In the study of Carmona et al. (2005), upward identification and downward contrast was classified as positive social comparison while downward identification and upward contrast was classified as negative social comparison. The study found that upward identification and downward contrast (positive social comparison) was positively related to organizational commitment but not upward contrast and downward identification (negative social comparison). Carmona and colleagues (2005) also found that Spanish workers who focused more on similarities with others (upward identification) had higher organizational commitment level when compared with successful colleagues. In contrast, Dutch workers who were more focused on distances with others (upward contrast) showed lower level of organizational commitment compared to Spanish samples when they compared with successful colleagues. Compared with successful colleagues could also mean employed upward social comparison. Therefore, the assumption was the more upward identification and downward contrast, the higher organizational commitment level.

1.4.3   Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959)

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory highlighted the role of motivation in job satisfaction. Herzberg stated that the traditional single-dimension approach of job satisfaction was inappropriate, whereby job satisfaction should not be ranged as opposite ends in a continuum from job dissatisfaction to job satisfaction. He claimed that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction were two separate and independent dimensions and thus came to a conclusion of two-factor theory (Riggio, 2009) where these two dimensions would affect separate aspects of job satisfaction. After interviewing with people from different professions at different level, Herzberg found out two important things which were factors that motivated employees in workplace and factors that prevented job dissatisfaction; named as hygiene factors and motivators. Herzberg suggested that each and every employee has two sets of needs, which were hygiene needs and motivator needs. Hygiene needs were associated with the work setting which was extrinsic to the work itself. It referred to elements such as salary, type of supervision, company policies and administration, interpersonal relations, working conditions and employee's safety. Motivator needs were associated with the actual work itself or job content. It referred to elements such as responsibility associated with jobs, personal achievement, chances for recognition, advancement, content of work and growth on job (Riggio, 2009).

Herzberg proposed a theoretical relationship between hygiene needs (hygiene factors) and motivator needs (motivational factors). Hygiene factors were factors that prevented job dissatisfaction. It did not make the employees feel happy or satisfy, it merely removed the unhappiness from working. Besides, hygiene factors did not necessarily motivated employees to excel, but when it was absent, it tends to cause job dissatisfaction or reduced employee efficiency. Motivational factors, on the other hand, were factors that helped motivated people at work. It gave employees an incentive to work which would result in job satisfaction. These factors may not result in dissatisfaction when they were absence; but when motivators present, it leads to job satisfaction (Riggio, 2009). In short, hygiene factors helped prevented job dissatisfaction but they did not lead to job satisfaction. Motivators, on the other hand, were real factors that helped motivated employees (Tan & Waheed, 2011). Therefore, both hygiene and motivator needs contributed to employee's satisfaction or dissatisfaction in their current job that may lead to commitment to an organization. By adopting Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (1994), job facets such as pay, supervision, fringe benefits, operating procedures, coworkers and communication were considered as hygiene factors; while promotion, contingent rewards and nature of work were considered as motivators in the present study. Therefore, the present study would like to apply this theory while explained the relationship between young working adults' job satisfaction with organizational commitment level.
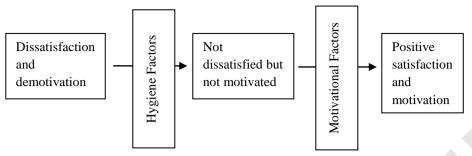
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Figure 1.2. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Motivation was a needs-satisfying process where when an employee's needs were fulfilled, he/she was more likely to exert additional effort toward attaining organization goals (Tan & Waheed, 2011). Motivation was also a process that prompted worker's behavior whereas job satisfaction was an emotional response that associated worker's behaviors and thoughts about one's job (Tan & Waheed, 2011). Herzberg's two-factor theory suggested that if managers were to keep employees happy and motivated, and hence more loyal to the organization, they have to eliminate job dissatisfaction by provided hygiene factors. Besides, in order to get employees put more effort into their jobs, motivators have to be present. In other words, employees should be treated well, compensated appropriately and justly, and provided them with job security. This is because employees were expected themselves to be treated fairly for the work they have done. If the expectation was not met, employees would most probably be dissatisfied with their jobs and thus left the company (Mudor & Tooksoon, 2011).

Tan and Waheed (2011) conducted a study among employees in the retail industry in Malaysia. Results found that 54% of variance in job satisfaction can be explained by Herzberg's hygiene factors and motivators. By adapting Herzberg's two-factor theory, results showed that working condition was the most significant motivator of salespeople, followed by recognition, company policy and pay (hygiene factors). The findings concluded that hygiene factors were more effective than motivators in motivating salespeople in Malaysia (Tan & Waheed, 2011). In terms of job satisfaction, money factor significantly helped motivated salespeople where individuals who highly valued on money were more satisfied with their pay and job when they received a desirable pay raise. This statement was supported by Sharma and Bajpai (2011) where pay satisfaction was an essential external reward that influenced employee's overall job satisfaction. Dissatisfaction in pay would lead to decrease in job satisfaction.

1.4.4 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory has background from the field of psychology, sociology and economics. This theory emphasized individual's social behavior when interacting with one another. The fundamental principle of this theory was individuals choose the behaviors that maximized the chances of meeting self-interest in the social situations. Homans' social exchange theory conceptualized social relations as exchange relationships where he was interested looking at the psychological conditions that encouraged individual to engage in the exchange process. Social exchange was

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regulated by norms, reciprocity and fairness. Theoretically, individuals who engaged in the social exchange process pursued rewards and avoided punishment. Individuals attempted to maximize profits and minimized costs for themselves and their behavior were often determined by their expectations for the rewards and costs.

Rewards, whether they were intrinsic or extrinsic, can be described as benefits exchanged within the social relationship. For instance, received recognition from a superior may be a strong reward or encouragement for an employee although it may mean nothing to other employees. Hence, for the first employee, receiving recognition from his/her superior could be a motivation or stimulus to perform the behavior in future; while for the second employee, the recognition from the same superior may not be significant to alter how he/she choose to behave in future. Social exchange theory suggested that individuals were motivated to gain rewards during social exchanges. When the reward was absence, individuals were motivated to avoid costs during the exchange process. For example, employees were motivated to exert much effort on their work in order to receive increment in return. Yet, when there was no increment, it may lead to low job satisfaction where pay served as an important factor in job satisfaction. Hence, the motivation for employees to exert effort on their work may merely due to sense of obligation rather than high job satisfaction level.

Reward or reinforcement principle has been used to explain the persistence of exchange relations (Cook & Rice, 2003). Homans' theory primarily focused on individual's social behavior emerged as a result of mutual reinforcement. The theory described the social behavior and the social interaction between individuals on how the behavior of one individual reinforced the behavior of another individual, and subsequently how the second individual's behavior reinforced the first individual's behavior in return. On the other hand, Blau (1964) viewed social exchange as a major process in social life and fundamental to the relations between individuals and between groups. He focused on the reciprocal exchange of extrinsic benefits within the relationship in which an individual expected some future return after he/she did another person a favor, and the social exchange was more likely to act in terms of obligation. When this reciprocal exchange concept felt on the relationship between employers and employees, employers would expect higher level of organizational commitment in return after taking into account the employees' needs and concerns, like offered them with high pay and fringe benefits. While employees valued intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, employers seek loyalty and commitment.

Social exchange theory also theorized the relationship stability in terms of comparison level for alternatives (CLalt) where solely satisfactory with a relationship did not determined the persistence of the relationship. This is because when the outcomes available in an alternative relationship exceeded those in the current relationship, there was a probability where individuals may choose to leave the current relationship or social exchanges. For example, when Company B offered higher pay for the same position, employees may choose to leave their current company (Company A) and received the higher pay offered by Company B. CLalt also found related to experience of dependence. Dependence occurred when individuals considered the perceived cost of engaging in a relationship to be high and it was determined by the level of satisfaction experienced during the relationship. Looking into Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model, employees willingly remain in the organization when

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they perceived that leaving the organization to be costly, and hence showed higher level of continuance commitment and dependency on the organization.

To sum up, social exchange theory encompassed five main elements. First, an individual's behavior was predicated upon the notion of rationality (Searle, 1990). The more reward gained from a behavior, the more individuals behaved in that way. However, when more individuals received a reward, the less value the reward became, and the chances for individuals to seek for alternative rewards through other behaviors were then be high. Second, the relationship was based on reciprocation (Searle, 1990). Each individual in the social relationship provided benefits to one another and the exchange has to be fair for the relation to last long. Besides, the elements to be exchanged were deemed important to the other person. Third, social exchange was based on a justice principle (Searle, 1990). In all exchange processes, there should be a norm of fairness or justice governing our behaviors. The perception of distributive justice comprised the equity principle between two or more parties within a similar condition. It means when an individual compared his/her reward to the reward of others when they received for the same or similar condition. Forth, individuals seek to maximize their gains and minimized their costs in the exchange relation (Searle, 1990). Last but not least, individuals participated in a relationship out of a sense of mutual benefit rather than coercion (Searle, 1990).

1.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the present study outlined the relationships between two independent variables, a dependent variable and a mediator. Self-construal and social comparison were the independent variables, organizational commitment as the dependent variable, and job satisfaction as the mediating variable. Based on psychosocial theory and social comparison theory, the present study assumed that self-construal, social comparison and job satisfaction have significant positive relationships with organizational commitment. In addition, based on Herzberg's two-factor theory, this study assumed that the relationships between self-construal and social comparison on organizational commitment were mediated by job satisfaction. The conceptual framework as followed:
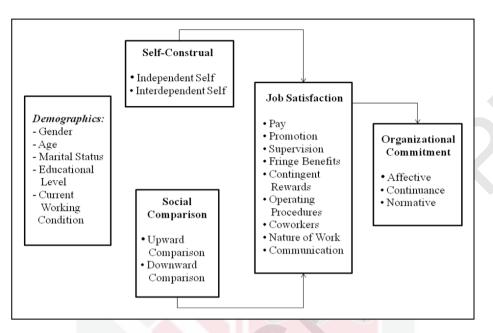
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Figure 1.3. The Conceptual Framework

1.6 Scope of the Study

Although the present study did not focused on young working adults' turnover, yet past studies (e.g. Ahmad et al., 2010; Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011; Kuean et al., 2010; Shore & Martin, 1989; Wagner, 2007) found that there was a negative relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intentions where lower in employee's organizational commitment significantly predicted employee's intention to leave the organization. The present study selected young working adults (aged between 21 to 30 years old) as main participants because they have been identified as having higher level of turnover intention compared to other age groups (e.g. Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011). Also, despite the vast number of studies on organizational commitment, young working adults in particular, received little attention among the researchers although they had studied cohorts from different age group.

In this study, young working adults who were self-employed and homemakers were not taking into account because they were not being paid where pay satisfaction or salary satisfaction found to be an antecedent of job satisfaction in past studies (e.g. Sharma & Bajpai, 2011). In addition, ample of past studies were conducted within a specific group of professions, such as nurses (Al-Hussami, 2008), teachers (Aydin et al., 2011), airline crew (Chang et al., 2010) and managers (Hemdi & Abdul Rahim, 2011). Thus, instead of concerned on one specific occupation group, the present study broaden the scope of participants' working condition particularly in terms of office-based (e.g. administrative and clerical task) and site-based (e.g. sales, external auditors, technician).

1.7 Significance of the Study

The present study focused on several issues that helped contributed to the literature. The first aim was to address gaps in past studies by examining the relationship between psychological variables and job satisfaction on organizational commitment, on one hand, and between psychological variables and organizational commitment, on the other hand, with a sample of young working adults. It was also to provide additional support to previous research about the importance of psychological variables, namely self-construal and social comparison that influenced young working adult's job satisfaction, and subsequently lead to different levels of organizational commitment. The second purpose was to provide information on the value of different theoretical perspectives that presented by Herzberg (1959) and Festinger (1954).

The present study would be beneficial to future researcher as guidance for further improvement on organizational commitment studies in terms of psychological factors. Findings of the present study assisted management or HR professionals to further understand their employees as an individual while at the same time served as a basis to design appropriate training courses specifically in the areas that enhanced employee's commitment to the organization. Instead of looking at employee's working performance and motivations, managers or supervisors should also considered employee's well-being, concerns and needs while keeping them happy and satisfied with their current job. This is because satisfied employees not only performed better in their work task, they also promoted greater organizational commitment that eventually resulted in less organizational turnover, job turnover and destructive behaviors.

1.8 Definitions

The conceptual definitions and operational definitions of all variables were defined in the following subheadings.

1.8.1 Organizational Commitment

1.8.1.1 Conceptual Definition

Allen and Meyer (1990) proposed a three-component model (TCM) of organizational commitment by identifying three components of commitment, which were affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. In this three-component model (TCM), affective commitment referred to employee's emotional bonding with the organization; continuance commitment referred to commitment based on the perceived costs that employees associated with leaving the organization; and normative commitment referred to employee's perceived obligation to remain in the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). In brief, affective commitment was the employees' positive feelings toward the organization and readiness to enhance their emotional bond with the organization; continuance commitment was the employee's willingness to remain in the organization; and normative commitment was the employees' believes or moral obligation that they have to their workplace.

1.8.1.2 Operational Definition

In the present study, the operational definition of organizational commitment adapted Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model (TCM) whereby commitment to an organization was defined as young working adults' emotional bonding, identification and attachment with their organizations. It also referred as an attitude toward employee's loyalty to an organization and a continuance process to remain in the organization. In particular, the researcher adopted Allen and Meyer's (1990) definition of organizational commitment in which affective commitment referred to young working adult's emotional bonding with the organization; continuance commitment referred to young working adults commitment based on the perceived costs that they associated with leaving the organization; and normative commitment referred to young working adult's perceived obligation to remain in the organization. Besides, the researcher also adopted Meyer, Allen & Smith's (1993) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) to measure young working adult's attitude about the company or organization that they worked in currently. Organizational commitment was measured in terms of affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. In short, organizational commitment was operationally defined as young working adult's attachment and loyalty to the organization or company.

1.8.2   Job Satisfaction

1.8.2.1   Conceptual Definition

Herzberg's Two-Factor theory categorized several elements into hygiene factor and motivational factor. Achievement, recognition, nature of the work and responsibility were examples of hygiene factors whilst pay, supervision and working conditions were factors that lead to motivation. Based on the global approach school of thought, overall job satisfaction was much important than the sum of satisfaction with separate job facets (Riggio, 2009).

1.8.2.2   Operational Definition

In the present study, job satisfaction was operationally defined as the extent to which young working adults satisfied or dissatisfied with their current jobs. The researcher adopted Job Satisfaction Survey from Spector (1994) to assess young working adult's job satisfaction with regard to their current job. There were nine job facets derived from Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (1994) which included pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work, and communication. Hence, job satisfaction was defined in terms of these nine facets. The descriptions of the nine job facets adopted from Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (1994) were illustrated in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Descriptions of Job Satisfaction Facets (Spector, 1994)	
Scale	**Description**
Pay	Pay and remuneration
Promotion	Promotion opportunities
Supervision	Immediate supervisor
Fringe Benefits	Monetary and nonmonetary fringe benefits
Contingent Rewards	Appreciation, recognition, and rewards for good work
Operating Procedures	Operating policies and procedures
Coworkers	People you work with
Nature of Work	Job tasks themselves
Communication	Communication within the organization

1.8.3 Self-Construal

1.8.3.1 Conceptual Definition

Self-construal is the way people perceived, comprehended, and interpreted the world around them so that they can make sense of the world and determined their own actions and judgments. Self-construal is the extent to which individual viewed himself or herself as independent from or related to others. Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed two dimensions of self-construal, which were independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal. Independent self-construal was defined as the way people conceived to be unique, focused on personal attributes and a being that was separate and autonomous from the social group (Franzoi, 2006). Interdependent self-construal, on the contrary, was defined as the way people perceived themselves in terms of social roles and a being that was dependent on the group in which they belong (Franzoi, 2006). An independent self was highly associated with independence, uniqueness and separation from others while an interdependent self stressed belongingness, connectedness and close relationship with others (Aronson et al., 2007).

1.8.3.2 Operational Definition

In the present study, young working adult's self-construal was defined in relation to their colleagues. It was operationally defined as the extent to which young working adults viewed themselves as independent from or related with their colleagues. Although past study (e.g. Lin et al., 2006) found that individualist (or independent self) and collectivist (or interdependent self) can coexist within a person, yet the present study followed the conventional studies where young working adult's self-concept was either categorized as independent self or interdependent self. This study adapted

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Singelis's (1994) Self-Construal Scales to measure young working adults' individual level of self-construal as two distinct dimensions, which were independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal where Singelis found that these two self-concepts were separate factors and not the opposite poles of a single factor.

1.8.4 Social Comparison

1.8.4.1 Conceptual Definition

People socially compared between each other because there was no standard assessment to measure them against and people may experience uncertainty about themselves in any area in lives (Aronson et al., 2007) without the assessment. Festinger's Social Comparison Theory (1954) stated that people learned about their abilities and attitudes by comparing themselves with other people (Aronson et al., 2007) that are closer and/or similar to them.

In general, people preferred to compare themselves with someone who was similar to them. Two major components of social comparison, which were upward social comparison and downward social comparison. When people engaged in upward social comparison, they were comparing themselves with someone who was better than them on a particular ability or traits (Baron et al., 2008). For downward social comparison, people compared themselves with someone who was worse or less capable than them on a particular ability or traits (Baron et al., 2008).

1.8.4.2 Operational Definition

In the present study, social comparison was defined as the global comparison that young working adults employed in relation to other people. The present study adopted Allan and Gilbert's Social Comparison Scale (1995) to measure young working adult's self-perception of social rank and their relative social standing in comparison with their colleagues on their current job. The 11-items bipolar constructs in the scale covered judgments concerned with rank, attractiveness and how well the young working adults think they 'fit in' with their colleagues in the organization (Allan & Gilbert, 1995).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Sample Demographic Questions

Age: _____

Gender: □ M
       □ F

Marital status: □ Single
           □ Married
           □ Widow
           □ Divorced

Educational level: □ below SPM level
                □ SPM level or equivalent (e.g. O-Level)
                □ STPM level or equivalent (e.g. UEC / A-Level / Diploma)
                □ Bachelor's Degree
                □ Master's Degree
                □ Philosophy of Doctorate (Ph.D)
                □ Professional Certificate

Current working condition: □ Office-based (e.g. administrative and clerical-task)
                     □ Site-based (e.g. sales, technician, external auditors)
                     □ Others: _____ (please state)

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Appendix B

Sample of Organizational Commitment Scale Questionnaire

Listed below is a series of statements that represent feelings that individuals might have about the company or organization for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular organization for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement of disagreement with each statement using the scale below.

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Undecided
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

1.	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	This organization deserves my loyalty.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.	1	2	3	4	5

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15.	I would not leave my organization right now because I have sense of obligation to the people in it.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	One of the new negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	I owe a great deal to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C

Sample of Job Satisfaction Survey Questionnaire

	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.	Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	I like the people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Raises are too few and far between.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6

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17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
19	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1 2 3 4 5 6
21	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1 2 3 4 5 6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1 2 3 4 5 6
23	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1 2 3 4 5 6
24	I have too much to do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1 2 3 4 5 6
26	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1 2 3 4 5 6
29	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1 2 3 4 5 6
30	I like my supervisor.	1 2 3 4 5 6
31	I have too much paperwork.	1 2 3 4 5 6
32	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1 2 3 4 5 6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1 2 3 4 5 6
34	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1 2 3 4 5 6
36	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Appendix D

Sample of Self-Construal Scale Questionnaire

This is a questionnaire that measures a variety of feelings and behaviors in various situations. Listed below are a number of statements. Read each one as if it referred to you. Please respond to every statement. Thank you.

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Somewhat disagree
4 = Don't agree or disagree
5 = Agree somewhat
6 = Agree
7 = Strongly agree

1.	I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I can talk openly with a person who I meet for the first time, even when this person is much older than I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I do my own thing, regardless of what others think.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I respect people who are modest about themselves.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I feel it is important for me to act as an independent person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	Having a lively imagination is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making career plans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	I feel my fate is intertwined with the fate of those around me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	I prefer to be direct and forthright when dealing with people I've just met.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I feel good when I cooperate with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15.	I am comfortable with being singled out for praise or rewards.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	Speaking up during a meeting is not a problem for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	I would offer my seat in a bus to my boss.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	I act the same way no matter who I am with.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	My happiness depends on the happiness of those around me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	I value being in good health above everything.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I am not happy with the group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	I try to do what is best for me, regardless of how that might affect others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29.	I act the same way at home that I do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30.	I usually go along with what others want to do, even when I would rather do something different.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix E

Sample of Social Comparison Scale Questionnaire

Please circle a number at a point which best describes the way in which you see yourself in comparison with your colleagues.

For example:

Short   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Tall

If you put a mark at 3 this means you see yourself as shorter than others; and a mark at 7 somewhat taller. If you understand the above instructions please proceed. Please circle ONE number on each line according to how you see yourself in relationship to your colleagues.

In relationship to my colleagues, I feel:

Inferior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Superior
Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More competent
Unlikeable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More likeable
Left out	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Accepted
Different	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Same
Untalented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More talented
Weaker	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Stronger
Unconfident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More confident
Undesirable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More desirable
Unattractive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More attractive
An outsider	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	An insider

Appendix F

Letter to Participants and Informed Consent

**Job Satisfaction as Mediator between Self-Construal and Social Comparison on
Organizational Commitment**

Thank you for taking part in this research. This is an online survey and the present
study aims to collect empirical data to investigate the relationship between self-
construal and social comparison on organizational commitment when job satisfaction
serves as mediator. Your participation is clearly significant to the study.

You must be Malaysian and of age 21 to 30 years old to participate in this study. You
should be working fulltime in your current job. If you choose to participate, you are
required to complete four sets of questionnaires. You are encouraged to report honest
statement on the questionnaires as the data would not be used against you in anyway. This
whole procedure would last about 20 minutes.

The decision to take part in this study is entirely yours. You may choose not to
participate and may terminate participation if you experience any discomfort while
completing the survey. No adverse action will be taken against you for your
withdrawal. I would be the only researcher handling your answers.

Your anonymity will be protected. Your answers to the question as well as your
participation will be kept private. No personal information will be released and only
group data will be released for academic publication or conference presentation.

Please e-mail us at the address below should you need further information. Thank you.

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□   I have read and understand the above statement and have been fully advised
of the procedures to be used in this research. I voluntarily agree to participate in this
study that requires me to complete four sets of questionnaires which will take
approximately 20 minutes. I understand that my participation in this research is
anonymous and all information will be kept private.

BIODATA OF STUDENT

I have received my Bachelor's Degree of Psychology from HELP University, Malaysia in 2010. I have continued my studies at Universiti Putra Malaysia for the degree of Master of Science in Social Psychology at Department of Social and Development Sciences.