

## 中文摘要

實習對企業、學校與學生是一種相互依賴的機制，實習生的生涯承諾是實習制度的延續性的效果，對所有關係利害人有重要的影響力，例如對業者而言可以從中挑選有潛力的員工，對學校而言，學生可以在專業領域佔有一席之地，可以造就學校的聲譽並吸引未來的學生，對實習學生而言不僅較容易在專業領域得到就業機會，同時可以降低再度社會化的成本，因此找出可以增加實習學生的生涯承諾的原因有其必要性，而人力資源措施是形塑組織成員態度與期待的重要工具，從社會化理論觀點，對於實習生可能會影響其生涯承諾，故需透過研究驗證此觀點。

本研究以旅館系已完成實習的學生為研究對象，透過問卷調查的方式，以自評的方式，有效問卷 154 份。實證研究結果發現：(1)激勵(2)訓練(3)績效評估是生涯承諾的有效指標，假說得到部分支持，結論以激勵理論、資源依賴理論與資源基礎觀點加以詮釋，並說明橫斷面資料的研究限制。

關鍵詞：人力資源管理措施，生涯承諾，旅館業，實習

## **Abstract**

Internship is an interdependence mechanism among businesses, educational systems as well students. Extensive effect of internship such as career commitment is beneficial for all stakeholders. For businesses and students, career commitment reduces re-socialization cost while interns continue career development in their majors after graduation. Besides, graduates gaining jobs in their major field represents expected performance of educational systems. Thus, investigation of factors affecting career commitment is critical. Human resource management (HRM) practices are vital tools to shape attitudes and perceptions of the individuals of organizations. Therefore, the research attempts to figure out effects of each HRM practices on career commitment of students who finished internships.

The research was conducted by questionnaire survey. 154 valid questionnaires were collected. The results showed that training, performance appraisal and motivation were significant predictors to career commitment. The hypothesis was partially supported. The findings were elaborated based on resource-base view, resource dependency theory, expectancy theory as well as motivation theory. Finally, limitations of the research were also explained.

Keywords: human resource management (HRM) practices, career commitment, hotel industry, internship

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## 1. Introduction

Due to open door policy for advanced vocational education systems, the quantity and quality of advanced institutions have been changed dramatically in Taiwan. For example, the numbers of universities of science and technology increase from 46 to 159 between year of 2000 and 2005. Graduates from advanced vocational education system, university of science and technology, have been occupied the majority of labor market. However, non-voluntary unemployment rate of graduates from advanced vocational education system has been ranked the top among subgroups for years. Therefore, it is important to figure out factors affecting career decision of students of science & technology universities.

From point of views of resource dependency theory, internship is a critical mechanism to deal with employment issue. The effectiveness of internship influences three-party stakeholders, including businesses, schools and students (Tovey, 2001). For host organizations, internship offers practitioners chances to observe potential employees and gain low-cost assistance from stable manpower due to contracts, and business also benefits from well-educated students who bring state of art knowledge into the firm. For educational institutions, it builds a bridge between campus and the real world; the cooperation may bring a good reputation for schools to attract ambitious students. For students, it is an opportunity to ensure knowledge and skills well-utilized and explore potentials. Meanwhile, it will be much easier for students gain a job from the agency they interned initially (Gabris & Mitchell, 1989). In fact, some interns do identify themselves to continue the occupation that they had chosen for their majors (Wentz & Trapido-Lurie, 2001), however, others quit from the “battle” where they had planned to march (McKerche, Williams & Coghlan 1995). Thus, the effectiveness of internship program for career decision is inconclusive. Internship experience becoming a terminator of career development at early stage is the last thing that we expect. It means a waste of educational investment for three parties. Therefore, it needs endeavors to trigger students’ career commitment, including motivation to continue working in the field same as their internship and persistent energy to pursuit career goals in a long term (Goulet & Singh, 2002).

The study attempts to investigate relationship between contextual factors, human resource management (HRM) practices, and career commitment of students who finished internship. It is because HRM practices are employed as vital tool to shape attitudes, perceptions as well as behaviors of all individuals of organizations (Collins & Smith, 2005) . Thus, we argue that HRM practices might affect perceptions of organizational outcome such as career commitment.

## **2. Theoretical Background and Hypothesis**

The impacts of HRM practices on interns' career commitment can be drawn from socialization theory. Newcomers are expected to become effective to the organization. Ceremonies, rites, documents such as standard operation procedures (SOP), rules as well as norms are employed to assist them to fit in the organization (Jones, 2005). The main purpose of socialization for interns who are with little or no relevant experience are called neophytes or initiates, will focus on acquisition of job and organizational knowledge and reduction of anxiety about work environment (Reichers, 2002). HRM practices are one of tools for socialization of newcomers like interns ( Hsiung & Hsieh, 2003 ) . For example, strategy for recruiting prospective interns should include policy of flexible working shifts, appearance requirements. Sometimes personality test or oral test in English or Japanese will be used to ensure that foreign language ability of students is qualified. Without using these crucial issues and methods to screen prospective interns, the organization might hire some interns who do not have fully readiness or are far behind standard due to manpower shortage. This mistake might add difficulties for interns to fit in the organization, in return, after internship, interns might choose not to return to the industry.

Second, on-the job training will strengthen intern's skill which is critical basis for building up confidence to deal with duties. Meanwhile, cross-training will offer a comprehensive picture of organization for interns, it is a chance for interns to explore potentials and not to get bored about jobs (Lee, 2005). Furthermore, "buddy system" training that pair newcomers with experienced employees will reduce newcomers' anxiety then helps them focus more intention on job performance (Reichers, 2002). Additionally, Hsieh and Hsieh (2003) indicated that job standardization requirement via SOP as a training tool would also decrease newcomers' role ambiguity and conflict.

Third, promotion policy will help interns evaluate their development opportunity in the future. For some specific field, like high technology industry, promotion relies on creativity, talent and ability but not tenure. The phenomenon may attract ambitious young adults to carry on career commitment. On the contrast, truncated opportunity for promotion will decrease the intern's career aspiration (Cunningham & Sagas, 2004).

In sum, various aspects of HRM practices not only assist interns to fit in the organization as well as help them have a better understanding of development about the industry and career opportunity (Rothman, 2007; Crossley & Mubarik, 2003). Similarly, Beard & Morton (1999) indicated that quality of supervision and organizational practices were best predictors of successful internship. Therefore, we assume that the perception of HRM practices will affect the students' willingness to keep career commitment after internship.

Hypothesis: HRM practices will be positively related to student's career commitment.

### **3. Methodology**

#### Sampling and procedure

The study was conducted via a questionnaire survey. Students finishing internship in hotels formed the sample. For data collecting, the authors contacted faculty at numerous universities locating in northern, central and southern parts of Taiwan for assistance to distribute and collect questionnaires from students. There were five faculty members at three universities of science & technology to join the study.

#### Instrument

The questionnaire design was based on previous research results. The questionnaire was on a 5-point Likert scale except demographic items. The measurement asked students to rate each item with choices ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Higher score reflects higher perception of the item. The first section, perception of HRM practices, including five dimensions, the first four dimensions namely selection/recruitment, training, compensation/benefit and performance evaluation, were adopted from Khatri's research (2000). Additionally, motivation dimension was adopted from Murphy & Poist's research (1992). The second part, career commitment, was adopted from Blau's instrument (1985). The third section contained demographic items. Items of HRM practices and career commitment dimension were listed in the appendix.

#### Analysis

First, the internal consistence of the two multi-item instruments used in the study was assessed by examining the coefficient alpha scores. Moreover, although all the scales and items were reported in previous research, a validity measure procedure was justified by factor analysis. The main reason of this stage was to clarify and delete poor items. Second, correlation analysis was tooled to examine the relationships between dependent variable and independent variable. Third, regression method was applied to test the hypothesis.

### **4. Finding**

There were 154 valid questionnaires collected from students of three universities of science & technology. With respect to profile of the sample group, 81.8 percent were female, 51.3 percent were seniors, one-year internship experience occupied 51.3 percent, 48.7 percent represented half-year internship program and the majority of participants had internship at

Front Office Department, Housekeeping and Food & Beverage Department.

The reliability measurement of HRM practices and career commitment were 0.837 and 0.878 respectively. However, Cronbach  $\alpha$  value of original items of recruitment and compensation dimension were not as high as the previous research. Based on factor analysis, two items were eliminated due to their lower internal consistency scores. Details were illustrated by table 1.

Table 1 Reliability Measurement of the Questionnaire

Dimension	Items	Cronbach $\alpha$ value
Human Resource Management Practice	16 items	Overall:0.878
1. recruiting/selection	2 items (elimination of no.2)	0.510
2. training	5 items	0.836
3. compensation	3 items (elimination of no.10)	0.708
4. performance appraisal	3 items	0.740
5. motivation	3 items	0.628
Career Commitment	8 items	Overall:0.837

With respect to perception of HRM practice and career commitment, data in table 2 showed that perceived HRM practices with higher agreement were training and recruitment. On the contrary, the lower agreement item was compensation. In terms of career commitment, the result showed that moderate agreement among respondents with a mean score 2.9495.

Table 2 Descriptive Analysis of HRM Practice and Career Commitment

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation
career commitment	2.9495	.56147
motivation	3.1190	.75328
performance appraisal	3.3660	.71611
recruitment	3.4545	.75269
training	3.6119	.61719
compensation	2.9416	.79772

With reference to correlation between HRM practices and career commitment, a result based on Pearson analysis indicated that training, performance assessment as well as motivation had significantly positive relationship with career commitment.( $r=0.190, 0.201, 0.224$ , respectively) Details is shown in table 3.

Table 3 Correlation Analysis of HRM Practice and Career Commitment

	commitment	recruitment	training	compensation	performance appraisal	motivation
commitment	1					
recruitment	.101	1				
training	.190(*)	.423(**)	1			
compensation	.128	.235(**)	.387(**)	1		
performance appraisal	.201(*)	.394(**)	.530(**)	.598(**)	1	



motivation	.224(**)	.305(**)	.540(**)	.545(**)	.540(**)	1
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\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In order to examine if causality relationship exists between HRM practices and career commitment, regression analysis was applied. We attempt to figure out effect of individual HRM practice on career commitment of interns in order to assist HRM practitioner to allocate resources efficiently. Therefore, the findings and suggestions are based on “best practice approach”. The result showed that three dimensions of HRM practices, namely training ( $\beta=0.190$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), performance appraisal ( $\beta=0.201$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) as well as motivation ( $\beta=0.224$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) were statistically significant. Not all five practices were significant predictors to career commitment, however, the result shown in table 4 suggested that better training, performance assessment and motivation practices lead to higher career commitment. Thus, our hypothesis is partially supported.

Table 4 Regression Analysis of HRM Practices and Career Commitment

	Career Commitment			
	$\beta$	t	R square	Significance
recruitment	0.101	1.239	0.01	0.217
training	0.190	2.345	0.036	0.02*
compensation	0.128	1.158	0.016	0.116
performance appraisal	0.201	2.494	0.040	0.014*
motivation	0.224	2.811	0.050	0.006**

\* $p<0.05$ , \*\* $p<0.01$

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

The research employed “best practice approach” to test our hypothesis. According to data of correlation and regression analysis, training, performance appraisal and motivation are significant predictors to career commitment. The relationships could be elaborated by resource-based view, resource dependence theory, expectancy theory as well as motivation theory.

First, the relationship between training practice and career commitment could be explained by resource-base view (Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2001) and resource dependency theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Resource-base view considers employees as one of resources of competition. There two ways to gain advantageous human capital. One is “buy” from labor market (external market base). Another is “made” at the organizations by training the employees. Especially for the latter, there are many benefits for organizations’ continuous training programs for employees such as avoiding cultural shock, knowledge exchange,

ensuring crucial core values controlled (Lepak & Snell, 1999). The calculation of knowledge and ability via training formulate both of organizations' and employees' competition. Moreover, the mechanism of training facilitates resources dependence between organizations and employees. The organizations need well-rounded employees to perform tasks. For employees, more training programs strengthen their professions to earn reputation or even monetary feedback from clients in specific fields. Take hotel industry as an example, well-experienced front-line employees have access to build up good relationship with important guests. The information that employees collect from clients will guarantee their important roles of service delivery. Tips are the most common as a feedback. If employees switch their career to other industries, they need to start over to collect resources in which it takes higher opportunity cost to start a new stage or network. Thus, we argue that the more training for interns in turn with competence, the more likelihood of career commitment is.

Second, according to expectancy theory, the organization is one form of marketplaces, the employees invest efforts and intelligence for their works, in return, and they will expect equal feedbacks (Aryee, Chen & Budhwar, 2004). Besides, performance appraisal system is a guideline for employees to perform their tasks, it is considered as rules for allocate reward. The better performance evaluation system is, the more clarification the employees can set up specific goals for now and future (Zivnuska1, Kacmar, Witt, Carlson & Bratton, 2004). Our finding that significantly positive relationship exists between performance assessment and career commitment is consistent with core statement of expectancy theory.

Third, motivation theory demonstrates that motive factors facilitating positive organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational citizen behaviors, performance and organizational commitment. Herzberg (1987) stated that effect of hygiene factor, like salary did not always motivate the employee. Instead, motivator factors like achievement or recognition worked. Our findings are consistent with the argument. The result showed that compensation system is not significantly related to career commitment. That does not mean the respondents do not care about the issue. It is because respondents are realistic that salary standard in hotel industry is not fairly competitive to other industries. Instead, they switch attentions to internal motive factors such as oral complements from supervisors and rites and ceremonies. Individuals of organizations are not always economic animals, material satisfactions is necessary but not sufficient to career commitment. Moreover, motivator factors should be stressed for individuals to reach the need of self-esteem and ego fulfillment.

The findings value effects of HRM practices on career commitment among colleague students. The results are explained via theories in strategy, organizational field. The research also offers implications for practitioners. However, there are some limitations should be mentioned.

First, we collected all data from a single source of respondents. This research suffers a methodological problem termed common method variance (CMV). The results are at the risk

of under-estimating or over-estimating effects of relationships (Peng, Kao & Lin, 2006). It seems that it is inevitable to have CMV problem because the antecedent and outcome variables are perceptual construct of individuals. Nevertheless, we adapted remedies suggested by Peng et al.(2006) such as reversed items to avoid consistency-tendency errors.

Moreover, the research used” best practice approach” in order to offers advices for practitioners to focus resources on specific HRM activities. Yet some scholars in strategic human resource management field are against “best practice approach” method for evaluating organizational outcomes. They criticize that idea of “one size fit all” is too naive and the linear relationship is too simple (Colbert,2004; Boxall, 1996). We do agree that HRM practices should fit the features of organizational structures, thus, considering contextual variables such as size, degree of decentralization, life cycle of organization will be helpful to justify the relationship between HRM practices and organizational outcomes like career commitment.

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## **APPENDIX**

We used the following scale:

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=feel alright, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

- Subjective perception of HRM practices as reported by students who finished their internship
  1. In the selection of new employees, my company uses employment tests (e.g. knowledge test, personality tests, language tests, etc.)
  2. In the hiring process, potential employees are provided with a realistic picture of the job and the hotel, including the negative aspects.(\*)
  3. My company conducts structured and standardized interviews (as opposed to unstructured interviews) for selection of jobs
  4. Employees in this hotel normally go through training programs every few months.
  5. There are formal training courses to teach new employees the skills they need to perform their jobs (e.g. service methods, bomb and fire emergency procedures, etc.).
  6. My company conducts systematic analysis to determine the needs for training programs.
  7. My company assess the effectiveness of the training programs by the degree of working behavior have been improved.
  8. My company evaluates the training programs to determine whether the training objectives

are met.

9. The financial reward practices of my company consist with my expecting.
10. Promotion is based primarily on seniority (\*)
11. My company has elaborate/comprehensive flexible benefits scheme.
12. My company constantly reviews and updates the range of benefits to meet the needs of employees.
13. Employee could know the performance appraisal result by the formal feedback system.
14. Performance appraisal includes the supervisor setting objectives and goals of employees for the period ahead in consultation with them.
15. My company emphasizes job-relevant criteria in the appraisal systems.
16. My supervisor often offers informal cognition (such as compliments).
17. My company has formal cognition activity (like selection of the best intern).
18. My company offers opportunities for advancement.

\* means the item was eliminated due to lower internal reliability score, therefore, only 16 items of HRM practices were remained.

● Career Commitment

1. I spend a significant amount of personal time reading profession-related journals or books.
2. I am disappointed that I ever entered this profession. (reverse coded)
3. This is the ideal vocation for a work life.
4. I like this vocation too well to give it up.
5. If I had all the money I need without working, I would probably still continue in this profession.
6. If I could do it all over again, I would not choose to work in this profession. (reverse coded)
7. I definitely want a career for myself in my current area.
8. If I could get another job different from this one and paying the same amount, I would probably take it. (reverse coded)

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明新科技大學 97 年度 研究計畫執行成果自評表

計畫類別： <input type="checkbox"/> 任務導向計畫 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 整合型計畫 <input type="checkbox"/> 個人計畫 所屬院(部)： <input type="checkbox"/> 工學院 <input type="checkbox"/> 管理學院 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 服務學院 <input type="checkbox"/> 通識教育部 執行系別：旅館管理系 計畫主持人：陳麗貞 職稱：講師 計畫名稱：人力資源措施與生涯承諾關係之研究 計畫編號：MUST-97 整合-402 計畫執行時間：97 年 01 月 01 日至 97 年 10 月 30 日	
計畫執行成效	教學方面 1. 對於改進教學成果方面之具體成效： <u>可以應用基礎統計將概念轉為結構性的數字說明，即以簡潔數據輔助說明旅館管理議題。</u> 2. 對於提昇學生論文/專題研究能力之具體成效： <u>1. 拓展研究主題的寬度 2. 量化研究方法的使用。</u> 3. 其他方面之具體成效： <u>執行統計分析軟體的熟練度與能力增加。</u>
	學術研究方面 1. 該計畫是否有衍生出其他計畫案 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 是 <input type="checkbox"/> 否 計畫名稱： <u>實習成效與生涯承諾關係之研究</u> 2. 該計畫是否有產生論文並發表 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 已發表 <input type="checkbox"/> 預定投稿/審查中 <input type="checkbox"/> 否 發表期刊(研討會)名稱： <u>The 14th Asia Pacific Tourism Association Conference</u> 發表期刊(研討會)日期： <u>97 年 7 月 10 日</u> 3. 該計畫是否有衍生產學合作案、專利、技術移轉等，請說明： <u>有，與「長庚股份有限公司」進行產學合作案。</u>
成果自評	計畫預期目標： 1. 與旅館業界建立學術交流管道。 2. 訓練學生的研究能力 3. 增加研究產能 計畫執行結果：該文已發表在國際學術研討會。
	其它具體成效： <u>無。</u>



