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Employee Empowerment in International Tourist Hotels in Taiwan: A Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

Empowerment in the hospitality industry is often regarded as a means to improve service quality and customer satisfaction by involving frontline employees with a focus on the employee-guest encounter. Because of the notion of empowerment many international hotel chains companies try to adopt and implement empowerment and transfer empowerment management practice to their hotels worldwide. However empowerment theory has barely addressed the implications of applying empowerment in a cross-cultural context (Klidas, 2001). This thesis explores in what way and to what extent national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice through cases studies of three international tourist hotels in Taiwan. The study's approach involved developing a conceptual framework of issues related to employee empowerment implementation. The investigation is based on the way that individual employees and managers give their personal views and experiences with regard to empowerment and look at the causes of any gaps between the empowerment rhetoric and practice. Relevant primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The study adopted an inductive approach to evaluate the implication of the research's empirical findings to understand better national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours. The results highlight the Taiwanese cultural value of group harmony orientation influence individual behaviour that may affect people's perception of relationship between managers and employees and how business should be operated challenging empowerment implementation. The contribution of this research is to our understanding of national cultural values have an impact on empowerment implementation and to the theory of the cultural relativity of empowerment.

To my family:
my parents, Lai, Yung-Chen and Lee,
Hui-Ju, for giving life, unconditional
love and support, as well as my elder
sisters, Lai, Shu-Chiao and her family,
for giving me strength to study the
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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study seeks to have a deeper understanding of the meanings of empowerment, the implementation of empowerment theory in practice, and also to consider the implications of implementing empowerment in different cultural contexts. Many organisations have to adopt new management processes due to the ferocious and competitive business environment which has existed throughout the world over the last three decades. This has occurred both in the manufacturing (Drucker, 1990) and the service sector. This has particularly focused on quality. Organisations are required to execute programmes which aim to improve their operational efficiency and overall quality so they can serve their customers better than their competitors (Shelton, 1991). It is believed that in service industries superior quality of service could be the most competitive advantage an organisation could have. Albrecht and Zemke (1985) recommend that high-quality service is delivered at the front line embodies a concept of service management which highlights the principal point that management is required to structure and orientate an organisation to be a customer-orientated culture.

The concept of empowerment is perceived to be an effective means of promoting this highly desirable quality. In an empowered organisation, the management makes an effort to encourage employee commitment, involvement, participation, and performance (Lashley, 2001). In general, empowerment in the management literature is regarded as the process of delegating and decentralising decision-making power (Conger and Kanungo, 1988) to lower level employees (Barner, 1994) or customer-contact employees in an organisation. Hence empowerment has been described as a means to enable employees to make decisions (Bowen and Lawler, 1992) and as a personal phenomenon where individuals take responsibility for their own actions (Pastor, 1996). However, there is a need to examine how national culture can have its impact when implementing the concept of empowerment, as some scholars have supported the belief that organisations are culture-bound (e.g. Hofstede, 2001). Thus, the relevance and application of management and organisational theory across different cultures is required further study. This research study is set within the context of the Taiwanese hotel industry to illustrate and examine empowerment implementation in a different cultural background. The study then focuses on cultural factors associated with the implementation of employee empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan.

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1.2 Background: the concept of empowerment

The cultural relativity of empowerment is the main theme for this study. Since the 1980s, many companies have been experimenting with various management programmes which including total quality management, downsizing, restructuring, bench marking, and re-engineering etc. (Ashkenas *et al.*, 1994) to respond to the increasingly competitive global economic environment. Redman and Wilkinson (2001) argue that markets are now more competitive partly due to globalisation and liberalisation by governments. This trend has made capital and technology widely available commodities for customers to choose. Therefore, it has been increasingly difficult for organisations to compete from a product-orientated perspective (Carlzon, 1987), as products and technology have been easily duplicated across international organisations (Albrecht, 2001). Thus, to provide high-quality service during service delivery is becoming a source of differentiation to gain competitive advantage (Sparrow *et al.*, 1994). The customer-contact employees play an important role more than ever as a medium to deliver service. The way that they respond to the needs and desires of the customer is a factor that guides customer judgement of service. This holds true particularly for the service industry, as service operations are characterised by extensive interaction between customers and suppliers. The quality of service provided to the customer is regarded as an intangible element of the product and manifests itself as an asset to the organisation. This is key to create a competitive advantage and outlining differentiation between competitors. If the customer perceives the quality of service as exceeding their expectations, they may even ignore some imperfections in the tangible elements of the service and still have a positive overall impression (Denburg and Kleiner, 1993).

The trend has forced the service industry to become more efficient and apply a more customer-orientated culture to ensure customers are delighted every single time, as the cost of keeping existing customers were several times lower than the costs of attracting new ones (Hart *et al.*, 1990). Thus, companies emphasise on addressing, meeting, and responding to customer requirements and paying more attention to the service delivery process in order to look after present customers and prevent them from defecting. Many companies make considerable effort to produce strategies that are designed for retaining their present customers, however, service failure such as human errors, customers' over-expectation, and the loss of control during service encounters still occur because of the service inherent characteristic. Thus, it is essential for an organisation to provide a proactive stance to reduce the occurrence of service failures and to equip employees

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with a set of effective recovery tools to repair the service encounter when failures occur (Hoffman and Bateson, 1997).

It has been suggested that service recovery is important for customer retention, as some researches indicate that customers who had their problems satisfactorily resolved during a unsatisfactory service encounter were more likely to become a repeat customer than customers who did not experience any problem at all (Zemke and Schaaf, 1989). If an organisation failed on service recovery, the firm not only loses the present customers but also potential customers due to the consequence of negative word-of-mouth which has ripple effect (Naumann, 1995). A study by the Technical Research Programme Institute reports that of the 91 per cent of customers who indicate they would not repurchase after a major complaint, 82 per cent said they would return if the complaint were recovered quickly (Kotler *et al.*, 1999). However, other researchers reported that customers who encounter no service problem had more positive attitudes towards the firm than customers who encountered a service problem that was satisfactorily recovered (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996). Thus, organisations recovered the importance of the role of the bottom-line employees in the customer retention efforts, as the responses of customer-contact employees is the critical factor to determine whether the customers were satisfied or dissatisfied (Bitner *et al.*, 1990). Therefore, they attempt to invest more in their employees, developing their skills and knowledge, motivating and rewarding them in order to perform more effectively and have better result. The empowering organisations provide front-line employees with the necessary resources and authority to respond immediately to customer needs, complaints or problems at the point of service delivery (Baum, 1995). Employees are thus able to adjust the service delivery process according to their own judgements to the needs of each individual customer to correct mistakes or problems that have occurred during service delivery to ensure that high quality of service is delivered and customers are satisfied.

The concept of employee empowerment, which advocates developing decision-making power and authority and more latitude to lower level employees and customer-contact employees in an organisation in order to enhance service quality seem to respond aforementioned issues. It is believed that in an empowering organisation empowered employees are more enthusiastic, committed, highly motivated and eager to satisfy their guests and constantly improve their service quality. The further discussion will be presented in Chapter 2.

1.3 The research issues

Although there is an abundance of literature on employee empowerment related to the service sector, the trend for employee empowerment can also be seen in the hospitality industry where the role of empowerment is regarded as an integral part of a total quality management framework (e.g. Woods and King, 1996; Goldsmith *et al.*, 1997), and of human resource management (e.g. Baum, 1995; Riley, 1996). The majority of literature on empowerment clearly has an Anglo-Saxon cultural background and has barely addressed the implications of applying empowerment in cross-cultural contexts. As Klidas (2001:12) asserts *'Empowerment theory has barely addressed the crucial question of whether the global propositions of the 'empowerment doctrine' are relevant in different cultural contexts'*. In addition, Lashley (2000) emphasises the form of empowerment in different service organisations and is best understood as an issue of "fit" between the management of employees and wider business strategy rather than one in which empowerment represents "best" practice in generating employee commitment to organisational objectives.

The work by Klidas (2001), considered employee empowerment in the European hotel industry and has provided an understanding of the concept of empowerment within it. This examines the implications of applying the concept in the cross-cultural contexts of the European Union. One of the main findings of his work relates to the importance of the cultural relativity of the concept of empowerment. This is achieved by examining the implications that cultural values have in the implementation of empowerment in different cultural contexts. On the basis of two of the dimensions of national culture of Hofstede (2001), power distance and uncertainty avoidance, the cultural relativity of the propositions of the empowerment doctrine was supported in his study. Klidas asserts that there are some issues that need to be addressed by empowerment theory in future research. In particular, the different cultural contexts and different approaches employed in order to gain the best understanding of cultural effects. This thesis takes up the challenge to further Klidas's work. This would allow empirical validation of the associations between national culture and behaviour of individual staff working in hotels in relation to the implementation of employee empowerment. This empirical research will focus on cultural perspective on how empowerment can be implemented in practice and how national culture can impact employee empowerment implementation.

To summarise: the previous studies mostly explored the issue of employee empowerment from the theoretical perspective and the empirical studies were mainly conducted in western countries where the studies rarely discussed the subject from the cultural perception in eastern countries. In addition, the literature suggests that the various management interventions and behaviours could contribute to the targeted outcomes of empowerment. However, since empowerment clearly has Anglo-Saxon cultural origins, the question emerges that whether the empowerment doctrine are relevant in different cultural contexts.

1.4 Study aim and objectives

The aim of this study is to explore the meanings and the implementation of empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan considering the role of national cultures may impact upon the empowerment concept. In order to achieve the aim, the study developed three objectives as follows:

1. To review the literature on empowerment and its implementation
2. To critically examine the literature on culture and explore Taiwanese societal culture
3. To develop, apply and refine a theoretical framework to analyse empowerment implementation. This includes its application for case studies of three International Tourist Hotels in Taiwan.

The research objectives are concerned with cultural influences and impacts on organisation, management, and employee perception and the ways affected by diverse national culture towards empowerment implementation and the evidence of any gaps between empowerment rhetoric and practice.

1.5 Taiwan case study

Taiwan covers an area of 36,000 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 23 million people. It is located in East Asia off the coast of mainland China (Administration Information, 2006). Taiwan once created an "economic miracle" that aroused the admiration of the world and its 3C products are sold throughout the global. Thus, the impression of Taiwan in the minds of many people is "Industrial Island" or "Island of Technology". Taiwan now faces many of the same economic issues as other developed countries with the prospect of continued relocation of labour-intensive industries to economies with cheaper work forces. Taiwan's future

development will have to rely on further transformation to a high technology and service-orientated economy. In addition, due to the high competitive business environment and products and technology have been easily duplicated across international organisations. The tourism sector becomes increasingly important for Taiwan for its further economic growth. According to the results of an R.O.C. (Republic of China/Taiwan) survey on the consumption and trends of visitors to Taiwan with the addition of domestic tourism expenditure by R.O.C. nationals shows the total tourism revenue of Taiwan's tourism industry in 2002 amounted to US$11.045 billion, accounting for 3.92% of Taiwan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Ministry of Transportation and Communications, 2005). Taiwan was chosen because it presents part of a new era of opportunity and challenge for the international tourism industry. The new slogan has been created "Touch Your Heart, Taiwan" based on the theme of Taiwanese warm hospitality toward visitors. There has also been "the mouldings of Taiwan from an Island of industry into an Island of tourism" as the policy goal (Yeh, 2000). Inevitably, the selection of the case study was also influenced by the pragmatic considerations of limited time and financial resources, and also the researcher has considerable familiarity with the destination. This is also an advantage as the researcher can conduct the fieldwork in his mother tongue and understand how people present their words based on cultural context. This study investigates the processes and relationships of empowerment implementation within the specific cultural context of the hotel industry in Taiwan. Case study research involves a detailed description of individual perception, followed by analysis of the data for the identification of key themes or issues (Stake, 1995). According to de Vaus (2001), case study design is helpful for both theory testing and theory building, which are important aspects of the present study.

In the Taiwanese tourism development conference in 2001, Mr. Bernd Chorengel, President of the Hyatt International Corporation discussed the skilled labour shortages and increasing turnover of staff that every operator is currently experiencing (Chorengel, 2002). Incentive plans, availability of compensation and employee motivation has become very important in the hospitality industry in Taiwan. It means organisations are required to allow individuals to develop and utilise their full potential for the benefit of the organisation and themselves. Many multinational and domestic hospitality operators and researchers assume that empowerment provide the answer and solution to these issues in the international hospitality industry. However, Watson (1993) considers cross-culture differences as important when examining and implementing empowerment.

The issue of the cultural relativity of empowerment demands further research. Klidas (2001) also declares that for future research empowerment must be both conceptualised and operationlised as a broader concept both from an aggregative and integrative perspective. Consequently this present research is required and is related to front-line employees and other employee categories to understand and also to explore how national culture can have its impact on empowerment implementation. A single nation study would allow research to associate cultural factors on the influences of implementation of employee empowerment better, as increasingly the number of countries of the sample their distinct economic developments and government policies could be the other factors that influence the implementation of empowerment.

1.5.1 Taiwanese hotel industry

In order to understand, describe and analyse the hotel industry in Taiwan it is useful to define the industry. Hotels play an important role in most countries by providing facilities for people who are staying away from home and to provide sustenance for people eating out. There are various types of hotels and many different terms to describe them. A hotel can be described in broad terms and it all depends on which particular criteria are used for classifying them. Different sources, like government bureau, marketing consultants, and other researchers, use different criteria for defining the industry. Medlik and Ingram (2000) list the criteria used to describe different types of hotels. The main criteria are location, the relationship with particular means of transport, the purpose of guests visit and the main reason for their stay, its range of facilities and services, size, and the ownership and management. According to the official government website (Tourism Bureau, Taiwan, Republic of China) hotels are divided into three main types of hotels, International Tourist Hotels, Standard Tourist Hotels and Ordinary Hotels (Administration Information, 2009). The total number of hotels in Taiwan at the end of December 2008 is shown in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2.

Table 1.1 The total amount and data relating to Ordinary Hotels

Ordinary Hotels	No. of Hotels	No. of Room	No. of Employees
legal hotels	2,673	105,179	37,149
illegal hotels	582	18,521	4,115
total	3,255	123,700	41,264

Source: Administration Information of Tourism Bureau, Taiwan, R.O.C. (2009)

Table 1.2 The total amount and data relating to Tourist Hotels

Tourist Hotels	No. of Hotels	No. of Room	No. of Employee	Overall Occupancy Rate	Average Room Rate
Standard Tourist Hotels	31	3,679	2,256	57.87 %	NT$ 2,234
International Tourist Hotels	61	18,092	18,441	66.04 %	NT$ 3,387
Total	92	21,771	20,697	64.67 %	NT$ 3,214

Source: Administration Information of Tourism Bureau, Taiwan, R.O.C. (2009)
Remark: New Taiwan Dollars (NT$)

International Tourist Hotels and Standard Tourist Hotels are both registered with and regulated by the central tourism bureau. Ordinary Hotels are not directly regulated by the tourism bureau but are regulated and licensed by local government under guidance from the tourism bureau. The tourism bureau also categorized ordinary hotels into legal and illegal hotels. The illegal hotels here mean that they have not been issued the hotel registration and license from local governments. Under the principle of central government guidance with local government enforcement supervision is provided on a scheduled basis to assist and guide in illegal hotels carrying out legal registration.

The official government categorisations and definitions of the hotel industry depend on the size of hotel. Both international tourist hotels and standard tourist hotels should conform to the standard of hotel architectural design, structures and facilities and also conform to construction, the latest fire safety and hygiene standards. If the tourist hotel is located in a residential area then the hotel and its facilities must occupy the whole of the building in which it is housed, in addition floor dimensions of total guest rooms should be greater than 60% of total floor dimensions. The tourist hotels provide accommodation and service for international and domestic travellers. There are also other same criteria instituted for the tourist hotel building itself and facilities provided, however in order to distinguish between international tourist hotels and standard tourist hotels some different criteria are laid down by central government (see Table 1.3).

However, the scale of the hotel industry is very difficult to measure precisely, as there are many different criteria used for defining and classifying hotels. Angelo and Vladimir (2001) consider that there are six different ways that hotels can be owned and operated according to ownership. To define the types of hotels seems to be more difficult than previously due to globalisation and the international development of the hotel industry. These have led to a range of types of organisation and business formats, from wholly owned businesses to franchises, to joint ventures and firms specialising in management contracts. There are several types of hotels according to the ownership criterion in Taiwan. These include domestic chain hotels, independent hotels, international chain

hotels, franchise hotels and joined management consultant hotels. The present study involved three international tourist hotels, one international chain hotel and two domestic chain hotels that operate in Taiwan. International tourist hotels were chosen because they offer better opportunities for the development of empowerment initiatives and the further discussion will be presented in Chapter 5. In Taiwanese enterprises, many western management concepts have been widely adopted. Empowerment clearly has an Anglo-Saxon cultural background and is clearly considered to have an American origin (Peter, 1989) this will be discussed in section 2.5. With Taiwanese national culture positioned at the opposite of American culture based on Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimension, it is interesting to investigate whether employees of foreign firms and local Taiwanese firms perceive empowerment differently.

Table 1.3 The different criteria between international and standard tourist hotels

	International Tourist Hotels	Standard Tourist Hotels
Hotel compulsory facilities	Restaurants, conference rooms, coffee shop, bar, banquet rooms, fitness centre, stores, in-room safe, cable/satellite TV (banquet room, fitness centre, and stores do not apply to the international tourist hotels established before 28 April 2003)	Restaurants. coffee shop, conference rooms, in-room safe, cable/satellite TV
Hotel optional accessory facilities	Night club, sauna, swimming pool, laundry, beauty salon, barber shop, archery, sports court, in-door amusement, postal and cable service, travel service, golf driving range, and other tourist related facilities approved by the centre government	Stores, swimming pool, banquet rooms, night club, sauna, fitness centre, laundry, beauty salon, barber shop, archery, sports court, in-door amusement, postal and cable service, travel service, golf driving range, and other tourist related facilities approved by the centre government
Total guest rooms	Major cities at least 80 rooms Scenic area at least 30 rooms Other area at least 40 rooms	Major cities at least 50 rooms Other area at least 30 rooms
Net square measure of rooms (excluding bathroom facilities)	Single room 13 square meters Double room 19 square meters Suite 32 square meters (a minimum floor space specified for the bathrooms provided of 3.5 square meters)	Single room 10 square meters Double room 15 square meters Suite 25 square metes (a minimum floor space specified for the bathrooms provided of 3 square meters)
Dimensions of kitchen of total F&B area	F&B area/ Minimum total kitchen area Less than 1500 sq/m /33% 1501~2000 sq/m /28% +75 sq/m 2001~2500 sq/m /23% +175 sq/m Greater than 2501 sq/m /21% +225 sq/m	F&B area/ Minimum total kitchen area Less than 1500 sq/m /30% 1501~2000 sq/m /25% +75 sq/m Greater than 2001 sq/m /20% +175 sq/m
Number of guest lifts of total guest rooms	Under 80 rooms 2 lifts 8 people 81~150 rooms 2 lifts 12 people 151~250 rooms 3 lifts 12 people 251~375 rooms 4 lifts 12 people 376~500 rooms 5 lifts 12 people 501~625 rooms 6 lifts 12 people 626~750 rooms 7 lifts 12 people 751~900 rooms 8 lifts 12 people	Under 80 rooms 2 lifts 8 people 81~150 rooms 2 lifts 10 people 151~250 rooms 3 lifts 10 people 251~375 rooms 4 lifts 10 people 376~500 rooms 5 lifts 10 people 501~625 rooms 6 lifts 10 people

Source: Administration Information, Tourism Bureau, Taiwan, R.O.C. (2009)

1.5.2 Taiwanese/Chinese culture

Central research intentions are to explore in what way and to what extent national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice. This is because employee empowerment practices are regarded as cultural-bound. Hofstede (1980) provides four dimensions, power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity/feminity to build societal divergence and the culture-bound thesis. Each of these values was constructed principally on the basis of statistical analysis of a series of works and questionnaires on employee satisfaction, perception of work, personal beliefs and work goals. Hofstede argues that the consequences of culture influences management practices and is more important when the application involves motivation, leadership, decision-making etc. In addition, Hofstede found a new dimension when conducting the Chinese Value Survey in 1985 and discusses long versus short-term orientations. For Taiwanese culture, Hofstede presents large power distance, collectivistic, strong uncertainty avoidance, feminine and long-term orientation. There are several authors have raised questions about Hofstede's research and his interpretation of the data and this will be discussed in section 3.3.1. It is indeed the definition of culture is open to interpretation and debate, while there is limited agreement on what is meant by national culture, in general, the culture of a society includes shared motives, values, and beliefs (Silverthorne, 2005). In order to understand what Taiwanese/Chinese culture is to review the traditional philosophical thinking may be a useful approach. According to Zhu and Warner (2003), four major streams dominated traditional thinking and are most relevant to management and employee strategies in contemporary Taiwanese/Chinese society. These are namely Confucianism, Daoism, Yi Jing and War Strategies. On the basis of these four ways of traditional thinking, the personal characteristics are cultivated through education. These reflect on the Taiwanese management system and employee strategy. In general, Taiwanese culture in the management field is regarded as hierarchy, paternalism, loyalty and commitment, strong personal connections in business and individual lives (Chen, 1995). The further discussion in relation to Taiwanese cultures will be presented in section 3.4.

1.6 Overall research methodology

Research methodology of the present study will be discussed in Chapter 5, which provides details of research approach, methods, and techniques that are employed. Constructivism combined with interpretive approach is considered appropriate for the present study, as the intention of the study is to understand employee empowerment implementation in Taiwan under an investigation that is based on the way individual employees and managers in three international tourist hotels give their personal view and experience with regard to this phenomenon. This qualitative methodological approach is characterised by a belief in a socially constructed, subjectively-based reality, one that is influenced by culture and history. This study will adopt an inductive approach in order to evaluate the implication of the researcher's empirical findings to understand better the nature of problem. The study seeks to contribute to the theory, as it is to explore in what extent national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice. The study is based on a series of case studies involving three international tourist hotels in Taiwan. This will give a cultural perspective to gain better understanding of the phenomena that is studied and categorised in three different perspectives; the organisation, management, and employee perspectives. Qualitative method, in-depth interview will be used to examine the employee empowerment implementation and other data collection will be sought from documentation and websites. Interview data will be collected from managers and employees based on empowerment themes and cultural issues. The analysis of qualitative data, four forms of data analysis will be used (Stake, 1995) and then build into three case study chapters. The results and analysis of the research findings will be presented in Chapter 6 to 10.

1.7 Outline of this present study

This present study comprises ten chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overall introduction to the thesis, the research issues, and the study aim and objectives. Chapter 2 attempts to have better understanding on the meaning of empowerment and its implementation in general. Chapter 3 identifies a range of conceptual approaches and definitions of culture. It also reviews the literature in relation to contemporary Taiwanese culture. Chapter 4 discusses the development of conceptual framework for this study that is then applied through the results, analysis, and final chapters. Chapter 5 explains the research strategies and methodology employed in this study in order to achieve the research aim

and objectives. Chapter 6, 7, and 8 presents respectively the findings of the qualitative research generated from the three international tourist hotels by the empirical research. Chapter 9 analyses the information provided by interviews conducted with managers and employees of the hotels and compares them with the available literature. Finally, the overall conclusions of the study and application of empowerment practice and theory and possible future research are discussed in Chapter 10, and the study's limitations.

1.8 Conclusion

Employee empowerment is regarded as one of essential managerial means to obtain competitive advantages. This chapter has provided rationale to position the concept of empowerment and has highlighted the research issues that in what way and to what extent national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice. From this the study aim and objectives were developed in order to explore the meanings and the implementation of empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan considering the role of national cultures may impact upon the empowerment concept. The case studies of three international tourist hotels in Taiwan were chosen for an in-depth assessment of employee empowerment implementation based on organisation, management, and employee perception. The overall research methodology that will be adopted in the study was briefly explained, followed by an explanation of the structure of the thesis. The next chapter reviews the existing available literature on empowerment and how it is implemented theoretically, discussing ideas relevant to the subject area under examination.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews previously published research relevant to the study of empowerment. It examines theories pertinent to the subject of employee empowerment in a cross-cultural context. The chapter provides an initial theory base to empowerment and its implementation. The review reveals that employee empowerment in a cross-cultural context (especially in Far Eastern Asia) has received limited attention in the literature. This is no surprise, as the study of empowerment in cross-cultural context is a relatively new area of academic enquiry. It will begin in section 2.2 where an attempt will be made to describe the meaning of empowerment in particular by identifying a range of conceptual approaches and definitions of empowerment. On the basis of the underlying notions of these approaches, an integrated approach to empowerment will be proposed. This will lead to the formulation of a set of dimensions defining empowerment. The latter will be presented in section 2.3 which will discuss the relationship while formulating the two aspects, the behaviour of a superior to empower subordinates and the psychological state of a subordinate to feel being empowered for implementing empowerment in an organisation. This study will describe a range of methods for organisational and management intervention and focus on the behaviours needed for the implementation of empowerment. This will provide theoretical support for their linkage to psychological dimensions of empowerment. Section 2.4 will briefly explain some negative consequences of empowerment. Section 2.5 will discuss empowerment and its cultural relativity. In Section 2.6 the conclusion will highlight the importance of cultural issues when studying empowerment.

2.2 Empowerment Studies

Empowerment has been widely employed in social and management science over the last three decades. Social scientists generally see empowerment as an antidote to powerlessness experienced by weak groups in modern societies. These groups include women, homosexuals, handicapped, ethnic minorities etc. The goal of empowerment here is to redistribute power from the traditional social orders and encourage individuals to gain his/her rights, equality, autonomy and to be '...*more active in democratic participation to influence community governance and social concerns*' (Short and Rinehart, 1992: 952). Employee empowerment has stimulated a growing interest in the

service industries since the 1980s, as in an empowered organisation the management makes an effort to encourage employee commitment, involvement, participation and performance and to further increase service quality (Lashley, 2001).The notion of empowerment is also frequently regarded as an antidote to powerlessness in management literature (Kanungo, 1992) and is the centre of the psychological empowerment approach (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995). In order to gain power and change the structural organisation hierarchy, there is a common assumption among the empowerment approaches where management practice across different management levels give more authority and discretion in task and context related issues to their subordinates. This allows employees to use decision-making power and sharing organisational resources which can benefit the employee giving increased job satisfaction and enhanced organisational efficiency. The definition here implies that management should facilitate and implement an empowerment culture, and focus on the importance of the individual to gain a truly successful application of empowerment. An empowered organisation relies on the involvement of everyone, including both management and employees to bring about its success.

2.2.1 Definitions and Meanings of Empowerment

There are abundant definitions offered by the literature to examine the notion of empowerment. Many authors that have researched empowerment tend to commence with definitions provided by various dictionaries. The most common definition gives two verb descriptions 'to empower': to invest legally or formally with power or authority; to authorise, license, and secondly, to impart or bestow power or ability to an end or for a purpose, to enable, permit.

The noun empowerment is defined as the action of empowering someone: the state of being empowered (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Lasley, 2001; Klidas, 2001). As a result, it allows for a wide range of definitions and relies on different intentions which effect the diverse interpretations. There is no single nor simple definition of empowerment and it is conceded that the idea too often lacks both theoretical clarity and empirical backing (Cunningham *et al.*, 1996; Wilkinson, 1998). In spite of this, most definitions focus on the concept of the dynamic process of redistribution of power between management and employee and also agree that empowerment is concerned with giving employees more authority and discretion or latitude over certain task-related activities (Conger and

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The term power is used and appears commonly in the definitions of empowerment; for instance, Conger and Kanungo (1988) refer to power is the central point of empowerment. Power is regarded as '*...the possession of formal authority or control over organisational resources*' (ibid: 473) and to transfer control by sharing authority to make employees belief that they have power to implement their own decision. Furthermore, they make a distinction between relational and motivational meanings of empowerment. The relational construct is built on the relative power to decentralise decision-making power of sharing authority and organisational resource between managers and their subordinates. However, there is an argument that employee participation through sharing authority and organisational resources is not necessary to implement empowerment as this effect is the same as delegation. Therefore, the motivational construct examines the psychological aspect of how subordinates tend to feel motivated when they are empowered. The aspect used to enable this, as enabling implies "to share authority" using the organisational resources that can increase the subordinates' sense of self-worth and enhancing personal efficiency. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) develop a cognitive model of empowerment that is based on the work of Conger and Kanungo. Empowerment is conceptualised here in terms of changes in cognitive variables and is recognised as task assessments, which determine the motivation of subordinates. There are four assessments in their study of empowerment and they propose that the higher understanding of these assessments that an individual has is positively related to feelings of empowerment. These four dimensions have become the representation of psychological perspective of empowerment, which is discussed in section 2.2.3.

2.2.2 The Notion of Empowerment

The definitions of the verb to empower provide an accounted explanation of the original meaning of empowerment. To "empower" has been referred to as the given authority or power, and perceived as the action of authorising within the management discipline. This approach has been adopted as a management technique employed by firms in order to increase organisational effectiveness (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Kanter, 1989; Spreitzer, 1996). A common assumption with this approach is the idea of delegation (Conger and Kanungo, 1988), however, Cook and Macaulay (1997) emphasise that this understanding holds the misconception that empowerment is just a fad word for

delegation. To clarify the difference, they compare the characteristics of delegation and empowerment in management styles (see Table 2.1). In addition, Foy (1994) provides an example which is easy to understand the differences between empowerment and delegation as she refers *'If you give your 12-year-old daughter money to buy jeans, that's delegation...If you give her a clothes allowance which she can spend as she chooses, that's empowerment'* (ibid: 2). This definition of empowerment can be related to an empowering management who stand in a more powerful position than their subordinates who are being empowered. The reason is because this definition actually relies on the management interventions, which are used for authorising decision-making power to the lower levels of organisational hierarchy and on the preconditions that are required for the delegated authority to result in the performance of the intended behaviour (Bowen and Lawler, 1992; Baum, 1995). Lashley (2001) provides an additional assumption on Foy's example as *'The budget head is defined, the money is to be spent on clothes, rather than being given an allowance with the freedom to spend the money as she sees fit'* (ibid: 3). Thus, empowerment in the hospitality service industry in this context is defined as *'...giving employees the power to make decisions as they think appropriate to enable them to serve the customer'* (Hope and Mühlemann, 1997: 330).

Table 2.1 Contrast in management styles between delegation and empowerment

Delegation		Empowerment
Manager decide what needs to be done to serve customer	vs	Individual decides what needs to be done to serve customer
Manager retains accountability	vs	Individual has accountability
Manager supervises output	vs	Manager acts as coach
Information is restricted	vs	Information flows freely
Individual is reactive	vs	Individual is proactive
Inward looking	vs	Outward looking

Source: Cook and Macaulay (1997)

However, empowerment in most cases seems to involve what senior managers decide on as boundaries concerning what should be done and what should not be done. This then gives employees discretion or latitude over certain task-related activities (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991; Bowen and Lawler, 1992). It is like management designs the system and employees implement it. While such definition is focused on task-related activities, empowerment should have its more wide-ranging meaning. Harair (1994) considers empowerment as giving freedom and this highlights the definition by freeing someone from rigorous control by instructions, policies, and orders giving that person freedom to take responsibility for his/her ideas, decisions, and actions (Carlzon, 1987), and the person here usually is considered the one at the lower

levels of organisational hierarchy. It is believed that bottom-line employees are closer to the work situation. Problems that are encountered may require a member of staff with greater experience when dealing with a customers' problem at this level. A manager on the other hand may not be able to affect a solution in this situation by virtue of their position in the organisations hierarchy. Barbee and Bott (1991) assert empowerment as being the act of vesting substantial responsibility in the people nearest the problem.

Aforementioned empowerment has been described as a means to enable employees to make decisions (Bowen and Lawler, 1992) and as a personal phenomenon where individuals take responsibility for their own actions (Pastor, 1996). However, from this approach empowered employees require resources from their managers and organisation to support their empowerment. Bowen and Lawler (1992) highlight these prerequisites including knowledge, information, rewards, and power to share with bottom-line employees. These four key features are asserted from top management down to lower levels of employees and are regarded as:

(1) Information about organisational performance (e.g., operating results and competitor performance)

(2) Rewards based on organisational performance (e.g., profit sharing and stock ownership)

(3) Knowledge that enables employees to understand and contribute to organisational performance (e.g., problem-solving skills)

(4) Power to make decisions that influence work procedures and organisational direction (e.g., through quality circles and self-managing teams)

(ibid: 35).

Klidas (2001) argues that this approach to empowerment is vague and fairly incomplete as the definition in Bowen and Lawler (1992) lacks evidence and does not explain why information specifically about organisational performance is considered empowering, but not job-related information; and also why rewards based exclusively on organisational performance are considered empowering but not based on individual performance. Blanchard *et al.* (1996) provide the answers on this argument. They assert to share information about organisational performance with every member of staff who works for an organisation is the first key of implementing empowerment, as it implies that management and employees trust each other. Boren (1994) defines empowerment as various skills to promote subordinates' capabilities and potentialities based on trust.

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The literature suggests that trust-orientated is a centre element while implementing empowerment in different contexts (Sternberg, 1992; Lashley and McGoldrick, 1994; Nixon, 1994; Hand, 1995). They also state in an empowered organisation people work as a team, therefore, rewards based on organisational performance will be more appropriate, but again the individual performance should not be ignored within organisational performance, as it is necessary to examine the individual's perception of empowerment within an organisational context (Menon, 1995).

2.2.3 Psychological Empowerment

Douglas McGregor is the most noticeable origin where empowerment comes from (Kinlaw, 1995), McGregor's Theory Y approach is relied on a belief of designing jobs that allow employees to exercise maximum control over their work which sustains employee motivation, productivity, and participation. The employee's mental resource has become a key element for improving individual and organisational performance, because the typical device of control and command is no longer continuing to exist in the mind of subordinates. It should be noted at this stage that this method does not fit into every organisation and can be seen to be more prevalent in western countries. As the generations in the developed Western economies were raised in a more democratic and liberal world, where it was generally conceded that people should have right to participate in organisational decisions and especially those affecting their working lives (Goldsmith *et al.*, 1997). Psychological dimensions of empowerment can be seen to emphasise the employees' perceptions and experiences of being empowered instead of focusing on the traditional way of studying management practices. Conger and Kanungo (1988) are among the first to conceptualise the empowerment construct in the workplace and have referred to empowerment as a motivational phenomenon related to expectancy and self-efficacy theories. Empowerment in this context is referring to an enabling rather than a delegating process. Enabling here involves creating conditions to ensure tasks are accomplishment by enhancing employee motivation at his or her work role through the development of a strong sense of personal efficacy. This approach is based on a motivational construct rather than a leader-member relational construct. It criticises the literature that defines empowerment as authority delegation or management techniques described earlier. The argument here is that there are many conditions when empowering an employee. The relational models of empowerment may or may not provide the necessary conditions, as an employee who has more power and organisational resources to deal with customers and to experience a sense of personal

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efficacy but has no guarantees of feeling empowered in his/herself. The main argument is that without the individual experiencing and feeling being empowered, empowerment does not exist even when managers authorise and share resource with their subordinates.

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) build on the work of Conger and Kanungo (1988) observe that power also means energy, therefore, to empower also can mean to energise which is the best term to capture for motivational usage and they suggest that empowerment should be regarded as a multidimensional construct. They subsequently define empowerment as increased intrinsic motivation manifested in a set of task assessments that reflect an individual's orientation to his or her work role. They outline four cognitions of task assessments, which include impact, competence (which is synonymous with Conger and Kanungo's self-efficacy), meaningfulness and choice. These four cognitions strongly rely on the state of each other, as an individual's sense of having choice on task objectives, and there is meaningfulness towards an individual's ideals or standards to evaluate the task goal or purpose rather than trivial, and individuals see themselves as having sufficient competence that they can perform tasks skilfully, and individuals believe they have an impact to make a difference whether their suggestions/decisions are supported or followed up by management. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) assert here that empowerment is a set of cognitions created by the working environment or context, not an enduring personality trait that is manifest across a situation. Empowerment here is defined to reflect employees' perceptions about themselves in relation to their work environment (Spreitzer, 1995). Spreitzer (1995) believes that without a theoretical drive measure for psychological empowerment in a work environment this would discourage substantive related research in the workplace, therefore, she validates measure of psychological empowerment, and defines psychological empowerment as a motivational construct manifested in four cognitions; meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact; and states that it is an active work orientation that an individual desires and feels able to influence or shape his/her work role and context. Spreitzer conducted and examined a number of studies on various organisational variables to investigate psychological empowerment through a common data sample, and it is later emphasised that all of these studies serve different intentions (Spretzer et al., 1999). A very similar definition of empowerment is suggested by Lee and Koh (2001) who define empowerment as the psychological state of a subordinate perceiving four dimensions, which is affected by empowering behaviours of the supervisor. These four dimensions as describing the psychological state of the

subordinate are listed below (Lee and Koh, 2001: 686);

> *(1) Meaningfulness Meaningfulness or meaning is the value of a task goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideals or standards*

> *(2) Competence Competence is an individual's belief in his/her capability to perform task activities skilfully*

> *(3) Self-determination Self-determination or choice means autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes*

> *(4) Impact Impact is the perception of the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative or operating outcomes at work*

This approach of defining empowerment implies that the measurement is basic by scoring perception of subordinates on the four dimensions. The lower the score the less the employee feels empowered and the higher score giving a greater sense of empowerment. However, for instance, even if subordinates score high on all the dimensions, it would be inappropriate to say that they were empowered, if their manager did nothing intentional to empower them. It seems these two aspects concern the cause and effect of empowerment, as '...*the behaviour of a supervisor as the cause of empowerment, while the latter the consequential perception of subordinates*' (Lee and Koh, 2001: 685). Finally, empowerment is regarded as a continuous variable (Spreitzer, 1995) rather than a dichotomous construct; subordinates may perceive different degrees of empowerment, more or less empowered, rather than whether they are empowered or not empowered (Lee and Koh, 2001).

To summarise: according to the major approaches to conceptualise empowerment, it can be divided into two basically different aspects of defining empowerment. One aspect is behaviour of a superior to empower subordinates; and the other is psychological state of a subordinate from being empowered (Lee and Koh, 2001). These two aspects are regarded as the cause and effect of empowerment.

2.2.4 An Integrated Conceptual Approach to Empowerment

As aforementioned, it is possible to identify two key aspects of empowerment from the management literature: first, the central underlying theme of management approach is the delegation of decision-making power and authority, this approach closely examines the role of managers and leaders; and secondly the psychological approach which
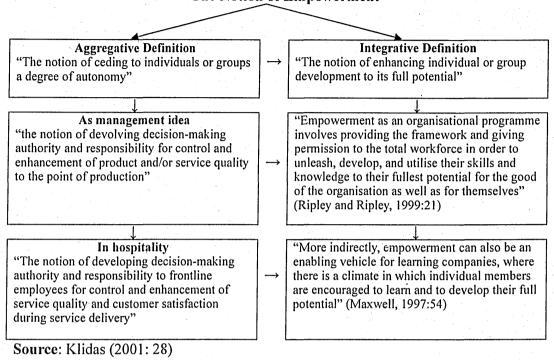
focuses upon how the individual perceives empowerment, it emphasises that both management levels and their subordinates have to be closely involved in empowering the subordinates. Thus, the definition integrates both relational/motivational aspects and behavioural/psychological aspects. In addition, the definition of empower from the dictionary "to authorise or delegate" and "to enable" are often fused together in the management literature, therefore, perhaps this could be taken to indicate that both meanings are necessary in order to make use of empowerment as a unique and fruitful concept. Excluding accounts of psychological empowerment, Klidas (2001) asserts empowerment in both the management and social context and seems to pursue both a narrow end of subordinate/individual or group autonomy, and a broader end of subordinate/individual or group development. But the fact these two contexts increase individual/group autonomy is often perceived as a means to the superior end of individual/group development. Klidas (2001) employs the study of Ripley and Ripley (1991) to distinguish an aggregative and an integrative definition of empowerment in management context (see Figure 2.1). In the first case empowerment is defined as '*...the vesting of decision-making or approval authority to employees*', and in the second case empowerment defined as '*...providing the framework and giving permission to the total workforce in order to unleash, develop, and utilise their skills and knowledge to their fullest potential for the good of the organisation as well as for themselves*'. The idea is that employees on any level or position are involved in all stages of production to influence the quality of the end-product (Klidas, 2001).

The definition of empowerment under this management idea implies that all members of the organisation, which include management and employees in back-of-house and front-of-house are responsible for the final stage of production of a product in order to determine the quality of the end product. For instance, housekeeping may be empowered to inspect a room to ensure it is achieved to the brand standard and if the guest has a special occasion, like an anniversary, they may be empowered to offer a complimentary bottle of wine or chocolates to put in the guest room before the arrival of the guests. Of course, for customer-contact employees they may be empowered to control the quality of service and to have certain authority power to make decisions when they detect a problem or sense that the guest is for any reason not satisfied with the service. It is believed that by increasing individual autonomy it will lead to individual development. As different skills are required the individual should look to gain the knowledge to accomplish the work tasks. Thus, empowerment is not only

regarded as management delegation of authority and decision-making power and the subordinates perceive and experience a feeling of being empowered. This is also a way to encourage all individual members in an organisation to learn and develop their full potential.

Figure 2.1 The notion of empowerment: Aggregative and Integrative definitions

The Notion of Empowerment

Aggregative Definition	**Integrative Definition**
"The notion of ceding to individuals or groups a degree of autonomy" →	"The notion of enhancing individual or group development to its full potential"
As management idea "the notion of devolving decision-making authority and responsibility for control and enhancement of product and/or service quality to the point of production" →	"Empowerment as an organisational programme involves providing the framework and giving permission to the total workforce in order to unleash, develop, and utilise their skills and knowledge to their fullest potential for the good of the organisation as well as for themselves" (Ripley and Ripley, 1999:21)
In hospitality "The notion of developing decision-making authority and responsibility to frontline employees for control and enhancement of service quality and customer satisfaction during service delivery" →	"More indirectly, empowerment can also be an enabling vehicle for learning companies, where there is a climate in which individual members are encouraged to learn and to develop their full potential" (Maxwell, 1997:54)

Source: Klidas (2001: 28)

2.3 Empowerment Implementation

The fundamental question emerges "how to implement empowerment?", as according to the definition of empowerment in section 2.2, empowerment is regarded as the behaviour of a superior to empower subordinates; and the psychological state of a subordinate to feel being empowered. This underlines management interventions and behaviours which are needed in order to develop the targeted behaviours of the subordinates. Lashley and McGoldrick (1994) assert that in the emerging literature of empowerment some themes can be identified: empowerment is individual and personal; it engages the employee at the level of emotion; it is about discretion, autonomy, power and control; and it is about responsibility, commitment and enterprise. Here empowerment is regarded as giving employees the responsibility and authority to carry out their jobs in a way that enables them to feel that they own their jobs in psychological terms (Potter, 1994). It is also about goals, the empowered people should understand what their jobs are about and be competent to undertake the tasks involved.

However, managers are often afraid of allowing freedom to exercise initiative to the person being empowered, as they believe their subordinates will not act responsibly or in the best interests of the business (Hand, 1995). Managers may expect that the task would be performed in the same way, as they would do it, instead, they should focus on results. Potter (1994: 5) emphasises *'It is rather like an aircraft flying between two points. The aircraft is only exactly on course for a tiny part of the flight. The pilot has to decide at what point to make course corrections so as to bring the overall progress of the aircraft toward the required destination'*. To approach empowerment, the first step is that everyone in the organisation should understand the nature of their job objective, their personal mission, and how their contribution fits into the operation of the organisation as a whole. The impression from the literature is that empowerment almost can be introduced into all organisations by following the steps approach and is regarded as a win-win scenario with gains available both to employers (increased efficiency) and the workers (job satisfaction) (Redman and Wilkinson, 2001), however, there are accounts of companies that have failed in their empowerment implementation. The argument is in order to implement empowerment successfully, an organisation must be prepared to view this implementation is a long-term investment, take risks, and ensure it fits into organisational culture. The biggest challenge for both managers and employees is that they require fundamental changes in their skills, attitudes and relationship in order to operate in an empowered organisation and to pursue organisational goals (Randolph, 2000). Empowerment basically is breaking the inner boundaries between management and employees in a hierarchical organisation and to create a flattening organisational structure to generate employee commitment and ensure optimum effort from employees (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2000). A flat organisational structure is necessary for implementing empowerment, as it enables employees to respond to customers' needs directly and promptly by unleashing their creativity and hidden energy that is directed at serving the customers (Carlzone, 1987). It means the front-line employees have some of the decision-making power previously held by middle management and they also have more room to make decisions and promote self-determination (Spreitzer, 1996).

However, it is necessary to clarify what commitment means in an empowered organisation, as Argyris (1998) defines commitment is *'...an idea that is fundamental to our thinking about economics, strategy, financial governance, information technology, and operations'* and also about *'...generating human energy and activating the human*

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mind' (ibid: 99). He emphasises there are two kinds of commitment, externally and internally, and both commitments are valuable in the workplace, as they can lead the employees to meet the organisational sales target, but in a very diverse fundamental thinking and only internal commitment reinforces empowerment. External commitment is consistent with old management style of command and control in a hierarchical organisation, employees have less power and control over their jobs and they only do what is expected of them, and will not feel responsible for the tasks, even when they know a task is not being done the best way they may continue to do it in a spirit of malicious compliance. External commitment has made many employees feel that they can only survive by complying. It is seen to be threatening and bewildering for them to take internal commitment. If managers want employees to take on more responsibilities in their employment role and develop internal commitment, individuals must be committed in defining work objectives based on their own reasons and motivations. Randolph (2000) is based on the work of Argyris's definition of two kinds of commitment and makes the clear view of the relationship between managers and employees in different operating contracts and provides the ideology on how to change from a command-and-control culture to a culture of empowerment (see Table 2.2). Du Gay and Salaman (1992) recommend seeking people to change in their behaviours, values and attitudes better through cultural change rather than structural change; therefore, it is important for an organisation to create a culture of empowerment in the workplace.

Table 2.2 Contrasts in manager and employee relationship between two commitments

External Commitment	Internal Commitment
Managers define tasks for employees at the level below	Individuals define their own tasks in the context of the company's vision and objectives, which are set by management
Managers specify the behaviours required to perform those tasks	Individuals determine the behaviours and action plan required to perform their tasks
Managers define performance goals for employees	Managers and employees jointly define performance goals for individuals
Managers specify the priority of employee goals	Employees and managers specify the priority of individual goals and how they relate to company goals

Source: Randolph (2000: 96)

2.3.1 The Change of Leadership

Empowerment in the service industry is a means to enhance service quality and customer satisfaction by allowing front-line employees to respond independently and immediately to customer needs, special requests or problems during service delivery. The process of empowerment is a deliberate organisational attempt to tap into that

tremendous potential and to enable people to develop and grow in terms of their performance at work. Therefore, empowerment is regarded as encouraging front-line staff to solve customers' problems on the spot, without constant recourse to managerial approval. The claim is that these employees must be given the discretion to act immediately and sensitively to satisfy unpredicted customer requirements, recover consumer confidence by remedying service failures and delighting customers by giving extra or unexpected service, all of which increase customer perceptions of functional quality (Gronroos, 1990). The best understanding of the concept of employee empowerment implementation is Kinlaw (1995: 7) who provides a definition of this as *'...the process of achieving continuous improvement in an organisation's performance by developing and extending the competent influence of individuals and teams over the areas and functions which affect their performance and that of the total organisation'.* The concept of empowerment implementation has been seen as a change-management means as it helps organisations create an environment where every individual can use his or her abilities and energies to satisfy the customers.

The literature suggests that to empower successfully the role of managers has to be examined, as the empowering behaviour of managers has considerable impact upon how employees perceive that they are being empowered. For example, Baruch (1998: 82) refers to empowerment *'...implementation will be dependent on the organisational state of development and is subject to the values and beliefs held by the top management team and leaders of the organization'.* To understand the changes of leadership in an empowered organisation is a core issue, as this change can cause problems with managers who are instinctively reluctant to allow their subordinates to be empowered. Reasons for this include *'...fear of loss of control'* (Capozzoli, 1995: 26), personal insecurity as *'...downsizing through the elimination of middle management positions'* (Ransom, 1994: 321), lack of skills in this *'...dramatic change from the familiar compliance model of management'* (Ransom, 1994: 323), fear of anarchy as *'...changed balance of power in the manager/employee relationship'* (Patterson, 1995: 46) etc., the empowerment theory does not provide an adequate response to middle managers or supervisors fears. Significant changes in individual and collective behaviours are essential on the journey to empowerment. To understand these changes, it is helpful to examine managers/employees and their most basic assumptions about how organisation should operate by managers/leaders. Nixon (1994) makes a model that shows the traditional messages with regard to traditional leadership (presented in Table 2.3). The

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model implies low expectations, low trust, and a need to keep control. However, organisations are demanding more from their employees than ever before where traditional command-and-control hierarchies are increasingly less appropriate. People who work in such a structure fall into the habit of checking with those above them to ensure that their intended decisions and actions are acceptable. Managers link their role and status to the authority levels and responsibilities vested in their post, enforcing a rigidity that it is difficult for the concept of empowerment to challenge.

Table 2.3 A model of the traditional messages about leadership

The way I see things is correct.
Keep separate from those you lead.
Avoid being vulnerable; pretend to be confident and to know; do not admit mistakes.
Be consistent to the point of rigidity.
Overwork and sacrifice self – thus become unfit, and often unfit to lead; demonstrate that work matters more than anything else.
People will not do things well or improve unless you reward, threaten, criticize or punish them however subtly.
There is a basic conflict between different groups and hence a competitive, win-lose situation.
Leaders pursue power rather than purpose.

Source: Nixon (1994)

Many different models for leadership have been suggested over the years because the aims and roles are constantly changing, not least between leaders and organisers on the one hand and staff or workers on the other. One of the early studies in 1990s is put forward by Simmons (1989) when he suggests an alternative leadership model for the 1990s that was thought to be more appropriate to modern times. Essentially it is a contradiction to the previous model. The model is rather revolutionary because it aims at developing an inspiring vision for the future, inviting others to contribute with their own ideas and visions. This includes a new attitude to the changes and uncertainties of times. An important aspect is to view the whole situation rather than narrow details, thus emphasising that everything goes well. Such an attitude involves the participation of everybody and prevents isolation. Consequently the leader must perceive him/herself as a leader of leaders and not as a leader of subordinates or followers; and this is contrary to what is seen as the role of leaders in the past.

Probably based on modern educational psychology pointing out that an atmosphere of warmth, challenge and high expectations are the prerequisites for good performance and learning, rather than criticism and blame, Simmons acknowledges the importance of the environment, his model trying to stimulate appreciation, expectations and mutual support. Another demand of the good leader is to regard him/herself as a perpetual

apprentice, enabling both leader and everyone else to learn and appreciating that in such a climate it is safe to be honest. Self-esteem must be developed to make it easier to be flexible, learn from experience and solve problems and difficulties. The model also emphasises the importance of building relationships based on mutual support in honesty and trust because this prevents isolation and helps appreciate the whole situation. Furthermore the importance of listening with respect and asking stimulating questions is emphasised because to release intelligence and initiative that are seen as a key in developing leaders, influencing others and helping people sort out their emotions. Finally the model aims at creating a culture where people take initiative rather than complain and blame, because the latter drains energy and initiative and results in powerlessness. He suggests that concrete strategies and plans should be made and reviewed regularly. The model implies the change of leadership is a complex interplay between organisational and human systems to create a culture of empowerment. The argument is that historically trends in leadership have not allowed empowerment and these attitudes are ingrained into management practice.

Change is impossible if the need for change is not understood. The task of leaders is to provide clarity of management thinking, a sense of direction, and a commitment to action, followed by an active role in making the changes happen. The key to empowerment lies with management. It is managers who must make the first moves: to provide direction; to begin behaving in new ways; to give responsibilities, train and support their subordinates so that the subordinates feel confident in accepting the new responsibility offered to them. This top-down mechanistic approach (see Table 2.4) relies on delegating decision making with a set of clear boundaries, however, this misleading of empowerment falls into danger, as the results would be greater managerial control as well as increased clarification and simplification of employees' work. Many authors advocate the mechanistic approach to empowerment and emphasise on sharing organisational information, imposing a structure for employees, and developing teams that have decision-making power that can ensure employee accountability. The managers need to provide relevant training and knowledge to the employees to ensure they can work collaboratively, have tools for problem solving, and understand company performance. Furthermore, they emphasise that the offer of compensation to reward employees is important, as it is a response to increase their responsibility and accountability (Quinn and Spreitzer, 1997). The argument in these practices is biased toward one assumption that '...*empowerment is something managers*

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do to their people' (ibid: 41). However, if empowerment is all about authority it is delegated from those who have positional power to the lowest possible level within the organisation or society to increase accountability among the lower levels and to develop problem-solving capabilities in the people at these levels to assist people in being responsible for their own destinies. It is seen to help the people in achieving their full potential and ultimately to have the positive impacts of empowerment spill over into the lives of all the people within the society or organisation. Then to consult with subordinates before implementing empowerment seems more appropriate, as empowerment cannot give, people have to want it (Hand, 1995). The organic approach to empowerment provides better strategy of perspective on empowerment (see Table 2.4), as it is a bottom-up approach and based on fundamental beliefs and personal orientations.

Table 2.4 Contrasts of mechanistic and organic approach to empowerment

Top-down mechanistic approach	Bottom-up organic approach
• start at the top; • clarity the organisation's mission, vision, and values; • clearly specify the tasks, roles, and rewards for employees; • delegate responsibility; and • hold people accountable for results.	• start at the bottom by understanding the needs of the employees; • model empowered behaviour for the employees • build teams to encourage cooperative behaviour; • encourage intelligent risk taking; and • trust people to perform

Source: Quinn and Spreitzer (1997)

2.3.2 To Achieve Employee Empowerment

The literature suggests that empowerment is regarded as to give increased power and authority, and corresponding responsibilities and competencies to employees. Empowerment is placing the responsibility for decisions and actions at the lowest possible level within the organisation and giving that level the tools, resources, and authority needed to decide and act. The benefits are to gain satisfied customers due to higher quality decisions, actions and outputs; and satisfied employees due to increased self-esteem, pride, confidence, and ownership of organisational outputs. As aforementioned empowerment seeks for individual's internal commitment, it is an internal decision by an individual to commit to achieve organisational goals and objectives. Many researchers believe that to implement empowerment fundamental changes in the mindset and behaviours of individuals throughout the organisation are needed. The assumption is that empowerment is a psychological perspective rather than management practice, it is also not a program but rather an involved process of change, and how employees perceive their characteristics reflecting personal experiences or

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beliefs about their role in the organisation. Some researchers suggest empowered people empower themselves (Quinn and Spreitzer, 1997; Randolph, 2000). The question is that employees have experienced to work in a hierarchical environment; they may not be willing to take the risks for the change and not be comfortable with the internal commitment. The literature generally acknowledges selection-recruitment, training, and rewards that can solve these problems, the key is to recruit the employees who are willing and able to exercise increased authority and take responsibility for their action related to the work; to provide appropriate training and enable employees to increase abilities and to achieve their full personal potential; performance-related rewards on the basis of performing their role effectively and fulfil management expectation that can improve their motivation (Crawford, 1995; Kappelman and Prybutok, 1995; Colling, 1995; Maxwell, 1997; Klidas, 2001).

The literature clearly describes recruiting of empowerable employees as a way to reduce the amount of risk involved when trying to implement empowerment within an organisation, as they are willing to and capable of learning and assuming increased authority and responsibility for the enhancement of service quality and customer satisfaction (Ripley and Ripley, 1992). An empowerable employee '...*basically refers to intrinsic qualities that cannot be taught, but are instilled early on (Fromm in Lovelock, 1995) and pertain to the individual's personality and psychology (Henkoff, 1994)*' (Klidas, 2001: 47). The importance of recruitment in human resources practices in the process of empowerment is highlighted in the literature, but as the interest of the present study is in the content of examining existing employee's behaviours, therefore, the study will focus on other factors that relate to the study objectives.

A culture of empowerment is regarded as a new world for most people in 1990s and it is still relevant new for people in non-Western countries, in addition, empowerment in hospitality remains a rather unexplored concept (Klidas, 2001). Thus in order to implement empowerment in an organisation, every employee needs to learn new skills, new attitudes, and new behaviours etc., therefore, training is probably the most frequently quoted factor for the implementation of empowerment. The aim of training is to ensure employees have necessary skills so that they can deal with their increased authority and responsibility effectively (Brymer, 1991), to exercise good judgement when making decision on recovering service failure (Sternberg, 1992), and to enhance their confidence and personal strengths while working in order to identify their role in

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an organisation (Dodd and Gutierrez, 1990). The bottom up organic approach to empowerment emphasises the importance of consulting with subordinates before the change conducts.

The first stage is to talk about the organisational situation and to share information with subordinates, as no one wants to be sold on the change; people want to be respected and want to be told and learn why the change is necessary. To share organisational information and resources with subordinates can clarify the vision and to give it meaning related to their jobs. This refers to the meaningfulness dimension (as defined in section 2.2.3) and to ensure congruence between the requirement of a work role and an individual's beliefs, values and behaviours (Brief and Nord, 1990; Spreizer, 1995). It implies that managers and employees require trust in each other, as interpersonal trust is regarded as the heart of organisational coordination and control (McAllister, 1995) and also a critical prerequisite before managers empower their subordinates (Mishra and Spreitzer, 1994; Mayer *et al.*, 1995). Here managers show their belief that the subordinates are competent, open, concerned, and reliable (Mishra nad Spreitzer, 1994) and the subordinates perceive that they are trusted by the managers. This will result in the subordinates having a high-quality exchange with their managers, as they receive high amounts of information, influence, involvement, latitude, confidence, and concern from the managers (Liden and Graen, 1980).

Although information sharing and consulting with the employees implementing the change helps to start the journey to empowerment, the issue is that the subordinates may worry about whether they have the abilities to operate successfully in an empowered organisation. Managers need to set boundaries within which the subordinates can use the information and resources they have so to be able to act with freedom and responsibility (Randolph, 2000) in order to transfer power and authority to lower organisational levels. Setting boundaries also means skill training, bearing in mind that people used to work in a hierarchical environment, therefore, they are unfamiliar with the language, skills, and attitudes of responsibility in relation to a culture of empowerment. Training and communication can be seen as key implementation issues. Without appropriate training before empowering people it is almost like sending people to a war without training them how to fight, it is similar to ask people to commit suicide (Sawyer, 1994). People need time and guidance to learn and develop the skills of empowerment. Empowerment is more likely to be practiced effectively when an

individual believes in his/her capabilities to perform a job skilfully. The literature

provides a range of skills that are required for implementing empowerment and

emphasises that the skills are aimed at enhancing an employee's competence in their job

role and ability to give customer care (Clutterbuck and Kernaghan, 1994; Klidas, 2001).

The training not only provides soft skills (see Table 2.5) but also needs to impart the

requisite technical and professional knowledge, for example, how to read a budget, use

software, and analyse an exceptions report etc. The literature also suggests the necessity

of teamwork in an empowered organisation, as team members can help each other

interpret and use the shared information more effectively. Under an empowerment

programme, managers and employees work together as a team, more in an adult-to-adult

relationship and less in an adult-to-child relationship (Johnson, 1995). The managers

play a role as a team manager and team coach, and it is no longer managing the staff but

all are responsible for enabling and facilitating staff to be more the self managing and

empowered. Hand (1995) assumes that managers may not be called managers at all,

they will be accountable to the teams with which they work and will succeed through

influence rather than command and control.

Table 2.5 Soft skills for enhancing employees' competence in customer care

• interpersonal and communication skills (Brymer, 1991; Ripley and Ripley, 1992; Hales, 1994; Lewis, 1995; Barsky, 1996; Hope and Mühlemann, 1998)
• marketing skills (Hales, 1994)
• decision-making skills (Hart, Heskett and Earl Sasser, 1990; Randolph, 1995)
• problem-solving and complaint handling skills (Hart, Heskett and Earl Sasser, 1990; Goldsmith *et al.*, 1997)

Source: Klidas (2001)

The second stage is 'making change' and is regarded a crucial phase of implementing

empowerment, as people encounter more complicated issues and concerns (Randolph,

1995). The employees may feel a tremendous sense of being lost, as they are inhibited

for fear of the consequences of making a mistake and lack the confidence to act

independently, to be creative or to make decisions by themselves. They express this by

asking for detailed procedures for action so they cannot be blamed for failure. The

danger is that if the managers provide answers and solutions to their subordinates

immediately then it is like continuing to demand external commitment from their

subordinates when they should preach the opposite of this, internal commitment.

Managers should introduce and encourage upward communication via suggestion and

speak up schemes, as this form of communication is seen more active in involving

employees with job tasks rather than them being passive in downward communication.

The trust orientation is required for upward communication, as employees need to feel

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sufficiently secure to voice dissatisfaction and make sure their voice/suggestion can be heard up to the top management and is adopted to have significant change in an organisation. The suggestion schemes here are regarded as part of upward problem solving. As employees identify problems and inform management, they provide the answer at the same time interacting with management to develop a solution to resolve problems. Managers at this stage must help the teams to '...*continue creating autonomy through boundaries by working with them to set challenging but attainable goals*' (Randolph, 2000: 104), but the employees retain the primary responsibility for setting and achieving their individual and team goals to fit into the organisation as a whole. The initiatives can be seen as self-determination and impact dimensions, as employees have autonomy over work behaviours and processes (Bell and Staw, 1989) and perceive the degree they can influence strategic, administrative or operating outcomes at work (Ashforth, 1989). Hypothetically each employee should have two jobs, one is to carry out specified tasks, and the other is to look for improvement (Morton, 1994). It is important for management to maintain information sharing to show their subordinates how their efforts have impacted on both business results and individual performance. People throughout the organisation will begin to realise that they have more freedom to operate and also have more accountability in an empowered organisation. As a result, to empower, managers have to trust that their subordinate's motivation is no different from their own. For the subordinates to commit themselves to greater ownership of the work they do, the subordinates must be able to trust their managers and feel able to exercise initiative without fear of recrimination.

The literature suggests that during upward communication or problem solving the employees will expect to receive a reward when their suggestion is adopted (Morrell and Wilkinson, 2002). The argument is that if employees do not perceive that rewards are available according to individual performance, they may not take additional responsibilities and show initiative during service (Schlesinger and Heskett, 1992; Klidas, 2001). Bowen and Lawler (1992) emphasise that empowered employees must be compensated for their increased responsibility and accountability, otherwise, employees may regard empowerment as a method that had produced more work with the same amount of money thus resulting in a reluctance to exercise empowerment (Maxwell, 1997). Performance-related rewards are emphasised as management assumptions that by establishing this type of reward employees will work diligently to meet the goals on which the rewards will be based (Simons, 1995). In summary, the

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conceptual model proposes that employees exercise empowerment depending on the level of reward perceived in relation to individual performance (Klidas, 2001).

The final stage but not the last, as empowerment is the process of achieving continuous improvement in an organisation. Managers and their subordinates must adopt and refine empowerment to fit the organisation. People have collaboration concerns and want everyone involved in empowerment in order to make a difference for themselves and the organisation. They want to use what they learnt of the new knowledge, skills, experience, and motivation to achieve results (Randolph, 2000). The literature suggests that the appropriate training/practices are undertaken and that changes in roles and responsibility are exercised continuously. This then results in the employees change in attitude so to adopt internal commitment, and is regarded as the psychological dimension (Morrell and Wilkinson, 2002). People throughout the organisation are encouraged to use their ideas to refine and improve the emerging culture of empowerment. Managers and their subordinates work actively together inside teams that are developed as a result.

The literature (e.g. Randolph, 2000) suggests that it is a long journey to implement empowerment and to achieve employee empowerment it is required that people throughout the organisation change their mindsets, assumptions, and behaviours, as well as the organisational systems to support the culture of empowerment. The literature suggests that empowerment should be implemented over a significant period of time with clear expectations, good communications, full participation, meaningful education, and appropriate consultation. Empowerment would not happen without effort.

Lasley (1997) provides a model for studying empowerment. He assumes that the organisational benefits will not be a simple and direct trade-off, and also one stage does not automatically lead to another. In the first instance, managerial perceptions of what empowerment is can be developed initially with consultations with their subordinates to shape the method in which employees shift from obeying to making decisions. This change is required in order to respond to different needs, and to offer different emotional benefits to employees. Similarly, responses to the first, second or third state of empowerment within an organisation needs careful consideration because individuals can be seen to react differently to these changes. This in turn has an impact on the feelings of those empowered. Are they affected by the process? And if they are, does the

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state of empowerment necessarily result in improved work performance which then results in the desired organisational objective? Fundamentally the study needs to be critically aware that one stage does not automatically lead to another.

Figure 2-2 The form, state and outcomes of empowerment

| Managerial intentions | Forms of empowerment | Change in working arrangements | The state of empowerment | Change in work behaviour | Organization objectives:
-improved service quality
-increased service productivity
-reduced labour turnover |

Source: Lashley (1997)

To summarise: there are abundant studies on empowerment and they could be divided into organisation, management and employee perspectives and each of them have its targeting empowerment behaviours (see table 2.6).

Table 2.6 A summary of empowerment behaviours and studies

| | Empowerment | |
	Behaviours	Studies
Organisation	Flat organisational structure	e.g. Barner, 1994; Clutterbuck and Kernaghan, 1994; Riley, 1996; Maxwell, 1997
	Customer-orientated culture	e.g. Ripley and Ripley, 1992; Hales, 1994; Hendry and Hope, 1994; Lewis, 1995
	Training	e.g. Brymer, 1991; Clutterbuck and Kernaghan, 1994; Colling, 1995
	Rewards	e.g. Bowen and Lawler, 1992; Nixon,1994; Simons, 1995; Quinn and Spreitzer, 1997; Morrell and Wilkinson, 2002
Management	Delegation of authority	e.g. Bowen and Lawer, 1992; Baum, 1995; Cook and Macaulay, 1997; Hope and Mühlemann, 1997
	Trust	e.g. Sternberg, 1992; Lashley and McGoldrick, 1994; Nixon, 1994; Hand, 1995
	Openness of communication	e.g. Brymer, 1991; Ripley and Ripley, 1992; Hales, 1994; Lewis, 1995; Barsky, 1996
	Sharing of information	e.g. Bowen and Lawer, 1992; Blanchard et al., 1996; Randolph, 1995; Baum, 1995
Employee	Meaningfulness Competence Self-determination/choice Impact	e.g. Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995; Lee and Koh, 2001

2.4 Negative Consequences of Empowerment

Lashley (1999: 172) comments '...enabling employees to sense their own power and the significance of their role in the service drama may help employees manage the emotions required of their performance'. Research has shown that employees who perceive task autonomy and decision-making influence and latitude are related to increase job satisfaction and reduce role stress (Zeithaml, et al., 1988). The positive perspective of

employee empowerment in service sector abounds in the literature; for instance, empowered employees are more willing to take responsibility for the service encounter, and respond to customers' needs or complaints more quickly; the increased internal commitment can lead them to take initiative and responsibility for their own performance and its improvement (Barry, 1993). Empowered employees have high commitment for the organisation and will result in producing more satisfied customers and gaining greater profits (Lashley, 1999). In general, empowering employees in the service industry is seen to improve the motivation and productivity of employees in order to improve service for the customers.

Although the literature provides many positive perspectives on empowerment, the question is, are there any negative consequences of empowerment? Hartline and Ferrell (1996) assert that although empowered employees gained confidence in their working abilities, they also experienced increased frustration, because the employees must take on extra responsibilities. Lashley (1996) refers to empowered employees as they interpret empowerment as a means to add responsibility and increase their workload without corresponding reward, and as a result are unlikely to exercise positive empowerment. Training plays an important role of implementing empowerment, as training ensures that employees can cope with the wider range of tasks required of them, however, this requires '...*substantial investment in training which may or may not pay off*' (Kappelman and Prybutok, 1995: 15). The increased responsibilities and improved skills required from empowered employees mean that they need to have better compensation and this will add to the labour costs. Empowerment requires a flat organisational structure, therefore, it needs a significant effort to be implemented (Ransom, 1994), as the organisation is required to provide new competencies to all members (Staples, 1990) and develop new power delineation bases for management and employees alike (Staples, 1990). Moreover, empowerment may have reduced the overall productivity of the service because empowered employees attempt to individualise the service for customers during service delivery process (Bowen and Lawler, 1992), and this might increase the waiting time for the next customer to be served for example. Empowerment also plays a vital role in service recovery (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991), as it needs employees to resolve the service failure immediately and less time is wasted in referring to their line managers. The possible danger is then that empowered employees give too much away (Rafiq and Ahmed, 1998).

2.5 Culture and Empowerment

Chains and franchises are seeking to expand their business globally more than ever in order to survive in a competitive global environment. The multinational companies tend to rely on organisational models and management techniques that have been developed in the United States into their global business operation. The question emerges that while the majority of theories of management have a Western and generally an American perspective, whether these management and organisational theories currently valid within the United States have universal value or applicability (Hofstede, 1993). While the proposed leadership style involves undoubtedly the typical characteristics of the leadership phenomenon as perceived in the United States. Different countries and cultural background however might require or need leadership with different characteristic to fit into its organisations. For instance in Western cultures organisations tend to require a more participative leadership style and in the Far East organisations tend to have a paternalistic leadership style (Hofstede, 1984). There is very limited research data in relation to managers and leadership in non-Western countries (Silverthorne, 2005), therefore most leadership theories developed in the United States and other Western countries cultural setting embrace the proposed leadership style as to '...*advocate participation of subordinates in the decision-making process following the initiative of the manager (Hofstede, 1980)*' (Klidas, 2001: 98). In such a culture setting subordinates may respond positively in participating in decision making, which is influenced by the relatively egalitarian culture. In general, the American conception of organisation will have considerable flexibility regarding to the ideal form of organisation and the ideal degree of centralisation of power. According to Hofsetde (1980: 60) Americans see '...*hierarchy is not a goal by itself [and] rules are not a goal by themselves*', they both are regarded as means toward obtaining results and can be changed if needed. Thus the common American organisational system is flexible and horizontal. Adler (1997) states that management techniques developed in one culture do not always produce the same results in a different culture. There are growing concerns about the extent to what organisational models and management practices are capable of being transferred from one nation to another. Advocates of empowerment propose fundamental changes in the form of organisation and management style (Brymer, 1991) and consistently make arbitrary assertions that employees will invariably embrace empowerment (Lovelock, 1995). However, a few authors challenge the universal validity of the propositions of the empowerment doctrine, for instance, Hoppe (1990: 206, cited in Klidas, 2001) contends that the ideas of '...*cutting levels of management or*

even turning the organisational pyramid upside down to shift the authority to the employees who directly serve the customer' maybe less likely to be embraced by the majority of members in countries that share different values from those of Anglo-Saxon countries. In addition, Durcan and Kirkbride (1994: 39) assert *'Empowerment is pragmatically adjudges a necessary condition of success, it is seen as 'right', in accord with society's values, and it is seen as being desired by employees'*, thus empowerment in such context is regarded as the product of a specific cultural context of American. Klidas (2001) further proposes the specific propositions of the empowerment doctrine about organisation, leadership and motivation and their cultural relativity on the basis of Hofstede's cultural dimensions (see Table 2.7).

The table shows both cultural opportunities and barriers of implementing empowerment and raises the issue of the compatibility of empowerment with certain cultures. Indeed, multinational companies operate across borders and within cultures other than the home culture, differences in the perception and interpretation of the concept of management, managerial styles, leadership, and work motivation can lead to significant problems. Therefore, transferring concepts like empowerment across national boundaries needs to take cultural differences into consideration (Jones, Taylor and Nickson, 1997).

Table 2.7 The cultural relativity of the empowerment doctrine

	Propositions	Cultural Opportunities	Cultural Barriers
Organisation	Flat structure	Small power distance	Large power distance
	Low centralisation	Small power distance	Large power distance
	Low formalisation	Weak uncertainty avoidance	Strong uncertainty avoidance
Leadership	Employee demand participation	Small power distance	Large power distance
	Employees wilfully accept responsibility	Small power distance/ Weak uncertainty avoidance	Large power distance/ Strong uncertainty avoidance
	Employees independent in thinking and acting	Weak uncertainty avoidance	Strong uncertainty avoidance
	Leaders share power	Small power distance	Large power distance
	Leaders delegate	Small power distance/ Weak uncertainty avoidance	Large power distance/ Strong uncertainty avoidance
Motivation	Self-actualisation as top motivator	Weak uncertainty avoidance	Strong uncertainty avoidance
	Esteem	Masculinity	Femininity
	Satisfaction from increased autonomy, responsibility and self-direction	Weak uncertainty avoidance	Strong uncertainty avoidance
Empowered behaviour	Creativity and innovative behaviour	Weak uncertainty avoidance	Strong uncertainty avoidance
	Risk taking (decision- making, initiative)	Weak uncertainty avoidance	Strong uncertainty avoidance
	Rule-breaking	Weak uncertainty avoidance	Strong uncertainty avoidance

Source: Klidas (2001: 100)

2.6 Conclusion

Apart from providing an initial theory base to empowerment, the literature also suggests that organisational culture is deemed to be significant in that it creates the overall context in which different forms of empowerment are located. Organisations are operating their businesses in a competitive global environment throughout the world. Each organisation is looking for different strategies in order to become or remain competitive. The need to empower employees has been partly justified by increasing global competition; however, the majority of published literature or textbooks on empowerment clearly have an Anglo-Saxon cultural background. There are only a few researches that address the implications of empowerment applied in an international and multicultural context in the last few years, but still can be barely found in an Eastern cultural context. Cultures vary, and different societies do not share the same values and individual behaviours that also vary across culture. The main concerns are raised about:

1) The extent to which individual employees as well as management invariably welcome the implementation of empowerment.

2) How the individual's cultural background has its impact on the perception of the implementation of empowerment.

Therefore, this research seeks to explore and understand the impact of culture on employee empowerment in Taiwanese cultural context, and will provide a conceptual framework and discuss this in the following Chapters.

Chapter 3 Culture

3.1 Introduction

In order to analyse the above issues concerning empowerment in cross-cultural contexts and to examine how national culture impacts on organisational culture, people might think about what national culture is and how national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours. The following section 3.2 addresses the question that has preoccupied social scientists as to whether organisational and corporate culture dominate individual employee's behaviour or national culture has a stronger impact on organisational micro levels, including motivation, perception, communication, group dynamic, and leadership. This section also describes the meaning of culture in general in particular by identifying a range of conceptual approaches to, and definitions of, culture. The term culture in this study is based on a pattern of taken-for-granted assumptions about how a group of people think, act and feel subsequently affecting how they produce goods and services. Section 3.3 will describe the work of Dutch scholar Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions and substantiate the reason for integrating his work in this study. Section 3.4 will review the literature in relation to the contemporary Taiwanese culture, a brief discussion of Taiwan's historical setting in order to understand its ethical background. The deep-rooted, traditional influences that are relevant to Taiwanese culture and individual behaviour are discussed, as few of the major Chinese philosophies and other important dimensions will be involved in order to understand how these have impact on Taiwanese culture. Section 3.5 will draw some conclusions from preceding discussion and will attempt to identify the importance of the cultural elements when study empowerment.

3.2 Culture defined

The word "culture" is used in everyday language to describe a number of quite distinct concepts; for instance, the concept of arts and culture, and the concept of organisational culture etc. The term culture can be distinguished in the narrow sense and the broad sense. Hofstede (1991: 5) indicates its narrow sense *'Culture commonly means 'civilisation' or 'refinement of the mind' and in particular the results of such refinement, like education, art and literature'; in its broad sense culture pertains to 'certain patterns of thinking, feeling and acting, which have established themselves within a person's mind'.* No matter narrow sense or broad sense, the implication is similar to one

and another; culture is regarded as an abstract entity which involves a number of usually man-made, collective and shared artefacts, behavioural patterns, values. The broad sense meaning of culture is relevant to the present study as it is common employed within the context of social anthropology. The study will provide various definitions of culture that reflect theoretical bases for understanding, or criteria for evaluating, human activity within organisations.

3.2.1 Organisational culture

Schein (1997:12) defines the culture of a group as *'A pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.'* Organisations do not operate in isolation; they function within a society that has its own national culture. Regional cultures and other sub-cultures also exist, including those of class, religion and education. This itself has implications for the management of organisational culture, as their influence is not left at the organisation's gate. Many writers in this field are concerned almost exclusively with the managerial contribution to organizational culture. However culture is not simply a matter of management decision or behaviour but the products of all organisational members, employees and managers both behaviour affects the organisational culture. Organisational or corporate culture is intended to represent a common perception held by all members of the organisation, which include power and authority relationships, coping with uncertainty and risk taking, loyalty and commitment, motivation, control and discipline, co-ordination and integration, communication, consultation, and participation (Tayeb, 1994).

Reyes and Kleiner (1990) develop an abstract model to establish an organisational culture. Firstly, an organisational vision which needs creation based on consultation with customers and employees to achieve organisational basic purpose. Later, senior management views on these are required to produce a coherent vision. In this model, the manager is the cultural assessor and they monitor organisational culture through assessment of organisational units and individuals and advise on the maintenance of cultural values. However, individuals here usually represent particularly other managers. It seems that top management can somehow drive or build an organisational culture. The assumptions are *'...corporate culture, akin to a national or local culture, comprises*

the values, norms, feelings, hopes and aspirations of an organisation's members' (Mwaura *et al.*, 1998: 213) and its purpose is to transmit learning and provide meaning to allow employees to understand their workplace, making sense of work activities and relating to their daily tasks (Porter, 1990). Organisational culture here is focusing on internal organisational processes and development, which forms a basis for competitive advantage, determines the effectiveness of the company, develops high performance among the staff, and helps to increase staff loyalty to an organisation (Porter, 1990; Mwaura *et al.*, 1998).

A disadvantage is it ignores the position of the organisations studied within the markets and industries in which they operate; an organisation needs to recognise that local differences do exist. This needs expansion, Watson (1993) creates 'official' and 'unofficial' cultures to examine empowerment in which the organisation operates. In Watson's study official cultures are manifest and at the visible and strategic levels. Senior managers have their power to change or modify organisational culture, like ceremonies, slogans, strategic vision, and internal approaches to management etc. However unofficial cultures may operate as the real culture may be more difficult to manipulate, because it is fundamentally an outcome of social interaction. Hofstede's (1980) study also argues that the consequences of cultural influence on management practices is more important in soft areas, which includes motivation, leadership, decision-making, management by objective and organisational design.

Some evidence shows that corporations clearly influence the operation of their subsidiaries in various countries, from which their national cultures are dramatically different. Schein (2001) distinguishes four different patterns of influence on corporate culture. First, culture diffusion through forced compliance and natural selection. A global corporation recruits from local people who fit the corporate culture and creates a two-way influence over a period of time but there are limits to what can be diffused into a given culture. Second, cultural resistance suggests that even instituted extensive training programs to ensure compliance but if a corporate culture are based on assumptions that violate pivotal national cultural assumption, it would face resistance. The cultural diffusion mechanism only works within the range of variation that already exists in the host culture. Third, cultural blending happens on several structural conditions which two or more organisations have different cultures but have a strong commitment to common goals or facing a common task or problem, and employees

clearly see their career future in the new organisation. Last, cultural learning provides the case of Singapore experience that government bureaucracy creates a business-orientated culture and the case indicates that cultural conflicts do not always reflect nations or regions. Natural culture plays a strong role when facing corporate culture, as it magnifies cultural differences with employees maintaining culturally specific ways of working even in the multinational organisation (Schneider, 1989; Sparrow and Wu, 1998). According to Wood (1994), the strategy which has been chosen to pursue in modifying organisational culture may be restricted by the circumstances where the organisation operates, and specifically the extent to which management of the organisational internal affairs is executed relative to responses and adaptation to the external environment and likely future events. Wood also identifies that these constituting aspects of the hospitality industry's 'culture' are in fact structural in nature and relate to the manner in which organisations interface with labour markets. In contexts, culture here includes all norms, beliefs, values, thoughts, feelings and behaviours, therefore, it influences management (Tayeb, 1994). One study compared the role of national and organisational culture in banks in Japan, the United States, Taiwan, and an American bank operating in Taiwan. This found that the employees of the American bank in Taiwan and the Taiwanese Bank in Taiwan perceived most elements of organisational culture in the same way, except that employees in the American bank identified their bank with and were supervised from the United States (Silverthorne, 2005). Thus the assumption is that national culture has a strong impact on organisational culture. This present study asks the question how far culture shapes business, economic and management and employee behaviours and values, in particular of the perception of empowerment, and explores empowerment implementation in Taiwanese cultural context.

3.2.2 National culture

Beck and Moore (1985) define national culture as the values, beliefs, and assumptions learned in early childhood that distinguishes people in one nation from those of another. Adler (1991) describes national culture as elder members of a group trying to pass on to the younger members how it shapes behaviour or structures one's perception of the life philosophies. The above definitions of culture imply culture as values and beliefs learned in childhood that shape a nation's philosophies and behaviours, and are passed on from generation to generation. The concept of shared values resulting in shared behaviour could be applied to other groups outside one's own group or society. For

instance, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952: 181; cited by Adler, 1997: 14) define

> *'Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour*
> *acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive*
> *achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts;*
> *the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived*
> *and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems*
> *may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as*
> *conditional elements of future action.'*

The above definition implies the existence of a large culture of the different cultures that make up one society's culture, for example, when talking about the "Japanese culture", or the multi-faceted values and resulting behaviour that abstractly represent Japan. The concept of Japanese culture implies that the society shares certain values and exhibits resultant behaviour that can easily be distinguished from other cultures, such as the Chinese culture or the Korean culture.

Hall (1983) views culture as often subconscious and operates in our thoughts. He believes that members of a given society, internalise the cultural components of that society, and act within the limits as set out by what is culturally acceptable. Schein (2001: 45) provides a better opportunity to study national culture, as he assumes culture is existing at three levels, which are *'(1) manifest, visible, feelable artefact that are easy to experience but hard to decipher; (2) espoused values and ideologies that are put forth as the explicit reasons why things are done the way they are; and (3) shared, tacit assumptions about how things are and should be'*. He further asserts that *'culture is more a matter of cognition and thought than a matter of feelings and values. It is the taken-for-granted, shared, tacit assumptions that people hold which make up the essence of culture'* (ibid: 46). It is believed that some values have been working well for a cultural unit for a long period of time and lost the status to be debated, and became part of the taken-for-granted thought process and remain relatively stable over time and over generations. Spencer-Oatey (2000) extends the concept of culture. She assumes culture is not only about values and resultant behaviour or artefacts, but should also include a description of the functions that culture performs. She defines *'Culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural norms, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and*

his/her interpretations of the "meaning" of each people's behaviour.' (ibid: 4) Thus, culture is not only an influence factor for behaviour but also an interpretation factor of behaviour. In summary, culture consists of various factors that are shared by a given group, and act as an interpretive frame of behaviour.

3.3 Hofestede and national culture

Probably the most often cited definition of cross-culture is issued by Hofstede during the 1980s. Hofstede (1991: 5) defines culture as the *'The collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.'* He identifies four universal dimensions of culture that are largely independent of each other in his seminal book *Culture's Consequences* in 1980. Each of these values was constructed largely on the basis of statistical analysis of a series of work in a large amount of employees working in worldwide subsidiaries of the IBM Corporation between 1967 and 1973, and the questionnaire involves the life outcomes questions on employee satisfaction, perception of work, personal beliefs and work goals. In general, it is dealing with company policies, practices and employee attitudes, beliefs and values.

The four dimensions are power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity and uncertainty avoidance. Later, a fifth dimension, the Confucian dynamic (Hosftede and Bond, 1988) or long-term orientation (Hosftede, 1991) dimension was added when Chinese Value Survey (CVS) was studied.

Although there is a lot of criticism about the internal validity of the dimensions and the methodology used to develop the scales, which will be discussed in the later section 3.3.1, Hofstede's cultural dimensions are still one of the most widely used among international marketing and management scholars (Sivakumar and Nakata, 1999). Hofstede's five cultural dimensions are presented in Table 3.1.

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Table 3.1 Hofstede's five cultural dimensions

Power distance is defined as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally".
Individualism is defined as "the extent to which the ties between individuals are loose in a society, so that everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family only". Its opposite pole *collectivism* is defined as "opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty".
Masculinity is defined as "the extent to which social gender roles in a society are clearly distinct; men supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life". It opposite pole *femininity* is defined as "the extent to which social gender roles in a society overlap; both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life".
Uncertainty avoidance is defined as "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations".
Confucian dynamic or *long-term orientation* is defined as "the extent to which the values of persistence (perseverance), ordering relationship by status and observing this order, thrift, and have a sense of shame". It opposite pole *short-term orientation* is defined as "the extent to which the values of personal steadiness and stability, protecting your 'face', respect for tradition, and reciprocation of greeting, favors, and gifts". (Hosftede, 1991: 165-166)

Source: Hosftede, 2001

3.3.1 Criticisms of the Hofstede Cultural Framework

There has been a great deal of criticism of the Hofstede cultural framework, however, most of the criticism has not revolved around the substance of the conceptual propositions of Hofstede, but mostly focus on the methodology by which it was developed (Klidas, 2001). The most common concern discussed includes the single company sample and the data collected is nearly forty years old and the cultural dimensions are an afterthought to the original purpose for the data collection etc. However, his cultural dimensions abound in many researches to support these dimensions and the preferences for different profiles of organisation. The Hofstede framework continues to be employed in international management research (Schneider and Barsoux, 2003).

Tayeb (1997: 628) indicates that Hofstede's cross culture study *'Was not planned in advance as an investigation into the effects of culture on organisations and their members [and] national culture was used as an explanation after findings revealed interesting patterns. '* Hofstede admitted that originally the questionnaire was designed to measure employee satisfaction, morale and perception of work in IBM's internal survey, which was *'... indeed not academic and the remarkable patterns of the value-related questionnaire items across countries were only uncovered afterwards. '* (Klidas, 2001: 86). The argument is that when any research findings are contrary to

expectations, it needs to seek theoretical support in order to interpret the findings. Hofstede's research was not initially grounded in any theoretical framework based on cultural theory. Berry *et al.* (1992) assert the need of such support in the literature about cross-cultural differences but was rather limited at that time, which all researchers would be faced when dealing with such databases. The difficulty and inflexibility involve the variables that are measured and the indicators used to measure.

The sampling of subjects from a single multinational company is open to debate. IBM is a major company that had a strong corporate culture and was predominantly by male when the data was collected. In addition, the employees belonged to the middle class in their society rather than to the upper working or rural classes, therefore, the sample was extremely narrow and specific of their countries' population (Tayeb, 1997). Furthermore, the sample population '...*differed from the general population not only in their education, but in their interest in science and technology and their exposure to 'modernising' forces – qualities likely to affect their value.* ' (Schwartz, 1994: 91). The argument is that whether employees in the subsidiaries of a multinational corporation are '...*representative of the national populations to which the results are generalised.* ' (Berry *et al.*, 1992: 332). It is believed the respondents shared the same superstructure and policies, belonged to the same occupational categories, and have similar educational level, which Hofstede asserts as employees across countries are matched on all these variables. Therefore, '...*the only criterion on which they differ systematically is their nationality, so this is the only variable that can explain the considerable differences found in their thinking.* '(Hofstede, 1981: 65). In summary, to compare people from the same company means that they share the same organisational and occupational cultures, so if there are any differences between countries they must be based on national culture. Actually the matching samples have been recognised and adopted in cross-cultural research (Drenth and Grornrndijk, 1998; Klidas, 2001), because '...*obtaining a sample that represents the various groups, strata and organisations of a given country is almost impossible.* ' (Ronen and Shenkar, 1985: 453). In addition, Hofstede undertook his findings from the IBM study by administering the same value questions to a sample of 400 executive attending courses in an international business school, the results revealed the same as the IBM research. Thus, it is assumed that data collected from IBM Company might have much wider implications (Hofstede, 2001).

Some criticism has been directed towards the conceptual propositions of Hofstede's research. Hofstede himself raises the issue that the four dimensions have been the product based on western mind thinking. The later Confucian dynamism or short-term versus long-term orientation was added from the Chinese Value Survey has indeed confirmed his suspicion. As aforementioned earlier the purpose of his study was not related to the development of a theory on national cultures, Hofstede was '...*by definition obliged to seek for explanations to interpret results rather than test theoretically founded hypotheses by means of appropriate measures.*'(Klidas, 2001: 93). However, later there are a large amount of studies to support the theoretical claim of Hofstede's framework, and that have empirically explored many of the predicted implications of the dimensions of national culture for individual behaviour and management at work (e.g. Barkema and Vermeulen, 1997; Drenth and Groenendijk, 1998; Klidas, 2001).

The other significant issue, which is further relevant to the present study, is the extent to which Hofstede's cultural dimensions - developed nearly four decades - ago are still valid nowadays. Klidas (2001) indicates that the principal belief embedded in Hofstede's dimensions of cultural values is not only relevant currently, but will be relevant in the foreseeable future. This study will carefully evaluate the results by employing Hofstede's cultural concepts, and it must be remembered that whilst culture suggests similarities and uniformity within a society, there are also a wide range of individual differences. For instance, Schwartz (1994) has developed a set of dimensions of national culture on the basis of the expectation that culture-level and individual-level value dimensions. Schwartz hypothesised and found support for seven types of values at the cultural level and ten individual-level values from the results obtained in several different research studies. The seven cultural-level values were conservatism, harmony, egalitarian commitment, intellectual autonomy, affection autonomy, mastery, and hierarchy. The ten individual-level values were power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security. Schwartz provides a framework for studying the role of the individual in society, as he argues Hofstede's individualism-collectivism dimension is too broad. It is suggested that individualism and collectivism should be regarded as independent dimensions rather than two ends of a continuum (Triandis *et al.*, 1988) and also should be considered in conjunction with the power distance construct (Silverthorne, 2005). Despite the aforementioned concerns, the theory of Hofstede's cultural dimensions

provides an ideal and a valid framework for present study to a wider discussion of national culture related to the implications of applying the concept in the Taiwanese cultural context.

3.3.2. Early studies

Cultural differences are regarded as important variables in understanding social and organisational behaviour (Silverthorne, 2005). According to the Hofstede's cultural dimensions, organisational structure relies on cultural dimensions that can be divided into four different concepts. First, organisations in countries with high power distance would tend to have more levels of hierarchy, a high proportion of supervisory personnel, and more centralised decision-making. Management level in the company is regarded as authorities and would be revered or obeyed, therefore, people will tend to seek status and power as their motivators. Second, organisations in countries with a high collectivist orientation, consensus and cooperation perhaps would be more valued than individual initiative and effort. Employees' motivation derives from their sense of belonging, and their loyalty and tenure to the group within the organisation will affect their rewards from the company. The role of management is to facilitate team effort and integration, to foster a supportive atmosphere to ensure people work as a team, and to create the necessary context. Third, organisations in countries with more feminine cultures, the role of management would be to ensure employee well-being and their quality of life. Social responsibility and relationships are concerned in such cultural setting. The cultural dimension is high in masculinity, the management style is likely to be more concerned with task accomplishment, therefore, to set demanding targets to ensure bottom-line profits in order to satisfy shareholders is common for the role of management. Employees' motivation derives from the acquisition of money and things. The final concept is that power distance and uncertainty avoidance are simultaneously considered relevant to organisational structure, as high power distance means people are more likely to accept hierarchy and high uncertainty avoidance means the desire for formalized rules and procedures. Therefore, organisations in countries that ranked high in both would be expected to be more bureaucratic. It is believed that different organisation structures are reflected in the organisational processes, the influence of culture are including the nature of policies and procedures, planning and control, information processing and communication, and decision-making (Schneider and Barsoux, 2003). Different environments require that companies adopt different strategies, and the organisational culture has to fit these strategies (Schwartz and Davies,

1981).

3.3.3 Chinese Value Survey

The majority of cultural studies were conducted and designed in western countries in order to avoid western cultural bias in research of non-western countries. A new questionnaire was designed in a Chinese culture bias, which was in the same way as western questionnaires had been used, so the results could be compared. The new questionnaire was called the Chinese Value Survey (CVS). There are some new terms that were studied in the CVS. Large power distance correlated CVS factor *moral discipline*, which contains having few desires, moderation, and keeping oneself disinterested and pure. Individualism corresponds CVS dimension *integration*, which is associated with the biggest cluster of CVS values contains tolerance, harmony and solidarity with others etc. Masculinity corresponds CVS factor human-heartedness, which contains patience, courtesy and kindness (forgiveness, compassion) and reflected a split between human-centred or task-centred considerations. Masculine-feminine dimensions in IBM study is based asks for 'values as the desired' or personal objective, but in CVS study asks for conscious endorsement of 'values as the desirable' or abstract virtues. The masculine and the feminine are regarded as *yang* and *yin* in Chinese Taoist philosophy, and these two elements in life are intertwined. Hofstede and Bond (1988) find that three dimensions, which are power distance, individualism-collectivism, and masculinity-femininity are equivalent to both West and East. These three dimensions dealing with basic human relationships seem to be universal in any multi-country value study. There is one uniquely western dimension, uncertainty avoidance, which deals with a society's search for truth and one uniquely eastern dimension, Confucian dynamism, which deals with a society's search for virtue. The Confucian dynamic dimension is regarded as long-term versus short-term orientation in life and also can be viewed as eastern versus western, dynamic versus static, and virtue versus truth. Confucius has been seen as the greatest teacher in Chinese society around 500 BC and till now still has its strongly influenced in Eastern Asia. His teaching ideas are not a religion that advocates absolutes but practical ethics. The American futurologist Herman Kahn (1992-1983) suggested that the recent economic success of the countries of East Asia could be attributed to common cultural roots, which it implies Confucian values and has been proven in the CVS study. Huat (1989) also asserts that the Confucian ethics of hard work and thrift were a key driver of the economic success of the Asian Five Dragons, which are Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea.

3.4 Socio-cultural Continuities and Changes in Taiwan

The Chinese culture is usually represented in a rather monolithic view, as the researches focus on China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore often presumed to be "generalisable" to all Chinese societies. However, there are rather substantial differences within each of them. The status of Taiwanese culture is a subject of debate. Along with the political status of Taiwan, it is disputed whether Taiwanese culture is a segment of Chinese culture, due to the Han ethnicity, a shared Chinese written language and traditional customs with mainland Chinese, and a common Confucian cultural heritage; or a distinct culture separate from Chinese culture, due to the past colonisation of Taiwan and the political separation since 1949 after the civil war Taiwan has developed distinct political and economic systems. Child (1996) argues these systems could then contribute towards shaping observable patterns of management and employees attitudes within organisational culture and behaviour, as culture is viewed to shape the values, beliefs, and behaviours of its member through its core issues of concern as well as its distinct political, economic, and societal structures.

3.4.1. Historical Setting

Taiwan is a multicultural and multi-ethic nation. The island's modern history goes back to around 1590, when the first western ship passed by the island in 1544, the Jan Huygen van Linschoten, a Dutch navigator on a Portuguese ship, exclaimed "Ilha Formosa" (beautiful island), which became its name for the next four centuries. The Table 3.2 shows Taiwan's history that how the nation had been through occupation and colonisation by different countries. The Dutch were the first nation actually to claim the island and in order to conduct missionary activities, trade and the production of various goods, they brought in Chinese labourers as migrant workers in the early seventeen-century. Han immigrants settled in Taiwan and married aboriginal wives, thus a new race was born, the Taiwanese. The Dutch and Spanish were two nations that maintained a colony in Taiwan during the early seventeen-century. *Cheng, Cheng-Kung* who was *Ming* Dynasty loyalist forces drove out the Dutch in 1662 and he set up schools for young, introduced Chinese laws and customs, and built the first Confucian temple in Taiwan. This was the beginning of traditional Chinese culture to be introduced into Taiwan and influenced people's values and thoughts since then. Until 1895 the Japanese maintained a colony in Taiwan for the half century, thus, Japanese had strong influence on Taiwan, as the Japanese intention was to turn the island into their showcase colony. They emphasised strict police control, compulsory Japanese education and

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cultural assimilation. As the result, Japanese colonisation had extensive effects in the island's economy, industry, public works and culture. In 1945 Japan was defeated in World War II and they returned Taiwan to the Republic of China. Thus, Taiwan has absorbed different cultural elements from various sources within each period. Its culture is regarded as a blend of traditional Chinese with significant East Asian influences including Japanese, and Western influences including American, Spanish and Dutch in many different forms. In addition, it is believed that Taiwan's economic and social systems have been deeply influenced by Japan and the U.S. (Cheung and Chow, 1999).

Table 3.2 Taiwanese Historical Setting

Time	Historical Setting
Pré – 1600s	Taiwanese aborigines or aboriginal peoples are the indigenous peoples of Taiwan. They are descended from the Austronesian-speaking inhabitants of Taiwan, who are believed to have been living on the islands for approximately 8,000 years before major Han immigration began in the 1600s (Blust, 1999).
The 17th Century	1624-1662 The Dutch maintained a colony in south-western Taiwan, near present-day *Tainan*. When the Dutch East India Company arrived, they found there were no signs of any administrative structure of the Chinese Imperial Government. The Dutch were the first nation actually to claim the island and when a Dutch force subjugated Mattau in 1635 it was the birth of a pax hollandica, which gradually expanded as the Dutch extended their control over large parts of Taiwan. The Dutch conducted missionary activities, trade and the production of various goods. Taiwan became the second most profitable trading house in Asia behind Japan due to its ideal central location between Japan, China and southeast Asia. The Dutch also brought in Chinese labourers as migrant workers, and eventually, more settled and married aborigine wives. Thus a new race was born, the Taiwanese. 1626-1642 The Spanish maintained a colony in northern Taiwan, in present-day *Keelung*, which they occupied until they were driven out by the Dutch. 1662-1683 The Dutch period ended in 1662 when *Ming* loyalist forces of *Cheng Cheng-Kung*, who was known as *Koxinga* in the West, drove out the Dutch and established the *Cheng* family kingdom on Taiwan. The fact, *Cheng* was on the run from the newly established *Ching* Dynasty and he established Taiwan as a base in his attempt to restore the *Ming* Dynasty. *Cheng* set up schools for the young, introduced Chinese laws and customs, and built the first Confucian temple in Taiwan. He died shortly thereafter, and *Ching* Dynasty conquered his descendants in 1683, Taiwan became a part of *Ching* Empire.
From the 1680s to the 1880s	In 1684 Taiwan became a prefecture of *Fujian* province, and only until 1887 the island was made into a distinct province of China, as the new *Manchu* (*Ching* Dynasty) emperors were not eager to extend their rule over the island. They were only interested in taxes payment to the authorities. Taiwan thus remained a loose-lying area for the next 200 years. However, immigration to the island from the coastal provinces of China steadily increased, forming *Han* communities in Taiwan. This era saw the nearly complete sinicisation of the western plains aborigines, as they were acculturated or assimilated into *Han* society. 1884-1885 The French maintained a colony in northern Taiwan, in present-day *Keelung* for nine months during the Sino-French War.
The 19th century	1895-1945 The Japanese maintained a colony in Taiwan. The *Cing* Dynasty was forced to cede Taiwan to Japan after losing the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. Taiwan

	was Japan's first overseas colony, Japanese intentions were to turn the island into their showcase colony, a model for further colonial ambitions. The Japanese emphasised strict police control, compulsory Japanese education and cultural assimilation. As the result, Japanese colonisation had extensive effects in the island's economy, industry, public works and culture. 1895 Pro-*Ching* officials declared the Republic of Formosa in an attempt to resist the arrival of the Japanese. *Tang Jing-song* (25 May, 1895- 5 June, 1895) named president and *Liu Yung-fu* (5 June, 1895- 21 October, 1895) after him.
1945-present Republic of China on Taiwan	1911 The last empire in China, *Ching* Dynasty is ended and Dr. *Sun Yat-sen* established the Republic of China (ROC) in 1912. 1945 Japan formally surrendered to the Allies following her defeat in World War II. They returned Taiwan to the Republic of China. 1949 The communists had occupied most of the Chinese mainland, as a result of the Chinese civil war, the ROC government under the *Kuomintang* (KMT) withdrew to Taipei, which has been the seat of the government of the ROC ever since. 1950 The US Seventh Fleet protected Taiwan against Chinese communist attack, as resulting from the Korean War. The USA also provided Taiwan with economic aid, a series of economic development plans undertaken during the 1950s to 1960s.

Source: New Taiwan Ilha Formosa (2004)

The Nationalist government retreated from the mainland and established their anti-Communist base in Taiwan in 1949. This resulted in Taiwan's mainstream culture being primarily derived from traditional Chinese culture, with significant influences also from western capitalism (Chu, 2001). Inwardly, the Nationalists took steps to preserve traditional Chinese cultural heritage, in order to rival the Communists' anti-tradition stance; outwardly, the help and alliance of the western countries, especially the U.S., secured the safety and survival of the early exiled government. Therefore, Western influences are welcome and profound, which laid the ground for later industrialisation and democratisation (Lu, *et al*, 2003). In addition, as in the first half of the twentieth century, Taiwan was colonised by Japan and Japanese influence was widespread, and the Nationalist government at first waited for a ripe opportunity to reclaim the mainland, this later shifted to the more realistic vision of sustaining a high quality of life for its people (Chu, 2001). Consequently, a new class of self-made, hard-driving, adventurous entrepreneurs flourished. Different stage of economic development in Taiwan has resulted the changing of organisational behaviour and its management practice.

3.4.2 Societal Culture

The Chinese people have experienced the longest span of homogeneous cultural development compared to any society in the world. Chinese culture and tradition are therefore deep-rooted and the Chinese people are very self-conscious of their cultural heritage. The Chinese philosophical thinking could be traced back to ancient China thousands of years ago. This Chinese culture also can be regarded as the basic reason of forming the distinctive Chinese philosophies. Confucianism is one of the most well known philosophies by western people, however, in relation to relevant management thinking in contemporary Chinese society, which Confucianism, Taoism, Yi Jing and War Strategies should be regarded as the four major streams that dominated traditional thinking and have their impacts and influences on Chinese people (Warner and Zhu, 2003). Different philosophies may benefit from influencing each other and later merge different philosophical approaches to fit into different era. Chinese thought has a highly distinctive cast and one of the characteristics is that Chinese thinking'...*does not set the search of knowledge into separate and rigid categories, with a separate set of principles governing each domain; it may be regarded as holistic*' (Warner and Zhu, 2003: 24). In this section, few of the major Chinese philosophies will be discussed; furthermore, other important dimensions, such as religion, social relations, education etc. will be involved in order to understand how these have impacted on Taiwanese culture.

3.4.2.1 Yi Jing

Yi Jing (Book of Changes) is the oldest of the Chinese classic texts and with the *Shi Yi* ("Ten Wings"), a group of commentaries on the *Yi Jing*, appendices attached, it is considered a work of philosophy (Warner and Zhu, 2003). It describes an ancient system of cosmology and philosophy, which is at the heart of Chinese cultural beliefs. The central ideas of *Yi Jing* can be divided into three major conceptions, which are the dynamic balance of opposites, the evolution of events as a process, and acceptance of the inevitability of change. The table 3.3 indicates these three implications in details.

There are two essential symbols in *Yi Jing*, which are *Tai Ji Tu* (known in the western as *Yin Yang*) and *Ba Gua*. *Ba Gua* is a circular arrangement of the trigrams, traditionally printed on a mirror or disk. It has eight basic trigrams, which are heaven, swamp, fire, thunder, wind, water, mountain, and earth. It represents natural phenomena and process and its sequence of hexagrams is a model of the cosmos. *Yin Yang* can be used as the basic of prognostications, which is always explained together with *Ba Gua*. *Yin* and

Yang represent two conflict powers; the *Yang* denotes strength and movement, the *Yin* denotes pliancy and rest; but expressing the idea of the complementarity of changes. Both *Ba Gua* and *Yin Yang* have strongly affected the Chinese people in believing the ideas of balance through opposites and acceptance of change. This philosophy teaches Chinese people to act with great cautions within extreme natural phenomena and situations, and always act in balance within the society, and adopt strategic thinking in order to survive in the ever-changing nature in the short-term and the long-term. The *Yi Jing* has influenced countless Chinese philosophers, artists and even businessmen throughout history. It is regarded at the heart of Chinese thought, serving as a common ground for the Confucian and Taoist schools. For instance, Confucian moralists concentrated on ethical issues reflected in the social content of the text, as the major commentaries of *Yi Jing* (Ten Wings) were written by Confucianists or Neo-Confucianists. In addition, *'Taoists and Yin Yang theorists were interested in cosmological issues suggested by the numerological and symbolic relations between the graphic matrices'* (McGreal, 1995: 63, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 27).

Table 3.3 The Three Major Conceptions Behind The *Yi Jing*

Conception	Implications
Simplicity	the root of the substance. The fundamental law underlying everything in the universe is utterly plain and simple, no matter how abstruse or complex some things may appear to be.
Variability	the use of the substance. Everything in the universe is continually changing. By comprehending this one may realize the importance of flexibility in life and may thus cultivate the proper attitude for dealing with a multiplicity of diverse situations.
Persistency	the essence of the substance. While everything in the universe seems to be changing, among the changing tides there is a persistent principle, a central rule, which does not vary with space and time.

3.4.2.2 Taoism

Taoism is used to translate the Chinese terms *Dao Jiao* and *Dao Jia*, and because of the translation makes the confusion of the term Taoism. The origins of Taoism and other philosophical schools are intimately related. *Dao Jia* is regarded as a philosophical school based on the texts the *Tao Te Jing* (Classic of the Way and its Power), which the authorship is assigned to *Lao Zi*. *Dao Jiao* refers to Taoism as a religion and regards *Lao Zi* is the founder of *Dao Jiao*, and by the early *Han* Dynasty, *Lao Zi* even came to be worshipped as divine. There is one argument refers to that Taoism as a religious identity, only because of to contrast with the newly-arrived religion of Buddhism. These two term were used interchangeably, however, even though *Dao Jiao* drawn majority of its theories from *Dao Jia*, they should be regarded as two individual terms.

Philosophical Taoism emphasises various themes found in the *Tao Te Jing*. The character *Tao* literally means 'path' or 'way', but in either Chinese religion or philosophy has taken on more abstract meanings. The most important element of Taoism is 'oneness'. In *Lao Zi*'s work, he indicated that *'Tao produces one. One produces two. Two produces three. And three produces ten thousand things (that is everything). The ten thousand things carry yin and embrace yang. By combining these forces, harmony is created.'* (*Tao Te Jing*, verse 42, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 26). *Te* is the other term in the title, which compounded with *Tao*, formed the Chinese term for ethics. *Te* could be interpreted the *dao* within which may comprise the capacity we have to learn a way of life and the result of learning/practicing it, therefore, *Te* should be regarded as the learned 'way of life' into a correct pattern of behavior, hence its usual translation as 'virtue' or 'excellence'. However, for *Lao Zi*, *Te* signifies natural abilities that enable things to be their best spontaneously and effortlessly, which is different from Confucians *Te* as a moral term (McGreal, 1995:13, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 26). Thus, one of the main theories of *Tao Te Jing* is *Wu Wei* (non-action), which emphasises the best way to act or think is following the natural cause rather than human intervention.

The other essential term was later integrated into Taoism is *Yin* and *Yang*, which describes two primal opposing but complementary forces found in all things in the universe. *Yin* represents the darker element, is passive, dark, recessive, soft, feminine, low, contractive, centripetal, short, hollow, empty, and so forth; and *Yang* represents the brighter element, is active, light, dominant, hard, masculine, high, expansive, centrifugal, long, full, and solid. They are opposites, interdependent, consume and support each other, can transform into one another, nothing is ever purely one or the other. Taoism emphasising *Yin* over *Yang* is to re-balance the one, as the world tends to privilege the *Yang* and denigrating the *Yin*. In *Lao Zi*'s *Tao De Jing*, he claimed: 'Human beings are born 'soft and flexible'; when they die, they are 'hard and stiff'. Plants arise 'soft and delicate'; when they die they are 'withered and dry'. Thus, the 'hard and stiff' may be seen as disciples of death; the 'soft and flexible' are disciples of life, later echoed in Goeth's 'green is the tree of life'. *'An inflexible army cannot be seen as victorious; an unbending tree will break.'* (*Tao De Jing*, verse 76, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 26). Thus, Taoism represents the view that the norms for language, knowledge, ethics and society are grounded in and continuous with natural norms, and human being should attain the balance between the poles, and it is an adaptive and

flexible way.

Religious Taoism adopted its theories from philosophical Taoism, as Taoism indicates human being should understand and follow the fundamental cycle of the universe. Therefore, religious Taoism believes various rituals, exercises, or substances are said to positively affect one's physical health; align oneself spiritually with cosmic forces. *Yin Yang* and *Ba Gua* associate with Taoist symbolism. Traditional magical calculations such as *Feng Shui* (geomancy) and *Kan San* (physiognomy) are still available and commonly used in Taiwan. It affects Taiwanese people's daily life, for instance, when a company wants to move or to find out what affects its business, it may see a *Feng Shui* consultant first; when people want to change their career or make important decision, they may consult fortune tellers to make up their minds. Fortune- telling, which including astrology, palmistry, phrenology, and divination, and *Feng Shui* have long been considered a traditional Taoist pursuit.

Another religious Taoism practice involves *BaiBai*, which is bowing towards an altar, with a stick of incense in one's hand. This may be done at home, or in a temple, or outdoors at certain dates, food may be set out as a sacrifice to the gods and/or spirits of the departed. Some of this custom related to management and work, and is regarded as a taken-for-granted culture. Many business in any field, on the second and sixteenth days of the Chinese lunar month, and on the first auspicious day, which often on the fifth when business reopen, following the Chinese New Year break, a table is set up and an offering of fruit, food and incense is made to the Earth God. For employees, at the end of every Chinese lunar year, employers pay their respects to the Earth God and provide a banquet for their employees (*Wei Ya* in Chinese). The aim of this activity is to allow employers to express their gratitude to staff, and the most important issue is that it is the time for employees to receive their a year-end bonus from the companies. It can be regarded as a reward system for employees in Taiwan. An annual bonus is paid as group incentives equivalent to one month up to several months' wages of an employee dependent on the company's profit for the year in most companies.

3.4.2.3 War Strategies (The Art of War)

The Art of War in Chinese is named *Sun Zi Bing Fa*, is a Chinese military treatise and written by *Sun Zi* in the forth century BC (Chu, 1995). It is the first and one of the most successful works on strategy and has had a huge influence on eastern and western

military thinking and has also been applied to business and managerial strategies (Lee *et al.*, 1999). The book composed of thirteen chapters and discussed the five elements that should be considered in formulating a strategy (See Table 3.4). The great importance to success in any endeavour is the harmony of the five elements (Chu, 1995: 32) and they are '...*intangible, spiritual as well as psychological, and are more related to people's mindsets.*' (Warner and Zhu, 2003: 28). Since at least the 1980s, the book has been applied to many different fields and has found application as a training guide for many competitive endeavours and corporate strategy (Krause, 1995). *Sun Zi Bing Fa* and the philosophy of *Yi Jing* have taught Chinese people to adopt strategic thinking in order to survive in the short-term as well as in the long-term.

Table 3.4 The five elements in formulating a strategy

The moral cause: the *Dao* addresses the morality and righteousness of a battle
Temporal conditions: heaven is signified by *yin* and *yang*, manifested as summer and winter and the changing of the four seasons
Geographical conditions: the earth contains far and near, danger and ease, open ground and narrow passes
Leadership: the commander must be wise, trustful, benevolent, courageous, and strict
Organization and discipline must be thoroughly understood. Delegation of authority and areas of responsibility within an organization must be absolutely clear (Zhu and Warner, 2003)

Source: Chu, 1995: 25-30, cited in Warner and Zhu 2003: 27-28

3.4.2.4 Confucianism

Confucianism is regarded as one of the most important influences on Chinese everyday life, it is a Chinese ethical and philosophical system originally developed from the teachings of the early Chinese sage Confucius. Confucianism has had tremendous influence on the history of Chinese civilisation down to the twenty-first century, and in Taiwan's current educational system, Confucianism is still taking a part of the content of the Chinese literature course. The major ideas of Confucius system of beliefs were three basic guides, which are ruler guides subject, father guides son, and husband guides wife; five constant virtues, which include loyalty, filial piety, faithfulness, caring and sincerity; and the doctrine of the mean/harmony (Redding and Wong, 1986). Confucius believed that *Ren* (benevolence) is the highest virtue an individual can attain. *Ren* is regarded as a strictly natural and humanistic love, based upon spontaneous feelings cultivated through education. To attain *Ren*, human beings have to practice *Li*, which represents social norms, and *Li* can be interpreted as rituals, rites or proprieties. Externally, ritual is used to distinguish between people and maintain the social order. Confucius taught Chinese people that son should be obedient to father, minister should be obedient to ruler, wife should be obedient to husband, and younger should be obedient to the elder among

friends. Internally, obeying ritual with sincerity makes ritual the most powerful way to cultivate oneself. Since *Li* is a term of moral codes and social institutions, many assume that the practice of *Li* is to enforce social conformity with social order at the cost of the individual. However, an individual personality is not an isolated entity. Confucius said, *'In order to establish oneself, one has to establish others. This is the way of a person of Ren.'* (McGreal, 1995:5, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 25). The central theme in Confucian doctrine is to indicate people their duty amongst others and what to expect from them, therefore, individualisation and socialisation are two aspects of the same process. The concept of relationships in Confucianism not only considered juniors have to owe strong duties of reverence and service to their seniors, but also seniors have duties of benevolence and concern toward juniors. Ritual divides people into categories and builds hierarchical relationships through protocols and ceremonies, assigning everyone a place in society and a form of behaviour.

The Confucian ethics puts family right at the centre of personal existence, as two of three bonds of loyalty bound the society (loyalty to the ruler, filial obedience and fidelity of wife to husband) were set within the family and all represented relationships *'...between superior and subordinate'* (Fairbank and Goldman, 1998:19). The doctrines based his ideas *'...on absolute respect of tradition, on a strict hierarchy of primary relationships between family members, and then again between the people and their rulers.'* (Child and Warner, 2003: 28). Filial piety is considered among the greatest of virtues and must be shown towards both the living and the dead. For Chinese people, the most intimate and important relationships are those within one's family. The Confucian ethics advocates that one should strive to expand and preserve the prosperity and vitality of his /her family. In the Confucian Taiwan, people place family ahead of work, status before worth, courtesy before frankness, harmony over competition, and value loyalty more highly than merit (Lu, *et al*, 2003).

According to Confucius, the optimal method of governing is not by legislation or by law enforcement but by way of moral education and by example (McGreal, 1995: 6, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 25). The ideal government is thus a government of W*u Wei* (non-action) through a rock-solid groundwork of moral education. Confucius notes that: *'If you lead the people with political force and restrict them with law and punishment, they can just avoid law violation, but will have no sense of honour and shame. If you lead them with morality and guide them with Li, they will develop a sense of honour and*

shame, and will do good of their own accord.' (McGreal, 1995: 7, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 25). The doctrine explains an essential difference between legalism and ritualism and indicates a key difference between western and Chinese societies. Confucius argues that under law, external authorities administer punishments after illegal actions, so people generally behave well without understanding reasons why they should; whereas with ritual, patterns of behaviour are internalised and exert their influence before actions are taken, so people behave properly because they fear shame and want to avoid losing face. Therefore, Chinese culture can also be described as a "shame" culture, which is different from the western "guilt" cultures. It means that social behaviour is judged accordingly by social approval or disapproval, whereby shame is experienced if one's behaviour is improper by others standard (Selmer *et al.*, 2003).

3.4.2.5 Buddhism with Other Philosophies

Buddhism is a religion but some scholars also regard it as a practical philosophy, focusing on the teachings of Gautama Buddha. When used in a generic sense, a Buddha is generally considered to be a person who discovers the true nature of reality through years of spiritual cultivation, investigation of the various religious practices of his time, and meditation. The entry of Buddhism into China was via its dialectic with later Taoism which transformed them both. Over the centuries of Chinese interactions, Buddhism gradually found itself transformed from a competitor of Taoism, to a fellow inhabitant of the Chinese cultural ecosystem. Buddhism also shares many commonalities with Neo-Confucianism. In fact, the ritual of ancestor worship normally practiced by Confucianists, has been adapted to Chinese Buddhist beliefs. Ideological and political rivals in ancient times, Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism have nevertheless deeply influenced one another, and eventually achieved a kind of *modus vivendi* in which each has its own particular ecological niche within Chinese society.

3.4.2.6 Social Relations

It is believed that relational networking based on interpersonal connections (known in Chinese as *Guan Xi*) works extensively as a coordination mechanism in both socialist and capitalist Chinese organisations (Child and Warner, 2003). *Guan Xi* (relationship) is regarded as a prevalent social and cultural phenomenon in Chinese societies. *Guan Xi* can be defined differently based on different perspectives. There has been substantial research on social networks and interpersonal relations in western literature (Chen and

Chen, 2004), however, to treat *Guan Xi* as a Chinese indigenous construct is expected to capture the unique characteristics of *Guan Xi* in Chinese concept. *Guan* and *Xi* are two words having different meanings but together it can be used as a verb, to have bearings on; or a noun, a state in which entities are connected. *Guan Xi* has been deep rooted in Chinese society since Confucius codified the societal rules over 2,000 years ago. The word *Guan Xi* '...*is not found in the Confucian classics; instead, the word Lun is used.*' (King, 1991: 67). Aforementioned Confucianism indicates the fundamental assumption of human kind is that individuals exist in relation to others. *Lun* in relation to human relationship has greater ethical obligation, the most important ones were known as *Wu Lun* (the Five Cardinal Relationships), which are ruler-subject, father-son, husband-wife, elder brother-younger brother, and friend-friend. These welded the hierarchies holding Chinese social structures together and remain very much relationship orientated (Redding and Wong, 1986). Therefore, *Lun* is also interpreted as social order, which members of each relationship have unequal rights and obligations, for instance, sovereign, father, husband, elder brother, the senior friend had more prerogatives and authority than the subject, son, wife, younger brother, and the junior friend. In addition, *Lun* refers to moral principles regarding interactive behaviours of related parties, which one should act towards others from an underlying attitude of *Ren* (humaneness). The best expression of *Ren* is probably in the Confucian version of the Golden Rule phrased in the negative: "Do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you". The moral principle of *Ren* was regarded as the highest virtue, *Ren* was seen as the basis of Confucian political theory, he refers an autocratic ruler should practice *Ren* towards his subjects. An inhumane ruler runs the risk of losing the "Mandate of Heaven", the right to rule. Such a 'mandateless' ruler need not be obeyed. However, a ruler who reigns humanely and takes care of the people is to be obeyed strictly, for the benevolence of his dominion shows that he has been mandated by heaven. The Confucian prescriptions of social relationships appeared one was a socially dependent being, which made it imperative to know one's social position, to fulfill one's duties and obligations, and to observe the appropriate moral standard. As Chen (1995: 144) puts it, '*A Chinese should first and foremost know his place in society and how to interact with others in a proper manner. Guan Xi, face and Ren Qing are important components in regulating interpersonal relationship*'.

Many researchers have indicated that *Guan Xi* is one of the particularly significant concepts in Chinese culture, which refers to the quality of a personal relationship

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outside an individual's immediate family (Lockett, 1988; Luo and Chen, 1997; Chen and Chen, 2004). In Chinese societies family members are highly trusting of each other but place low trust in larger collectivities (Fukuyama, 1995). Therefore, *Guan Xi* plays an important role for individuals to deal with an environment lacking general trust, it is believed that people who share a *Guan Xi* relationship are committed to one another, as interpersonal trust is essential in building a quality *Guan Xi*. According to Chen and Chen (2004: 306), they view *Guan Xi* as '...*an indigenous Chinese construct and define it as an informal, particularistic personal connection between two individuals who are bounded by an implicit psychological contract to follow the social norm of guanxi such as maintaining a long-term relationship, mutual commitment, loyalty, and obligation.*' *Guan Xi* is viewed to have both positive and negative ramifications; one thinks it causes the corruption in Chinese society, as its black gold politics and go through the back door often secures personal advantages such as favourable conditions of work or promotion etc. (Chou, 2003; Chen and Chen, 2004); another regards it as a human and organisational capital that helps gain competitive business advantages (Tsang, 1998). Redding and Ng (1982) assert that *Mian Zi* (face) is a key component in the dynamics of *Guan Xi*, as one should have a certain amount of prestige to cultivate and develop a viable network of *Guan Xi* connections. In addition, *Ren Qing* (humanised obligation) is regarded as a precondition for the establishment or use of *Guan Xi*, but the advantages run both ways, as *Ren Qing* emphasises the sense of obligation owed to each other. Hwang (1987) indicates when Chinese people enjoy the benefits of relational network; they also take on a reciprocal obligation which must be repaid in the future. Together with *Guan Xi* (relationship), *Li* (rite), *Mian Zi* (face) and *Ren Qing* (obligations) reinforce the social bonds that make the Chinese system function smoothly. These elements represent in relation to organisation theory is regarded as '*A reciprocal informal system that acts as neither market nor hierarchy; it acts reciprocally with whatever institutionalised bureaucratic structures exist at the time and may help to make them work more smoothly.*' (Child and Warner, 2003: 31).

3.4.2.7 Education
Confucian's meritocracy led to the introduction of the Imperial examination system in China and this system allowed anyone who passed an examination to become a government officer, a position which would bring wealth and honour to the whole family. The Chinese examination system over the following centuries has grown until, finally almost anyone who wished to become an official had to prove his worth by

passing written government examinations. This influence also reflected on the education system in Taiwan, as students were required to take the Joint High School Entrance Examination to gain admission to a High School or Vocational School; and the Joint College Entrance Examination to gain admission to a university. However, this highly competitive system causes tremendous stress on students and may kill opportunities to develop their own creativity and independent thinking. Therefore, the government changed the system in the last decade and students may enter college by application or selection by recommendation. This change has deep implications for cultural change, as variety, creativity and independent thinking are strongly emphasised for the need of Taiwan's economic growth (Chou, 2003). Furthermore, many managers in Taiwan completed their university education in the United States, and many Taiwanese go abroad for further higher education, such as MBA, Master and PhD courses, have become the trend in the last two decades. Thus, there is a predominantly western-style business environment in Taiwan. The capitalist and market-driven forces that operate in Taiwan make it easier for managers to accept an American or western management philosophy.

3.5 Conclusion

The cultural perspective has for some time provided the dominant paradigm in comparative studies of management and organisation. Culture impacts primarily on individual attitudes and behaviour, which include interpersonal behaviour, therefore, it is likely to be pervasive influence in organisations. These influences are involving with the matters such as the motivational consequences of managerial practices and styles, norms of communication, the willingness to take individual responsibility, the conduct of meetings, and modes of conflict resolution (Child and Warner, 2003). There are various researches have identified the values underpinning Chinese culture that are relevant to management and organisational behaviour (e.g. Shenkar and Ronen, 1987; Bond, 1996; Redding, 2002; Warner and Zhu, 2003). It is widely accepted that Confucianism has been the most important historical foundation for many of these values. According to Confucius and his most influential successor Mencius, human as biological beings have to face the inescapable fate (*Ming* in Chinese) of living, aging, illness and death. In Taiwanese culture nature is accepted as a given, thus destiny or fate is predetermined. People are more stable on what they are doing rather than try to change things or make things happen, it is considered to be more natural to let things happen. However, Confucius asserted every single human being must practice the

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transcendental moral principle to fulfil his destiny (Lao, 1968) and practicing the heavenly fate is to do everything according to *Yi* (righteousness) (Tang, 1986). Confucian regarded affairs out of human control as the realm of *Ming*, whereas those under the human control as the realm of *Yi*. The idea of separating *Ming* and *Yi* has profoundly influenced traditional Chinese attitudes towards the outer world. The Chinese proverbs which presents this idea such as "Man should do his work first, then leave the rest to Heaven" and "It is up to man to strive, but up to Heaven to grant" reflect a rather proactive attitude towards life in general.

From the above review, it can be summarised that several underlying elements may be useful for studying the implementation of empowerment in Taiwanese cultural context, and also reflect on Hofstede's framework of the cultural dimensions. First, in the contemporary Taiwan, societal order reflects the sense of Chinese civilisation as based on the learning and practice by individuals of clearly defined roles. Confucian ethics values legitimate paternalism at the levels of family and organisation (Redding, 2002). The establishment of the fundamental virtue of benevolence within the organisation is required, and it influences people regard their workplace is like family among Taiwanese organisation. To provide a moral justification in this hierarchy organisational setting by stressing reciprocal vertical obligations is to achieve a peaceful and orderly workplace. It correlated with large power distance of Hostede's cultural dimension. Second, Taiwanese society is based in identity with family as the core social unit. The concept of family life is *'...emulated within the work setting and with it the broader societal values that ensure social harmony and behavioural ritual are preserved.'* (Yau, 2002, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 28). To develop *Guan Xi* is a key element for people trusts each other outside the immediate family, in order to build teamwork, sharing values and information. Group orientation is preferred in Taiwanese culture and incentive schemes are based on the foundation of collectivism. It correlated with individualism-collectivism of Hostede's cultural dimension. Third, the balance between *Yin* and *Yang* is to achieve harmonisation in the workplace and maintain a dynamic reversion to ensure the organisation in a stable and sustained position. It correlated with masculine-feminine dimensions. The last is the virtues and quality of leadership emphasized by Confucianism, and combine with social relations. Managerial leadership requires the qualities of wisdom, trust, sincerity, benevolence, courage, and strictness to carry out policies (Chu, 1995: 29). This present research seeks to explore and understand how culture shapes management and employee behaviours and values in

relation to employee empowerment in the international tourist hotels in Taiwan a cultural perspective. A conceptual framework will be developed and will be discussed in the following Chapter.

Chapter 4 The Conceptual Framework

4.1 Introduction

According to the literature review the theory is that to empower employees in the hotel industry is a means to enhance service quality and customer satisfaction. However, accounts of companies that have implemented empowerment programmes have shown that there is a large distance between the empowerment rhetoric and the empowerment practice (Hales and Klidas, 1998; Klidas, 2001), therefore a more systematic approach to the important issue of implementing empowerment in needed. Hence the aim of this chapter is to introduce the conceptual framework that has been developed for this study. The framework is devised to accommodate the aim and objectives of the research and has relied on the literatures that have been reviewed in the previous two chapters.

Due to the scarcity of studies on the implementation of employee empowerment in the hotel industry in Asian countries, the study framework is based on western theories of investigating the impact of national and organisational culture on effective employee empowerment in this setting. The relevant literature review provides the identification of key concepts and variables for developing the conceptual framework. Thus, this framework seeks to support research on the implementation of employee empowerment based on a cultural perspective. Fundamentally this study aims to achieve an improved understanding of the complex issues surrounding employee empowerment in the Taiwanese cultural setting. The following section 4.2 will deal with the initial development of the conceptual framework. Section 4.3 will describe a range of Taiwanese culture and provide theoretical support for their linkage to organisation, management, and employee behaviours for the implementation of empowerment. It will also describe the contexts of the hotel industry, which may have a potential influence on empowerment implementation. Section 4.4 will seek to give a comprehensive explanation of the application of the conceptual framework. Finally, section 4.5 will outline the general conclusion for this chapter.
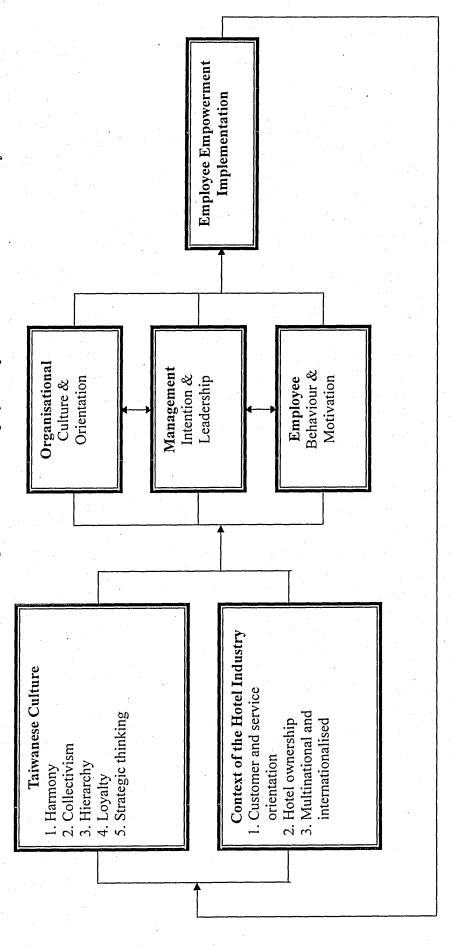
4.2 Purpose and Development of the Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review a conceptual framework has been developed that was applied and evaluated in three case studies in order to gain an improved understanding of the impact of national culture on the implementation of employee empowerment and

the ways that management and employees perceive of national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice. The conceptual framework serves as a guide for the research approach and provides an opportunity to identify relevant concepts that may help towards an understanding of cultural impact on empowerment implementation. The study framework is devised to help investigate and analyse employee empowerment implementation processes and underlying relationships in employee empowerment implementation in the Taiwanese cultural setting. In practice, the framework assists in selecting the areas of literature to investigate and facilitates the development of the interview questions, the analysis and the building of the case studies and their interpretation, as well as the synthesis of research conclusions and implications.

The conceptual framework is essentially the integration of literature, practice and realities that relate to the research aim and objectives. The aim of this study is to **explore the meanings and the implementation of empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan considering the role of national cultures may impact upon the empowerment concept.** Thus, the framework in this study required a good coverage from literature review to the development of Taiwanese culture which is relevant to empowerment practice. It examines Taiwanese culture that can lead to impact on organisational culture and orientations, management intentions and leadership, and employee behaviours and motivation, with a focus on influences of the implementation of employee empowerment based on theoretical framework. In creating cultural taxonomies, what have got out depends on what have been put in. Therefore the Taiwanese culture has been developed and the relevance to empowerment theory will be examined. The framework demonstrates the connection of logically coherence of study that national culture variables and the contexts of the hotel industry have impacts on the hotel organisations in Taiwan. It recognises that the influences are inter-connected and interactions within organisations and organisational culture, management intention and employee behaviour have an impact on the effective employee empowerment implementation. The concerns of this study are to explore the process of Taiwanese culture influences on the implementation of employee empowerment and if this specific practice is capable of being transferred from western countries to Asian Chinese societies. The framework is shown in Figure 4.1 overleaf.

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Figure 4.1 A Framework of influences leading to the implementation of employee empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan

Taiwanese Culture
1. Harmony
2. Collectivism
3. Hierarchy
4. Loyalty
5. Strategic thinking

Context of the Hotel Industry
1. Customer and service orientation
2. Hotel ownership
3. Multinational and internationalised

Organisational Culture & Orientation

Management Intention & Leadership

Employee Behaviour & Motivation

Employee Empowerment Implementation

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4.3 The Discussion of the Conceptual Framework

National cultures can have a direct and significant impact on managerial and employee behaviour and even the domestic customers, so it is especially important to realise that western management models and concepts do not necessarily transfer to other cultures. The work by Klidas (2001) has proved the importance of the cultural relativity of the concept of empowerment on the basis of two of the dimensions of national culture of Hofstede (2001), power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Nevertheless, this thesis focuses on employee empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan. Therefore in order to gain the best understanding of cultural effects, Taiwanese cultures studied in the section 3.4.2 generated a number of characteristics that are clearly Taiwanese/Chinese come to mind are harmony, collectivism, hierarchy, loyalty, and strategic thinking. The following section 4.3.1 will discuss these characteristics and then in section 4.3.2 will show how they are relative to organisation, management, and employee behaviour in order to understand the impact of Taiwanese culture on empowerment.

Five conceptual themes are developed in this framework. It shows that Taiwanese culture and the contexts of the hotel industry may lead to impact on organisations orientations and its culture, management intentions and leadership, and employee behaviours and motivation, with a focus on influences of the implementation of employee empowerment. The five conceptual themes are presented in the following subsections.

4.3.1 Taiwanese Culture

This study concentrates on the cultural factors that are relevant to the Taiwanese society and reveal the influences on employee empowerment in order to examine how national culture has its impact on the implementation of employee empowerment. The key Taiwanese/Chinese cultural elements are described as the following:

Harmony

The concept of *Yin Yang* have strongly affected Chinese people and at the heart of Chinese thought. The doctrines of the major Chinese philosophies are based on the concept of *Yin Yang*. The characteristics of *Yin* and *Yang* are that they are opposing, rooted together, transform each other, and balanced. *Yin Yang* is regarded as a universal way of describing the interactions and interrelations of the natural forces that do occur in the world. The idea of balance through opposites of *Yin Yang* is to achieve

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harmonisation. The review of literature on the major Chinese philosophies shows the evidence that harmony is emphasised in each of their doctrines (Table 4.1). Warner and Zhu (2003: 29) assert '*The doctrine of harmony and the balance between Yin and Yang: the effort to achieve harmonization in the workplace and maintain a dynamic reversion that perpetually counterbalances all propensities towards one extreme or another puts the organization in a stable and sustained position*'. For Taiwanese people to maintain group harmony in their workplace is very important, thus most Taiwanese will always act in balance within the society and organisation.

Table 4.1 The doctrine of harmony in the major Chinese philosophies

Chinese philosophies	The doctrine of harmony
Yi Jing	The dynamic balance of opposites, the evolution of events as a process, and acceptance of the inevitability of change. It teaches Chinese people to act with great cautions within extreme natural phenomena and situations, and always act in balance within the society, and adopt strategic thinking in order to survive in the ever-changing nature in the short-term and the long-term.
Taoism	*Lao Zi* indicated that *'Tao produces one. One produces two. Two produces three. And three produces ten thousand things (that is everything). The ten thousand things carry yin and embrace yang. By combining these forces, harmony is created.*' (*Tao Te Jing*, verse 42, cited in Warner and Zhu, 2003: 26).
War Strategies	The book, The Art of War discussed the five elements that should be considered in formulating a strategy. The great importance to success in any endeavour is the harmony of the five elements (Chu, 1995).
Confucianism	The major ideas of Confucius system of beliefs were three basic guides, which are ruler guides subject, father guides son, and husband guides wife; five constant virtues, which include loyalty, filial piety, faithfulness, caring and sincerity; and the doctrine of the mean/harmony (Redding and Wong, 1986).

Collectivism, Hierarchy, and Loyalty

Collectivism, hierarchy, and loyalty are rooted in Confucianism, a belief system that values harmony, and the tendency to see individuals in a family and socially dependent context. Confucianism has been a deep-rooted foundation of Chinese life for over two thousand years and the Confucian work dynamism epitomises the eastern values of perseverance, ordering relationships by status, thrift, having a sense of shame, and attaining long-term goals. Confucianism creates a belief in harmonious interpersonal relationships, the value of hierarchy and order in society. One of well-defined principles in Confucius doctrines is that an individual is not an isolated entity. The Confucian ethics puts family right at the centre of personal existence, as two of three bonds of loyalty bound the society (loyalty to the ruler, filial obedience and fidelity of wife to husband) were set within the family. The concept of family life is regarded as '...*the basic unit of society is emulated within the work setting and with it the broader societal values that ensure social harmony and behavioural ritual are preserved*' (Warner and Zhu, 2003: 28). Ritual (*Li*) is used to distinguish between people and by practicing *Li*

human beings can attain *Ren* (benevolence), the highest virtue. The establishment of the fundamental virtue of benevolence has strong influence within the organisation, as many Chinese/Taiwanese people regarded their workplace is like a family. Consequently, organisation and management have duties to look after the interests of fellow employees, while employees have a high commitment to the management and organisation. This relational virtue can be interpreted based on the management aspect is to ensure employment security, compensation and reward, training and development; from the employee's perception is high commitment, self-discipline, and individual sacrifice for the common goals etc. (Warner, and Zhu, 2003). The eventual goal of such efforts is to achieve a harmonious and orderly workplace.

Strategic thinking

The concept of *Yin Yang* creates an attitude which copes with the environment in an adaptive and flexible way and combines with *Sun Zi Bing Fa*, it provides the general guidance for strategic thinking which helps organisation to form business strategies. Chinese/Taiwanese people believe in order to survive in the ever-changing world, it is necessary to adopt strategic thinking and change for the good.

4.3.2 The impact of Taiwanese Culture on Empowerment

4.3.2.1 Organisation perspective

The empowerment theory emphasises that an empowering organisation should be a flattened structure with a reduction in the amount of the intermediate management and supervisory in hierarchical layers (Riley 1996; Maxwell, 1997), as it is believed that a flat hierarchical pyramid is necessary for organisations to become flexible and adaptive to a rapidly changing business environment and customer demands. A flat organisational structure enables employees to respond to customers needs directly and it means front-line employees have some of the decision-making powers previously held by middle management and they now have more room to make decisions. Therefore the organisation is required to provide new competencies for all members and to develop new power delineation. It is believed that an empowering organisation is necessary to decentralise the power and disperse decision-making authority throughout the organisation to the lowest level of organisational hierarchy. In Taiwan the hierarchical structure is based on the belief of inequality between subordinates and their superiors. The organisations in such cultural settings tend to have more levels of hierarchy, a high proportion of supervisory personnel and more centralised decision-making. There is a

distinct power hierarchy within the organisations which is significantly influenced by the family-centeredness value in Chinese culture. Hofstede (1983) asserts the form and structure of organisations has to a significant degree been influenced by culture.

4.3.2.2 Management perspective

The Chinese consider filial piety the first and ultimate of all virtues; therefore, the boss-employee relationship at work follows the model of filial piety as in the parent-child relationship at home, as *'Chinese have learned relationships with others almost exclusively from the family experience'* (Hsu, 1984: 758). Many Chinese organisations are run like a family, subordinates feel obligated to be loyal and to obey their superiors; and the superiors feel obligated to be concerned with subordinate welfare and interests. These results in the centralisation of power and the power core controlled by the owner or a small number of people normally the people here means the higher management levels who are usually family members; or employees who are regarded as in-group and are highly trusted. Thus the management level is regarded as the authority and would be revered or obeyed, therefore people will tend to seek status and power as their motivators at work in Taiwan. To decentralise the power and flat hierarchical pyramid could be a massive challenge for both superiors and subordinates and they may not embrace the idea that provides by empowerment doctrine, as it could be difficult to suspend their deeply embedded values of their distinct roles.

The proposition of the empowerment theory emphasises to create culture of empowerment is required superiors and subordinates build their relationships based on mutual support in honesty and trust, the traditional management style rigorous control of employee behaviour should be suspended. However, trust-orientated organisations may not be fulfilled in different cultural contexts. The advantage of interpersonal trust can be found in Chinese cultures. *Guanxi* (connection or relationship) plays an important role in Chinese society. Organisations and individuals emphasise relationship and social networking and to build and maintain *guanxi* in Chinese societies includes four strategies, which are instrumentalism, trust, reciprocity, and longevity (Silverthorne, 2005). *Guanxi* binds people through the exchange of favours and it does not have to involve friendship. The relationship tends to be more utilitarian than emotional. The moral perspective here is that a person who fails to observe a rule of equity and refuses to return favour for favour loses face and looks untrustworthy. This exchange of favours tend to benefit the weaker members more, such unequal exchange reflects the

Confucian principle of the senior taking care of the junior (Chen, 2004). Trust in empowerment doctrine implies that managers trust employees working abilities and capabilities and employees trust their managers supporting them in making decisions. However, trust in Chinese culture seems to be different form what empowerment is required as it is more about ethics and moral respect. It is notable that in order to build *Guan Xi* relationship, it is essential for managers to socialise with their employees outside their working hours. When *Guan Xi* relationship is developed between managers and employees it creates in-group emotion and further firms interpersonal trust.

Taiwanese people generally believe superiors and subordinates are considered inequality. In order to maintain power the superiors tend to control information and transmit it piecemeal to subordinates so that they become dependent and unable to outperform superiors. Therefore the information is only possible given to a specific subordinate who is highly trusted by the leader. Employees expect to be told what to do and do not challenge their superiors, they are supposed to think what their superiors are thinking and tailor their ideas accordingly. The empowerment proposition for independent thinking and acting will challenge their beliefs in relation to their social order and ethic issue within an organisation. The ideal boss in the subordinates' eyes in Taiwanese culture is a benevolent autocrat or sometimes even seen as a good father (Hofstede, 1991). Managers are expected to lead in a directive way and only top managers share in the decision-making process. Managers who cannot provide precise answers to the employees' questions and seek their input in the decision-making process will tend to lose respect from their subordinates (Hoppe, 1990). In Taiwan the directive leadership is rated positively and the managers who fail to provide direction and answers to their subordinates may be regarded as poor managers rather than offering a positive step towards to empowerment (Durcan and Kirkbride, 1994). As an empowering organisation is required for upward communication as employees are expected to identify problems and inform management then provide the answer at the same time to interact with management to come out with a solution to resolve problems. The required leadership is influenced by Confucianism, as the Confucian's doctrine indicates managerial leadership require the quality of wisdom, trust, sincerity, benevolence, courage, and strictness to carry out policies (Chu, 1995: 29). If managers lack these qualities may experience lack of support and respect from employees, and the consequence will be low productivity and discontent (Warner and Zhu, 2003). Thus, the directive leadership may challenge empowerment doctrine, as the empowerment

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doctrine favours democratic and participative leadership and abandons the traditional autocratic and directive leadership (Lashley and Taylor, 1998, Klidas, 2001).

4.3.2.3 Employee perspective

The majority of literature and research on empowerment doctrines have a strong inherent cultural bias as they share a common belief that employees will invariably embrace the notion of empowerment, which increases their autonomy, development within organisation and job satisfaction (Maxwell, 1997). In addition empowerment has been proposed as a method to increase employee motivation at work (Bennis and Nanus, 1985), Conger and Kanungo (1988) conceptualise the empowerment construct in the workplace and refer to empowerment as a motivational phenomenon related to expectancy and self-efficacy theories. Thomas and Velthouse (1990: 668) state that '*Intrinsic motivation involves those generic conditions by which individual undertakes activities pertaining directly to the task that produces motivation and satisfaction*'. The researchers who formulated psychological empowerment suggest four dimensions of assessment and these are also known as task assessment that individuals employ to evaluate their work environment and this is regarded as the cognitive component of intrinsic motivation. It is believed that empowerment can tap into the enthusiasm and intrinsic sources of job satisfaction (Lashley, 1996) as individuals tend to prefer jobs that can give them the opportunity to undertake mentally challenging work and these should improve employee morale and performance at work (Lewis, 1995). In general, the overwhelming majority of literature supports the notion of empowering employees. Research indicates that to increase responsibility that employee have at their jobs could make them sense of their importance and lead to enhanced opportunities that they will use their skills and knowledge to their fullest potential, and as a result employees feel better about themselves and proud of their jobs, therefore, organisation could have greater employee commitment, reduce labour turnover and improve customer service. However, all of these of the individuals' values are prevailing in the American and Anglo-Saxon cultures. It is argued that empowerment is '...*to build on the higher need for self-actualisation and achievement, which are the top motivators in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Ripley and Ripley, 1992)*' (Klidas, 2001: 103). Indeed, some researchers contend that empowerment is an appropriate choice for the individuals who have high growth needs within the organisation (Bowen and Lawler, 1992; Hales, 1993; Lovelock, 1995).

The assumption is that psychological empowerment is regarded as intrinsic work motivation for individuals, and if the role of work in a society reflects the values of that society then presumably individuals needs and work motivation is influenced by cultural issues. If it is believed that meeting and filling needs is the primary motivating force then individuals in different cultures should have different nature of the needs and will respond to varying types of motivation (Hofstede, 1991). In an empowering organisation, empowered employees seek their freedom to adopt their own approach to their job and enjoy having challenges at work which can help them achieve their sense of accomplishment but in Taiwanese society people may not consider these work goals as relatively important to them. Taiwanese employees are more likely to emphasise relationships rather than task itself. In addition, Taiwanese/Chinese management style is also influenced by Confucian values (Bond, 1996). Confucianism creates a belief in harmonious interpersonal relationship, the belief of hierarchy and order in society. Most of Chinese/Taiwanese believe that relationships generate results, therefore, people put much more effort into developing relationship both within and outside the organisation. It is common for the Chinese/Taiwanese to seek and expect friendships to develop between managers and workers (Beamer, 1998). Taiwanese employees tend to develop a good relationship with their direct superior and working colleagues in order to cooperate with each other to get the job done. Empowerment appeals to individuals who have a higher need for self-actualisation and achievement, hence, individuals are likely to be motivated by the increased opportunity for self-development and challenge offered by empowerment. Taiwanese employees have different desire of needs on motivation; therefore they may not embrace empowerment.

The empowerment doctrine encourages individuals to take initiative and make effort during the service encounters. However, Taiwanese culture is a high collectivist orientation where people regard consensus and cooperation would be more valued they may not take initiative. Taking initiative means subordinates would be required to have strong independence and also having decision-making power and latitudes. However, people in collectivist cultures tend to have strong dependence on their superiors and prefer working in a small group, they tend to hesitate to speak up in larger groups but this hesitation decreases in smaller groups. They would prefer to discuss with others in a small group before they can take action, as this can make them feel more comfortable as they represent a group's idea not only himself/herself. Employees in this cultural setting perform best when operating with a group goal and anonymously as the virtues of

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harmony and the maintenance of face reign supreme (Hofstede, 1997). In an empowering organisation employees prefer for a consultative style of decision making and management usually consults with his/her subordinates before reaching a decision, however Taiwanese employees generally expect their boss who decides autocratically or paternalistically. Taiwan has a strong Confucian influence on social order and ethic issue, the attitudes of role pairs towards parents, especially to fathers are easily transferred towards bosses in the workplace, as it is regarded as part of human mental programming (Hofstede, 1997). The five basic relationships of role pairs contain mutual and complementary obligations, thus relationships between subordinates and superiors in Taiwan are frequently loaded with emotions. The culture barrier is that Taiwanese employees may not embrace empowerment as there is considerable dependence of subordinates on bosses and they will try to avoid taking the initiative in making decisions.

An individual's working experience is likely to have an effect on empowerment. It is commonly accepted that employees with more working experience in the hotel are more trusted as they are likely to have a better understanding and be more familiar with its organisational culture and mission. This will enable them to determine which patterns of behaviours are acceptable and encouraged by their leaders and which are not. The hospitality industry should be a customer-orientated culture and it is believed that the employees who have been working in the hotel longer will be more proactive in exercising discretion in order to satisfy customers. This is in comparison with more recent employees who may have less confidence to make decisions and they will need to consult with their supervisors as to what they need to do, as they would rather play safe than make a mistake. In addition the employees who have more working experience in the hotel will be more familiar with its clients or specific guests and therefore more likely to know what their personal needs and preferences are and they can provide services likely to delight the customers and thus exercise empowered behaviour. With the traditional culture of avoiding conflict between management and employees, most workers can be promoted up the scale of their job title if their annual performance is above average (Chen, 1998: 161). Thus, organisations tend to have more levels of hierarchy and senior employees are more likely to be assigned jobs that require autonomy.

4.3.3 Contexts of the Hotel Industry and Its Influence on Empowerment

As aforementioned in the introduction chapter, the competitive global market has forced many organisations to adopt new management processes. To provide high-quality service during service delivery is becoming a source of differentiation to gain competitive advantage, thus the customer-contact employees play an important role more than ever as a medium to deliver service. Empowerment in the hospitality management literature is interpreted the term as delegation of decision-making power and authority (Maxwell, 1997) targeting customer-contact employees at the lowest level of organisational hierarchy and focus on the service encounter. The common goal in all these accounts is in order to enhance service quality and customer satisfaction and the reason to empower the lowest level of employees in the hospitality industry is to ensure employees can respond immediately to unpredictable service situations according to their judgement without reference to an interminable hierarchy (Baum, 1997). Thus, the aim is that when facing and meeting the individual needs of highly demanding customers, empowered employee is able to customise the service according to the different needs of each individual customer (Lashley and Taylor, 1998). The trend has forced the hospitality industry to apply a more customer-orientated culture and tie to the customer building a long-term relationship, especially in the hotel industry as the cost of keeping existing customers were several times lower than the costs of attracting new ones (Hart *et al.*, 1990). Empowerment is regarded as the most suitable approach when the company wants to build a relationship with the customers or where the relationship itself is the principle commodity of the service (Bowen and Lawler, 1992). Indeed, the quality of service provided to the customer is regarded as an intangible element of the product and the intangible-dominant nature of the service offering increases the dependence upon the service provider-customer interaction in delivering the service (Lashley and Taylor, 1998). A handful authors argue that the more unpredictable the business environment, the more a particular business would need and presumably benefit from an empowerment approach (e.g. Bowen and Basch, 1992; Bowen and Lawler, 1992). Thus, it is not a surprise empowerment has been adopted in practice by all major international hotel chains, for example, Marriott Hotels (Maxwell, 1997), the Accor Group (Parsons, 1995), the Inter-Continental Hotel Group (Go and Pine, 1995), Hilton Hotels, and Westin Hotels and Resorts (Brymer, 1991) etc. Thus, the question emerges multinational runs by dominate big international hotel chains to transfer management practice but in what way and to what extent national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice.

4.4 The Application of The Conceptual Framework to This Study

This framework is informed by the review of literature. From the left-hand side the issues of national culture and the contexts of the hotel industry can be seen as a key consideration in employee empowerment implementation. The second arrow shows that these national culture variables and the contexts of the hotel industry can have an impact on organisation culture and orientation, management intention and leadership, and employee behaviour and motivation. They also influence organisational structure and systems, management strategy and style, and employees' shared values. The second movement area involves organisation, management and employee. The area has a two double-headed arrow in between each box, as they all interplay, and the last arrow shows that relationship within and between organisation culture and orientation, management intention and leadership, and employee behaviour and motivation are vital influences the effective in employee empowerment implementation. This does not guarantee to lead to the success of employee empowerment implementation. Thus the arrow goes back to the beginning and shows that in order to continued the process, some innovative actions are reinforced and have their impact on national cultures and the contexts of the hotel industry, as people recognised the need to remain flexible and adaptable in response to a changing and ambiguous environment.

Influenced by the discussions in previous sections, the conceptual framework is applied to this study in various ways. Firstly, it directs the study into a certain range of information and review of literature in harmony with the research aim and objectives. Secondly, it assists in selecting methodological approaches in relation to study employee empowerment implementation. Qualitative method provides more rich information and comprehensive understanding of employee empowerment based on cultural perspective. Third, according to the framework, the interview questions are derived. The questions reflect the detailed elements to cover each area, which are needed when study empowerment from cultural perspective. Fourth, it provides guidance for data analysis and each hotel case study will be interpreted, analysed and reported in results chapters. Finally, in the conclusion chapter, the framework will help with understanding how Taiwanese culture has its impact on empowerment implementation in the hotel industry and further contributes to application to the empowerment theory to a wider discussion of national culture related to contingency models with Hofstede's dimensions of national culture.

4.5 Conclusion

Consistent with the research aim and objectives, the conceptual framework that is developed in this study is to explore in what way and to what extent national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice. The conceptual framework functions as a guide and directs the interview questions, research methodology, data analysis interpretation, as well as generating research conclusions. The research methodology will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 Research Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research methodology employed in this study. This research employs a qualitative approach conducted in three upscale and luxury international tourist hotels in the three biggest cities in Taiwan. The present chapter outlines the research approach. Section 5.2 explains the research philosophy to the study which was the interpretive paradigm. Section 5.3 will explain how the research in this study involved an inductive approach. Section 5.4 outlines the qualitative research design and issues associated with the participant hotels search and contacts in Taiwan. Section 5.5 describes data collection involved with qualitative techniques; semi-structured interviews and documentation. Section 5.6 explains the themes of the interview questions and the conduct of the interviews. Section 5.7 highlights three ethical considerations. Section 5.8 briefly explains the approach to the data analysis. Section 5.9 outlines some of the problems encountered during the research and it also outlines the research limitations and the research credibility.

5.2 The Research Philosophy

Taylor and Edgar (1999) emphasise that the approach to hospitality and tourism research adopted by an investigator depends very much on his/her ontology and epistemology, which in turn influences his/her selection of an appropriate methodology. Clarke *et al.* (1998) also mention that one of the most frequent distinctions between types of research encountered in texts on research methods is that between positivism and interpretative research, with both having an important part to play in business and management research. The choice of research methodology is determined by the way the researcher thinks about the development of knowledge, which is influenced by the nature of existing knowledge in the area they have been researching, the research aims and objectives, and the time and resources that are available for the research study (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998).

This thesis seeks to contribute to the theory of employee empowerment based on a cultural perspective. Thus the study clarifies the meanings of empowerment in the management context within the hotel industry and explores how national culture has its impact on empowerment implementation where it takes place. The literature review

found very few empirical studies have been carried out on the concept of empowerment, especially in the hotel industry in non-Western countries and based on the studies of a cultural perspective. The literature review also provides the evidence that what has been produced on these empirical studies on empowerment actually serve different intentions. There is a gap between rhetoric and reality of empowerment, as lacking of explanation in alternative cultural contexts. In addition, as hotel companies internationalise more important than before. It appears therefore that the implementation of employee empowerment in different cultural context is a phenomenon needed to be studied, especially in Asian or Chinese societies, as there has been no significant research on empowerment conducted in this region. Thus this study focuses on the cultural impacts to create a better understanding of empowerment implementation and tries to understand the practices and meanings of research participants from their perspective. Given the aim of this study, the inquiry paradigms involve social constructivism combined with interpretive approach (Mertens, 1998). Constructivism is assumed that individuals seek to understand the world in which they live and work, and later to develop subjective meanings directed toward certain objects or things of their experience, which are often negotiated socially and historically. In other words, they are formed through interaction with others and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives (Creswell, 2007: 21). In fact, constructivist, naturalistic, and interpretive paradigms are specific terms given to an epistemology that contrasts with positivist orthodoxies. The constructivist paradigm could be involved with multiple realities (Creswell, 2003) and seeks to explain people's unique experiences (Crotty, 1998). This assessment of employee empowerment implementation, therefore, is based on the views of stakeholders in the international tourist hotels that are subjectively cultural level and related to the organisational structures, management intentions, and employee perceptions upon them. This study rejects the positivist approach which is based on it sees only measurable events in numerically as the possible objects of scientific study (Coolican, 1999). In addition, Clarke *et al.* (1998) argue that the methods of positivism are effectively limited in what they can explain and describe about human behaviour, however, human behaviour is constructed through shared meanings and to effectively study such behaviour it is necessary to identify, understand and interpret such meanings.

The intention of the present study is to understand a phenomenon under investigation that is based on the way participants view and experience this phenomenon (Saunders *et*

al., 2003). For the interpretive what is meaningful emerges from the data, therefore the process is inductive. In presenting results it is the narrative of the participants that speaks. The participants in this study are managers and employees working in international tourist hotels in Taiwan. The interpretive process '... *involves an ongoing cycle in which preexisting interpretive frameworks shape how people make sense of their experiences, and these experiences, in turn, shape the development of new interpretive frameworks*' (Ezzy, 2002: 6). Therefore an interpretive approach exhibits a number of characteristics. First, the social world is seen as socially constructed on the basis of shared meanings which are subjective. The social world is also prone to greater variations than the natural world. Human behaviour is variable rather than fixed, which leads to the second characteristic that is the unavoidable involvement of the researcher in the observation process. The third characteristic of interpretive research is that human action/behaviour is based on shared meanings (Clarke *et al.,* 1998). In this research, various stakeholders expressed their views and experience about working within the participant hotels in relation to implementation of employee empowerment on a cultural perspective, and the researcher was there to listen carefully to what they said, then as the inquirer interpreted that information and developed an understanding of that reality in pursuance of the overall research aim. In summary, this research study is concerned with the interpretation of the meanings and implementation of employee empowerment bases on a cultural perspective within the Taiwanese hotel industry.

It is worth drawing to the practical scenario, as the goal of this research is fundamentally to rely on the participants' views of the situation in their life setting, the research therefore involves in-depth interviews. The interviewer talks to his sample group in detail, explores their views, developing their answers and following through some of their ideas. This high researcher-subject verbal interaction is characteristic of an interpretative approach; the interviewer acts as analyst and interpreter and directs the conversations as he feels appropriate. The process is consequently highly subjective. Thus, it is important that the researcher systematically reflects on who he is in the inquiry, and recognises that his own background will shape his interpretation, and to acknowledge that his interpretation flows from his own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (Creswell, 2007). The researcher should be sensitive and acknowledge his potential biases, values and interests and how these may shape the study (Creswell, 2003). Thus, these issues were kept in mind throughout the research process for this study. The interpretive approach could be regarded as human action is the result of

subjective interpretations of the external world. A situation can arise that the researcher observes that there has been very little research done in a particular field and starts off without a hypothesis but instead, having collected and analysed the conversations/interviews, he/she identifies patterns and trends and suggests explanations based on his/her observations. This is a process of induction and one of the major features of interpretative research (Taylor and Edgar, 1999). However, it is important to point out that an interpretative approach is considered very time consuming due to interviews, fieldwork, and its data analysis (Clark et al, 1998).

5.3 The Research Approach

This study seeks to understand and explore the reality what individual and cultural factors have their impacts on empowerment implementation in Taiwanese cultural setting based on the views of affected parties and the researcher's interpretation. The study does not make judgements about the success or failure of employee empowerment implementation in Taiwanese international tourist hotel firms.

The research approach in this study adopts an inductive approach. The study of employee empowerment in the European hotel industry by Klidas (2001) proves that different cultural backgrounds indeed have an impact on employee empowerment implementation. Thus this research seeks to explore the impact of Taiwanese culture on employee empowerment implementation in the Taiwanese hotel industry. Inductive research is frequently used in building theory from the implication of the researcher's empirical findings to understand better the nature of the problem. Thus qualitative research is more likely to be adopted in order to understand why something is happening rather than being able to describe what is happening (Saunders et al, 2003). In summary, induction is a process of observation-findings-theory. In order to investigate this under-researched topic in the Asian region, an exploratory research study is adopted with a combination of qualitative research methods to evaluate the managers and employees perceptions of empowerment implementation in the Taiwanese international tourist hotel industry based on cultural issues. Therefore, the inductive research is employed to explore and gain an understanding of emerging objectives of this research.

Furthermore, the study is employing a case study research strategy. Case study research involves a detailed description of individual perception, followed by an analysis of the

data for the identification of key themes or issues (Stake, 1995). According to de Vaus (2001) case study design is helpful for both theory testing and theory building. A questionnaire survey approach was considered less appropriate in this study since the intention was to gain in-depth insights in a natural setting, based on understanding the entirety of the given phenomenon and situation, and there was no intention to seek representativeness (Denscombe, 1998). Creswell (2007: 16) indicates '*qualitative research is legitimate in its own right and does not need to be compared to achieve respectability.*'

It is believed that case studies are the source of data richness and of contextual understanding. Robson (2002: 40) defines case study as the '*...development of detailed, intensive knowledge about a single "case", or a small number of related "cases"*'. Finn *et al* (2000: 81) state '*case studies tend generally to be inductive by exploring issues in depth and in context to generate or replicate theory. The aim is to understand the particular and unique features of the case but also to draw out analysis that has a wider applicability*'. As stated in Chapter 2 literature review on empowerment, empowerment has a variety of meanings and forms, and analysis need to consider both relational and motivational constructs. Empowerment denotes different things to different people and studies of its application should investigate the context in which empowerment takes place. The case study has several advantages in these circumstances (Hartley, 1994). In particularly, it enables an understanding of the processes which are in place to manage the organisation within traditional line management structures. It will enable a study of the roles, responsibilities, and authority allocated to various participants in the organisation. Most importantly, the case study will enable an investigation of the views and impressions of the approach from individuals in key roles. It is said that case study research is probably the most flexible design (Hakim, 2000). It can utilize multiple methods and triangulation as it is useful to ensure the research results considering the idea of triangulation, which helped to increase the study's likely reliability (Hakim, 2000).

In practice, the initial stage of the research study conducted a review of the literature to gain a theoretical base of knowledge to investigate issues of employee empowerment implementation as a social phenomenon that have occurred in Taiwan. Secondly, the investigated phenomenon was behaviour of a superior empowering subordinates and the psychological state of a subordinate from being empowered. The main argument is that

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without an individual experiencing and feeling empowered, empowerment does not exist even when managers authorise and share resource with their subordinates. Thus, the study investigates the involvement of managers and employees in their perception and practice of empowerment implementation in international tourist hotels in the Taiwanese cultural setting. Finally, an in-depth investigation was carried out on the phenomenon of using multiple methods, categorised into three different perspectives, the organisation, management, and employee perspectives. However, despite the ability to gain an in-depth and rigorous understanding of the particular subject matter, case study is sometimes criticised for its lack of concern for external validity or generalisation (Denscombe, 1998). Thus, the question is how far this research study can generalise empowerment theory from the findings of the three hotels in Taiwan. Yin (cited in Bryman, 2001) argues the issue is not whether case study findings can be generalised to a wider universe, rather it concerns how well the researcher generates the theory out of the case study findings. The purpose of this research does not intend to produce a theory which is generalisable to all population. The study is to explain what is going on in the particular Taiwanese cultural setting and contribute to application to the empowerment theory.

The reasons why Taiwan was chosen for this study were outlined in more detail in section 1.4. Taiwan is regarded as one of the Chinese heritages and it is a country positioned at the opposite end of American cultural dimensions. Taiwanese cultural dimensions tend to have a large power distance with weak uncertainty avoidance, low individualism, be fairly feminine, and have a long-term orientation. As its cultural characteristics are opposite to America, it is thus interesting to explore whether the empowerment doctrine can be transferred and implemented in such a cultural setting. This research inquiry paradigm is constructivism, thus it is crucial that the researcher in this case of study can focus on the specific contexts in which participants live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of participants. The researcher's experience and background would shape his interpretation of what he found in the data and to make sense the meanings others have about the world (Creswell, 2007) since the researcher and participants are from the same country, the researcher will be better able to understand their views in their natural setting.

5.4 Research Design

According to Creswell (2003) the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants that will best help the researcher understand the problems and the research questions. In this study primary data will be qualitative. According to Veal (1992: 93), one characteristic of a qualitative approach is that it provides '...*a great deal of rich information about relatively few people rather than more limited information about a large number of people*'. Finn *et al.,* (2000: 81) also asserts that qualitative research is beneficial because of '...*the appropriateness of methods to the understanding of the subject matter*'. Importantly this study deals with employee strategy, national culture and organisational culture and their influences on the implementation of employee empowerment in Taiwanese international tourist hotels. It requires an insight into empowerment in Taiwanese cultural context, therefore quantitative methods which usually produce the results in numerical terms would be inappropriate. Therefore, a qualitative methodology was used to explore the intentions, priorities, values and opinions of front-line employees and managers in the international tourist hotel in Taiwan. The literature review on the role of the manager in implementing empowerment in most cases remains theoretical and fragmented and the most important is that the literature seems to suggest the management somehow can implement the concept of empowerment into workplace, though it is recognised that the role of the manager is crucial in implementing the concept. Therefore this study attempts to examine both management and employees' perception of implementing employee empowerment and how national culture can have its impact on empowerment. Furthermore the literature review appears to make arbitrary assertions that employees will invariably embrace empowerment (Lovelock, 1995). The argument is that in countries that share different values from those of Anglo-Saxon countries, changing the leadership style, organisational structure, and employee behaviours may not be invariably welcomed in different cultural contexts.

Qualitative researchers emphasise the value-laden nature of inquiry and seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning, thus qualitative research is involving an interpretive and naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers would study the particular subject matters in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them via multimethod, such as to conduct a variety of empirical materials-case study and interview etc. to describe subject matter

and meanings in individual's lives (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). There are five reasons for using a qualitative research design in this particular study. First, the subject matter of this research questions is about how a relationship between cultural variables of the implementation of employee empowerment, and then intent of establishing an association, relationship among factors and further to identify the complex interactions of factors in any situation (Creswell, 2007). It is also about why and how the variables can influence the implementation of employee empowerment. Second, the cultural variables in this particular study cannot be easily identified, theories are not available to explain behaviour of participants, as there is no other research in employee empowerment in Taiwanese hotel industry. Third, there is a need to present a detailed view of the study. The quantitative approach will not suffice to present answers to this particular research issue. Fourth, a qualitative approach is employed in order to study individuals in their natural setting. Lastly, the study needs sufficient time and resources to spend on data collection in the fieldwork and also on data analysis.

This study addresses a fundamental need of the employee empowerment theory, which generally lacks evidence of implementation in a cultural context. Denscombe (1998) admits that with small-scale, qualitative research it is very difficult to adhere to the principles of probability sampling when selecting people to consult. There may also be concerns about the issue of representativeness. However, qualitative research is not necessarily intended to reflect representativeness, rather it is an approach that provides explanations and comprehension based on all the complexity of the given situation. The researcher is a key instrument to collect data through multimethod and focus on learning the meanings that participants hold about the problem and issue, and then interpret to make sense of meanings out of the case study findings (Creswell, 2007). Denscombe (1998) also refers that to select the sample size in qualitative research is unlikely to be known at the beginning of a research project and it will generally be relatively small. Creswell (2007: 128) further suggests for case study research '... *would not include more than 4 or 5 case studies in a single study. This number should provide ample opportunity to identify themes of the cases as well as conduct cross-case theme analysis.*' The concept of purposeful sampling is employed to ensure the selected participants and sites could purposefully inform a better understanding of the research aim and objectives (Creswell, 2007). Thus the initial decision was to conduct research in the properties of upscale and luxury international chain hotels as they were more likely to offer opportunities for the development of empowerment initiatives, because of

their orientation to service quality and customer satisfaction, and also their ability to develop an integrated human resource management strategy. In addition, the international hotel chains are internationalised and multinational hospitality companies which have strong organisational cultures and standardised practices in operating their hotel business worldwide. The search of the hotels was via the official government website, Tourism Bureau, Taiwan, Rep. of China. The list of possible participant international chain hotels had been identified through their hotels and corporate companies' websites. The selected hotels offer the appropriate environment for the study of empowerment with a corporate strategy founded on service quality and strong customer orientation, and also have empowerment policy on the companies' profile.

The following hotels were eventually selected, as the sample population (see Table 5.1). Grand Hyatt Taipei and Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei were selected because they were constantly rewarded as 'Best hotel in Taipei' by various magazines and parties, which show on the hotel websites. They were also regarded as two of the most competitive hotels in Taiwan. The Westin Taipei and Sheraton Taipei Hotel were selected because both were members of Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, which could support the comparisons between Klidas (2001) study which considered employee empowerment in the European hotel industry, as the hotel company in his study was Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide.

Table 5.1 Originally possible sample hotels

Grand Hyatt Taipei	a member of international hotel chain of Hyatt International Corporation, which is the subsidiary of Hyatt Corporation
Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei	a member of international hotel chain of Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts
The Westin Taipei	a member of international hotel chain of Westin Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, which is the subsidiary of Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide
Sheraton Taipei Hotel	a member of international hotel chain of Sheraton Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, which is the subsidiary of Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide

5.4.1 The Hotel Search and Contacts

Four possible participant hotels had been identified by employing a purposive sampling strategy. Email and telephone contacts were undertaken with each hotel in order to gain their interest in participating in this study from January 2004. At this stage the possible participating hotels were assured about individual confidentiality issues and made aware of the study purpose and the procedures that would be undertaken. Please see the covering letter and two preamble letters, included in Appendices A, B, and C. However,

the researcher experienced significant difficulty in gaining two way communications with the targeted hotels as the initial gatekeepers were unknown.

It is very important to have and decide who the critical gatekeepers to organisational research were (Hartley, ed. by Cassell and Symon, 2004). Initially only the Grand Hyatt Taipei responded but due to limited manpower and high season, they refused to participate in the research. The other targeted hotels did not respond at all. For various reasons beyond the control of the researcher it was not possible to access these possible participant hotels, therefore, the researcher decided to visit each hotel in person to discuss their interest in participating in this study. The researcher began to visit targeted hotels in February 2004. However, due to the president election held in mid-March 2004 in Taiwan, the progress of contacting the hotels was delayed, as most of hotels were busy during the event and thus the researcher was not able to speak to any managers, except for the manager of the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei. In this case the manager suggested that the researcher works as a trainee for three to six months, as the researcher could gain more understanding and also the hotel would more prefer a person who had working experience with Shangri-La to conduct the research. However this was difficult as the researcher had very limited time and there were other hotels where case studies were required.

In order to gain access to the targeted hotels, Mr. Song, Director-General at Hygiene Bureau Taipei was contacted to assist the researcher in his contact with the hotels at the end of March. The relationship between Mr. Song and the researcher is based on *Guan Xi*, as the researcher's father used to work for Hygiene Bureau Taichung, thus Mr. Song was asked for a favour to involve in the research study. *Guan Xi* is one of the particularly significant concepts in Chinese/Taiwanese culture that was discussed in Chapter 3. Mr. Song had good contact with the hotels and provided names and direct contact telephone numbers to the researcher on the 6th April 2004. This was the first time that the researcher was really able to access the hotels to discuss their interests in participating in the study. The following contacts with the hotel were productive and each hotel expressed their consideration of participating in the study. Due to confidentiality and anonymity alphabet will be used to instead of real names. The brief explanations from each targeted hotel were as follows:

Grand Hyatt Taipei - Marketing analyst, Ms. A was contacted in April 2004 and after consulting Human Resource reported back that the hotel would only assist interns/trainees or employees who are working or had worked in Grand Hyatt Taipei for their research projects. The hotel was not willing to offer assistance to other students who had no working experience within the Grand Hyatt Taipei. Moreover, it was not possible to interview 12 to 15 people including managers and employees, due to the shortage of manpower in the hotel. The researcher had a number of negotiations with Ms. A to seek other possible approaches to conduct the interviews outside staff working hours. She suggested that the researcher to make a list of major questions and she would send the questionnaire to the appropriate participants. As this could not meet the inquiry of the research methodology, thus Grand Hyatt Taipei was abandoned.

Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei - Service Manager – Hygiene Executive, Ms. B was contacted for assistance in April 2004. She forwarded the research enquiry to the Human Resource Department. Unfortunately the Director of Human Resources felt that each interview would take longer than one hour as the interview questions were excessively in-depth, therefore, she decided not to participate the research study. The researcher explained the pilot interview had been conducted and the running time was approximately one hour and asked the hotel to reconsider. The Human Resource Manager contacted the researcher two weeks later and agreed to participate in the research study as the research inquiry.

The Westin Taipei - Human Resources Director, Mr. C was contacted in April 2004 and he expressed an interest in participating in the research study. However the condition he provided did not meet the research inquiry as only two managers could be interviewed and none of the bottom-line employees could be conducted an interview. The researcher spent two weeks discussing how essential the perception of bottom-line employee is in terms of this research study. On reflection he decided that the researcher could conduct questionnaires to bottom-line employees, and he would pass it to the hotel staff for them to fill in the questionnaire but he did not agree to interviews. This could not meet the inquiry of the research methodology, thus The Westin Taipei was abandoned.

Sheraton Taipei Hotel - F&B senior supervisor, Ms. D was contacted in April 2004 and she forwarded the research enquiry to Human Resource Department. Ms. E who works in Human Resource replied and explained that the hotel was unable to participate in the

research study. The reason was because from 1st July 2003 to 30th June 2005, the Sheraton Taipei Hotel had embarked on an extensive US$58 million renovation project that would include the banquet hall, guest rooms, restaurants, kitchens and public areas. The renovation process proceeded in phases and there were new training courses for the hotel employees during renovation, and also lots of divisions would be completed in 2004. Therefore, it was very difficult for them to arrange staff to fit into the research. She said if the fieldwork was conducted in the year 2005, then it would be easier for them to participate in this research study. As the result, the researcher had no chance to conduct interviews with Sheraton Taipei Hotel during the fieldwork period, thus Sheraton Taipei Hotel was abandoned.

As the results show there were three targeted hotels unavailable to participate in the research study, therefore, replacements were required. Marshall and Rossman (2006, cited in Creswell, 2007) indicate that sampling can change during a study and the researchers need to be flexible on selecting samples. Thus the researcher considered other international chain hotels in Taiwan and as a result of this the Grand Formosa Regent Taipei, The Landis Ritz Hotel Taipei, The Sherwood Hotel Taipei, and Holiday Inn Asiaworld Taipei were contacted. The researcher visited these four hotels and asked them to participate in this research in person, as the Chinese folk adage says "to come face to face will show sincereness to make things easier to achieve". The brief explanations from each new targeted hotel were as follows:

Holiday Inn Asiaworld Taipei - The researcher visited the hotel and spoke to the employee at the front desk requesting a verbal communication with PR. The researcher waited for one and a half hour in the lobby and did not meet anyone at the end, thus the researcher left a covering letter and research enquiry to the front desk employee, and even asked if there was possible to have contacted name and telephone number for whom he/she works in HR or PR departments. They refused to give any information and insisted they would contact the researcher in the future. However the researcher has not heard from them since then.

The Sherwood Hotel Taipei - The researcher presented and explained the reason to a member of staff who works in the concierge department. He immediately contacted the hotel PR and later Ms. F came and had a talk with the researcher. She was very polite and sincere and promised she would forward this research enquiry to Human Resource

Department. The hotel replied a week later and they were apologetic that they were unable to carry out the whole project but wanted to offer alternative ways to assist this research. They suggested managers could fill in an open-ended questionnaire and the hotel could provide other information in relation to the hotel policy etc. However, none of the bottom-line employees would participate in this exercise. Consequently whilst he researcher appreciated their kindness this could not meet the inquiry of the research methodology, thus The Sherwood Hotel Taipei was abandoned.

The Landis Ritz Hotel Taipei – The researcher had a friend who worked at The Landis Ritz Hotel Taipei, and therefore, the researcher arranged a visit to meet up with Human Resource Assistant Training Manager, Ms. G to express the research intentions. After she had a discussion with Human Resource manager, she replied that the Hotel could only arrange individual interviews with the Front Office Manager to participate in this exercise and none of the bottom-line staff would be able to attend the interviews as this was hotel policy. Thus, The Landis Ritz Hotel Taipei was abandoned.

Grand Formosa Regent Taipei – The researcher visited the hotel and left contact details, a covering letter and research enquiry with the concierge. Human Resource supervisor, Ms. H replied via email and explained to the researcher that as the hotel is a franchise with the Regent and that they do not have a management contract the hotel might not be an appropriate hotel for this research study. After an in-depth discussion, she considered that the number of interviewees and time would be another major issue and problem. She was apologetic for not cooperating in this research stating that as the hotel lacked of manpower, participating in the study would cause operational problem if they needed to put someone to be interviewed. Thus, the Grand Formosa Regent Taipei was abandoned.

As the results show the four targeted replacements were also not able to participate in the study. In view of the above and to ensure that this research could still progress the researcher had to reconsider his options and came to the view that the study would now not only focus on international chain hotels but include others. As mentioned previously this study was still in the exploratory phase while conducting the research fieldwork. The researcher decided to select another two international tourist hotels which were considered as upscale and luxury hotels and their orientation was mainly focused on service quality and customer satisfaction, and had high overall occupancy rate in the

second biggest city, Kaohsiung and the third biggest city, Taichung in Taiwan. Thus, The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung were contacted. The brief explanation from these two targeted hotel is as follows:

The Splendor Taichung – The hotel met the research inquiry and also the researcher happened to know someone very well who works for the hotel. The Splendor Taichung used to be one of hotels under the Regent international hotel chain. Mr. I who is a friend of the researcher acted as a gatekeeper and agreed to arrange interviews with the hotel employees and managers. .

Han-Hsien Hotel Kaohsiung – A client of the researcher's sister who had a very good network connection with the hotel offered assistance to contact one of the directors in the hotel to require their interests in participating in the research study in June 2004. One week later, the researcher received a phone call from the hotel secretary and she arranged a meeting for the researcher to meet up with Back of House Manager, Mr. J to discuss further details for participating in the research study. During the meeting with Mr. J confirmed that a commitment had been made from one of the directors in the company to the study and thus he arranged interviews with managers and employees to participate in the research study.

Gaining access to the last two hotels is because Mr. I is a friend of the researcher and the other one is the client of the researcher's sister, and because of *Guan Xi* relationship they are willing to offer a favour to assist in the research study. It is again indeed to prove how *Guan Xi* relationship is one of the particularly significant concepts in Chinese/Taiwanese culture. In addition, Mr. J agreed to arrange interviews with managers and employees in the hotel because one of the directors in the company indicated him to assist the researcher to conduct his fieldwork. Mr. J would have to participate in this research in order to save *Mian Zi* of the director and it also implies that in order to maintain harmony he would follow the instruction which was given by the higher core member of the company.

Three participant hotels were now confirmed (see Table 5.2). These were the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei, Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung, and The Splendor Taichung . Three cities were involved the capital city Taipei where the economy and trading was prospering and also the biggest city located in northern

Taiwan. The second biggest city Kaohsiung also known as an industrial city located in southern Taiwan, and Taichung the third biggest city and also known as a cultural city located in the centre of Taiwan. Moreover the three selected hotels offered the appropriate environment for the study of empowerment with a hotel strategy founded on service quality and customers satisfaction. The final samples of one international chain hotel and two domestic chain hotels that operate in Taiwan give an opportunity for the research study to investigate whether employees of foreign firms and local Taiwanese firms perceive empowerment differently. Silverman (2006) indicates in qualitative research that very often a case was chosen simply because it allowed access but it was unlikely to be selected on a random basis.

Table 5.2 The final sample hotels

Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei	a member of international hotel chain of Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts
The Splendor Taichung	a member of domestic hotel chain of The Splendor Hotels
Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung	a member of domestic hotel chain of Han-Hsien Hospitality Group

5.4.2 Hotels Access Issues

The researcher had found that gaining access to hotels in Taiwan was a major challenge while conducting the research fieldwork. Indeed, some doctoral researchers have experienced difficulties in gaining access to hotel companies for their research (Horng, 2004). In addition, the requirement to involve hotel front-line employees at a lower level to participate in the research study caused more problematic issues for some hotels. Ms. G at The Landis Ritz Hotel Taipei had a long conversation with the researcher and she provided useful information for the present study in relation to the potential reasons of why hotels have no interest or were unable to participate in the research fieldwork.

She stated that many hotels participated in research to assist students to complete their studies but it was not usual for researchers to interview front-line employees at a lower level. In her view it would be difficult for hotels to assign significant amounts of time for front-line staff to meet with researchers as they were needed to carry out their jobs and due to a lack of manpower they would not be able to release them from their duties. The issue of image and reputation was also raised and hotels were keen to protect their image and thus tended to prefer that well experienced managers represent them when interviewed. She assumed the above factors could be reasons that most of hotels in Taiwan would only agree to interview those at management level only.

This implies that Taiwanese culture has a large power distance and thus great control from the superiors would be common in this cultural perspective. Furthermore Ms. G mentioned that empowerment has become a trend and many organisations were struggling to ensure its successful implementation into the workforce and thus hotels would like to gain the benefit from a researcher who could provide a solution to resolve the problem of its implementation. However the present study was not set up to provide a solution to implement empowerment but rather was a study focused on gaining a better understanding of empowerment and how Taiwanese national culture have its impact on empowerment implementation.

Indeed, many doctoral researchers have experienced particular difficulties in gaining access to hotels in Taiwan for their research (Horng, 2004). The issues of gaining access in organisational research have been commented on by many researchers (Cassell and Symon, 2004), and Hammersley and Atkinson (1983: 78, cited in Silverman, 2007: 82) note '*Whether or not people have knowledge of social research, they are often more concerned with what kind of person the researcher is than with the research itself. They will try to gauge how far he or she can be trusted, what he or she might be able to offer as an acquaintance or a friend, and perhaps also how easily he or she could be manipulated or exploited.*' Thus it is not surprise that gaining access to hotels in Taiwan might be difficult, as Chinese/Taiwanese societies family members a highly trust each other but show low trust in larger collectivities (Fukuyama, 1995). Therefore, *Guan Xi* becomes an important role for individuals to deal with an environment lacking general trust, to build *Guan Xi* relationship is essential to gain interpersonal trust, and further become in-group. Therefore it could be concluded that only when the researcher knows someone who has good network connection with the hotels or the researcher knows someone very well who works in the firm, and either of them would like to assist to contact the hotels, only then the researcher would be more likely to gain access to the hotels and their interests in participating in the research would be more possible. Indeed this is shown above in the researcher's attempts to gain access to hotels. This contemporary phenomenon is indeed correspondent with Taiwanese social relations, how *Guan Xi* dynamic dominated the society.

5.5 Data Collection

As mentioned previously in section 5.3, multiple data collection methods were employed to collect the evidence from the case studies. This study of employee empowerment implementation seeks to get as deep inside the subject matter as possible, attempting to see cultural impact reality where the cases were studied. The study adopted qualitative techniques which include semi-structured interviews, documentation. Documentation reviewed such as literature, governmental reports on the hotel industry in Taiwan, online news bulletin, the hotel companies' strategies and documents. Some of these sources were the focus of intensive retrieval and analysis, but most of them were merely of passing relevance. Since these documentary sources were easy to collect and assess, thus it was to be aware of their purpose of original compilation and intended readers to avoid potentially misleading use of the sources (Yin, 2003). With regards to the interviews, semi-structured interviews were used. As according to Breakwell (2000: 240), '*Structured interviews leave little room for unanticipated discoveries, as people often feel constrained because they are not free to give information that they may consider important*'. Bryman (2001:110) defines semi-structured interviews as '...*a context in which the interview has a series of questions that are in the general form of an interview schedule but is able to vary the sequence of questions...also, the interviewer usually has some latitude to ask further question in response to what are seen as significant replies*'. It is widely accepted that semi-structured interviews would allow people to answer more on their own terms than with structured interviews. In addition, it allows the interviewer to probe particular answers in more depth if necessary.

5.6 Interview Schedule

5.6.1 Interview Questions

The interview questions were designed specifically into two different forms. While designing the interview questions for employees, the researcher tried to eliminate the possible effects of rival explanations of a causal finding, as having empowerment in the context may alert subjects and this might result in high motivation and intention in this particular event, thereby masking the effects of the real factors and opinions from the interviewees, as they might concentrate on empowerment subjects. However, the study intended to develop subjective meanings of their experiences in order to explore how Taiwanese culture has its impact on empowerment implementation. The danger of

empowerment in the context would much rely on the meaning that the researcher brings to the research or writers from the literature, rather than to keep a focus on learning the meaning that participants hold about the problem and issue (Creswell, 2007). In addition, the interviewees were required to have a good knowledge of the concept of empowerment if asked about empowerment directly. This thought that there would be no impact on the interviewees' perception during the interviews. In addition, the questions were designed based on a cultural perspective to explore the impacts of national culture of the implementation of employee empowerment. While designing the interview questions for managers, the researcher would involve the concept of empowerment and try to understand managers' intentions about how they considered the national culture when implementing empowerment in each hotel.

The empowerment interview questions for both managers and employees consisted of two parts (see Appendix D and E). The first part included 6 questions that reflect the possible individual variables that affect the employee empowerment implementation. The second part included 21 questions for managers and 14 questions for employees in relation to their perceptions of working at the hotel. The six extra questions in management interviews were in particular asking for their knowledge of the notion of empowerment. Other than that, both interview questions were designed using the same layout in order to seek any gaps, conflicts by comparing both managers and employees answers within the hotels. The notion of empowerment doctrine is a phenomenon of behaviour of a supervisor of empowering subordinates and psychological state of a subordinate from being empowered. Thus the views of managers on how they empower their subordinates and the perceptions of employees on how they are perceived being empowered might develop a complex picture of the problem or issue under the study, and further could interpret the meanings on the participants' views if the situations into different themes to achieve the research aim and objectives. Thus, the second part of interview questions was regarded as main findings that the researcher to study the subject matters in its natural setting.

As mentioned previously in section 5.3 the study investigated the involvement of managers and employees perceptions in empowerment in hotels based on Taiwanese cultural setting. Thus, as influenced by the research conceptual framework, the findings are categorised into three different perspectives, which are the organisation, management, and employee perspectives with the various key themes under each

perspectives and further added cultural impact on each theme. The literature indicated that the biggest challenge was that managers and employees required fundamental changes in order to operate in an empowered organisation and to pursue organisational goals (Randolph, 2000). Empowerment basically was breaking the inner boundaries between management and employees in a hierarchical organisation and to create a flattening organisational structure to generate employee commitment and ensure optimum effort from employees (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2000). Thus the study would focus on the relationship between managers and employees and organisational systems and structures. In addition, it was believed four prerequisites including knowledge, information, rewards, and power to share with bottom-line employees imply that managers and employees require trust of each other, as interpersonal trust was regarded as the heart of organisational coordination and control, and here managers showed their belief that the subordinators were competent, open, concerned, and the subordinators perceive that they were trusted by the managers. This would result in the fact that the subordinators had a high-quality exchange with their managers. Thus, the study would explore trust issue in these findings. Power is the centre theme for empowerment, thus, how power played the role should be investigated. Table 5.1 outlines 10 empowerment themes associated with prerequisites and psychological dimension of task assessments along with interview questions would be studied.

Table 5.3 Empowerment themes in relation to the interview questions

Empowerment themes	Task assessments	Prerequisites	Managers	Employees
Sharing of information	Meaningfulness	Information	12	12
Openness of communication	Impact	Power	10,11	10,11
Empowerment training	Competence	Knowledge	14	14
Performance-related rewards		Rewards	15,16	15,16
Customer-orientated culture	Meaningfulness		12,13	12,13
Delegation of authority	Self-determination	Power	13	13
Empowerment management style	Self-determination	Power, trust	13	13
Empowered behaviour	Self-determination	Power	13	13
Satisfaction with rewards		Rewards	15,16	15,16
Motivation	Meaningfulness		8,16,25,26	8,16,19,20

5.6.2 The Interviews

Qualitative approach was adopted in this study and the semi-structured interviews were the main qualitative technique used in the study. Two stages were involved in the interviews, which were pilot testing and the full interviews, the explanation for each are as follows:

5.6.2 1 Pilot Testing

Based on the two rational considerations the pilot test interviews were conducted. Firstly, the initial interview questions were developed in English and then the researcher translated the interview questions into Mandarin. While the research area was in Taiwan and the interviews were conducted in Mandarin, the research preparation and analysis were in English. All the data gained from the fieldwork were translated from Mandarin to English. The accuracy of its translation was double-checked with an expert who is fluent in both languages. However, English and Mandarin are two very different languages. In order to gain the reliability from the data a pilot study was conducted. Secondly, the selection of pilot testing was greatly influenced by professional advice by the supervisory team. Since the interviewees would be at various levels in the hotel industry in Taiwan, it was important to test whether the interview questions were appropriate for managers and employees who were working in the Taiwanese hotel industry. Furthermore the pilot testing was used in a real life situation, thus, it would allow the researcher to test whether interview questions would generate the clarity, scope and depth of data being sought. The first pilot interview was carried out with a concierge supervisor in one of the hotels in Taichung, and involved an interview of one hour and 10 minutes, in order to test the employee interview questions. The second pilot interview was with a Front Office manager in one of the hotels in Taipei, with an interview lasting one hour and 30 minutes, in order to test the management interview questions. Both respondents were invited to feedback comments on the interview questions and the entire process. The respondents indicated they were confused with a few works, such as "approach" in question 10 and "value" in question 15. After the researcher explained the meanings, they suggested new words to be used in the Mandarin version for a better understanding for local Taiwanese people. Thus a few words in the interview questions in Mandarin were modified to ensure an easier understanding and hopefully better results from the interviewees. In summary, these proved helpful for the conduct of subsequent interviews. In addition, all interviews were conducted in Mandarin but in order to decrease the possibly problematic language issue of different meanings in term of empowerment in between English and Mandarin both languages. Empowerment was said in English instead of Mandarin during the interviews with the managers.

5.6.2.2 Research Participants

Requests for the hotels to participate in the research study were mentioned previously in section 5.4.1 and were made in advance. These begun to be requested in late-January 2004 and were finally confirmed with the last participating hotel in June 2004. The researcher sought the gatekeepers in each hotel to gain access to a mixture of managers and employees in the front line within the hotels to participate in the interview schedules (see Appendices B and C). The gatekeepers were necessarily considered as an important hurdle in conducting this research study. If the response from a hotel organisation was clearly unavailable for conducting interviews with both managers and employees in the front line, for whatever reasons, the replacements should be considered and then to contact other appropriate hotels. Two pilot interviews were carried out at the beginning of the fieldwork, which had their contribution for the remaining interviews.

The interviews took place in Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung in Taiwan. A total of 38 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with managers and employees in three participant hotels, which involved a total of 15 managers from various departments and 23 employees from Front Office and Food and Beverage departments (see Table 5.4). A more detailed list will be provided in the following three result chapters. However, the researcher had no control on the selected participant respondents during the fieldwork as all the respondents were assigned by the hotels. The interviews schedules were received via emails from the gatekeepers in each hotel. The hotels made time for the researcher to conduct interviews with the respondents. The researcher commenced with a brief summary of the purpose of the research and to ensure all the respondents were assured about anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. The details of interviewees from each hotel will be listed at the beginning of each following three results chapters. The interviews were recorded on audiotape in order to gain all valuable data. Little informal conversation or discussion was made before and after interview to ease and reduce pressure on the participants. According to Flick (1998), it is be useful to create a documentation sheet stating date, place, time and other crucial information of each interviewee, using a different folder, in order to avoid any possible mistakes deriving from conducting more than one interview. Thus notes were made immediately after each interview noting the circumstances of the interview, any reluctance or other concerns shown by the interviewee, and considering the likely openness and reliability of the responses, and these were kept in the relevant interview

folder.

Table 5.4 The numbers of participant interviewees in each hotel

Hotel	Managers	Employees
Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei	6	8
The Splendor Taichung	6	7
Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung	3	8

5.7 Ethical Considerations

A variety of ethical issues have been considered in this research study since they are especially influential in qualitative research and also might contaminate the research (Silverman, 2000). To get informed consent was considered before conducting the research fieldwork, all targeted hotels were given information about the research purpose, aim and objectives, the type of information being sought, the request of numbers of managers and font line employees to be interviewed, and how the data would be used (Kent, 1996). All participant respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality prior to commencement of the interview. Due to the participant respondents being assigned by the hotels, they had never seen the covering letter and preamble letter, it was important that the researcher commenced with a brief summary to assure the respondents that their names would not be identified in the research, as they should be confidentiality and anonymity in relation to the thesis and related publications. In addition, that the research findings would only be used for academic purpose. The researcher introduced himself and made participants aware that the researcher's position had nothing to do with the hotel. This was in order to gain their trust and hopefully to enable them to respond truthfully to the research questions. It was important to secure permission to tape record the interviews and to ensure that access to all recorded tapes was limited only to the researcher. They were also assured that all recorded tapes and interview transcripts would be destroyed after completion of the research study. Furthermore, participants should be invited to answer questions as the in way they felt comfortable, they should not be forced to answer questions.
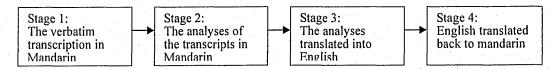
5.8 Approach to Data Analysis

As mentioned previously in the section 5.6.2.1, this research study is in English but the interviews were conducted in Mandarin. In order to gain accuracy from the data, the researcher employed different means of analysis for the pilot interviews. In the first case, the interview was conducted in Mandarin and translated into English word by word, and analysed in English. The outcome was that a majority of sentences lost their true

meaning and did not make sense. In the second case, the interview was conducted in Mandarin and translated into English by interpreting the meanings of each sentence, and then analysed in English. The outcome had a logical problem as Chinese and English have fundamental differences. It made the structure very loose and lots of jumping logical thoughts were found. Lastly, the interview conducted in Mandarin and transcribed into Mandarin word by word, and then analysed in Mandarin. The outcome seemed the best for understanding in this particular study. Therefore, the researcher assumed the last means was an appropriate method for analyses. Analysis of interviews began with their verbatim transcription, two fully indicative examples one of the management interviews and one of the staff interviews were provided (see Appendix F and G). After analyses were completed in Mandarin (see Appendix H and I), the results were translated from Mandarin to English (see Appendix J and K), and again from English back to Mandarin (see Appendix L and M) to examine if there was any diverse meaning (see Figure 5.1). The accuracy of its translation was double-checked with an expert who is fluent in both languages, as she works as a teaching assistant at English Language and Literature Department at Providence University in Taichung Taiwan. The interviews verbatim transcription were very time-consuming and took up 16 weeks, partly because the difficulty of inputting Mandarin. The next stage involved making sense of text data, conducting different analyses to gain in depth understanding the data and the representative of the data. Last, to make an interpretation of the large meaning of the data. The researcher needed to be very focused in deciding on relevance and importance of context specific and recalcitrant qualitative data (Fielding and Lee, 1998).
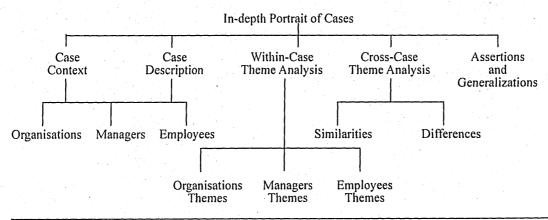
Figure 5.1 Stages of the transcription and translation processes

Stage 1: The verbatim transcription in Mandarin	Stage 2: The analyses of the transcripts in Mandarin	Stage 3: The analyses translated into English	Stage 4: English translated back to mandarin

The analysis of qualitative data, four forms of data analysis was used (Stake, 1995). In categorical aggregation, the management and employees of the raw data were collected in order to emerge the issue-relevant meanings. In direct interpretation, each single instance were described, the process was to pull the data apart and then put them back together in more meaningful ways in order to make sense of the evidence by interpreting the participants' views of the situation. At this stage of analysis of the transcripts was to generate themes and concepts and examine and identify important

themes and issues thoroughly then label data by themes assigning meaning. The next steps involved establishing patterns and looking for a correspondence between two or more categories in order to lift out similarities and differences among the cases by annotating them with the relevant themes, as some could be merged or grouped together. At this stage entailed re-visiting the study's framework to create clear headings and a related hierarchy and also to refine categories and classify data. Finally developing naturalistic generalisations form analysing the data, generalisations that people can learn from the case and how they compare and contrast with published literature. The study also employed a template for coding a case study (Creswell, 2007) through data analysis (see Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 Template for Coding a Case Study
(Using a Multiple or Collective Case Approach)

In-depth Portrait of Cases

| Case Context | Case Description | Within-Case Theme Analysis | Cross-Case Theme Analysis | Assertions and Generalizations |

Organisations   Managers   Employees   Similarities   Differences

Organisations Themes   Managers Themes   Employees Themes

Source: Creswell (2007: 172)

5.9 Research Limitations and Credibility

In evaluating the results and findings of this research study it is important to take into accounts its limitations. Almost every researcher will encounter some barriers during their fieldwork. First, there is a technical limitation due to the qualitative research which is heavily reliant on the use of tape recorders. During one interview with a participant employee from the front office at the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei the recorder ran out of battery in the middle of the interview, and during another interview with participant service manager in Food and Beverage Department at the same hotel the recorder ran out of space near the end of the interview. Notes were taken after the interviews in order to record the missing information.

Another limitation encountered was that a number of participants in one hotel did not feel comfortable being recorded, thus the researcher noted key findings during the

interviews and therefore it took a much longer time to complete the interviews. Indeed the researcher made more notes after the interviews to ensure that no valued information would be missing. Thirdly, there were limitations regarding time, since three participant managers, the Director of Human Resources and the Front Office Manager at the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei and the Food and Beverage Dep. Director at the Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung, only had very limited time to participate in the interviews (a maximum of one hour), thus they did not complete the all interview questions. Fourthly, there was source limitation, with a scarcity of research on employee empowerment in hotel industry in general and based on cultural perspective in particular, also the research focused on Taiwanese cultural setting. Consequently, this study demanded an extensive search of literature from varied interdisciplinary fields. Fifthly, there was language limitation, as the research fieldwork was conducted in Mandarin, but the rest of this study was using English. This was explained previously in sections 5.6.2.1 and 5.8.

In the academic perspective, case study research is questionable in its credibility. As aforementioned qualitative research is not necessarily intended to reflect representativeness, rather it is an approach that provides explanations and comprehension based on all the complexity of the given situation. Klidas (2001) only employed Sheraton Hotels & Resorts into investigations and the results present that even one international hotel chain operates hotels in seven different European countries; and the different cultural contexts have different outcomes of the implementation of employee empowerment. Therefore, Klidas's study makes the present study is comparable. In addition, three international tourist hotels were selected in this study, so each international tourist hotel has its own organisational culture and, therefore it provides an opportunity to study how national culture has influences on each hotel organisation. Furthermore, to understand an employee and manager's perception and attitude relate to the implementation of employee empowerment.

5.10 Conclusion

This research study employed a qualitative methodology and focused on both management and employees. Employees are the principle stakeholders in the empowerment process, so it offered the antecedents of employee behaviour, and this was the insight missed in Klidas's research (2001). This chapter has clarified how the research was designed and conducted. This research was an inductive and involved the

use of qualitative methodology as research enquiry. In order to gain in-depth understanding of employee empowerment in international tourist hotels in Taiwan based on a cultural perspective, the study employed the case study approach and the choice of qualitative techniques, which included in-depth semi-structured interviews and documentation. Case study research allowed the researcher to study phenomena within a distinct setting and in relation to the web of relations in that context (Yin, 2003) and allowed for the application of more than one research tool and source for a better understanding of the subject matter. Other methodological issues were also discussed in this chapter which included sampling design, the themes of interview questions, and the approach to data analysis. The study limitations and its credibility were also explained. The study extracted the results from qualitative approach in the case study with three international tourist hotels in Taiwan will be presented in the following three chapters.

Chapter 6 The Empowerment Process in Practice: A Case Study of Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the outcomes of the qualitative research, derived from the information generated from the 14 interviews conducted with 6 managers and 8 employees from one of the participating hotels, Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei (see Table 6.1). In order to understand the delegation of authority in a chain of command from the top to the bottom of an organisation, the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei organisational Chat was presented in (Figure 6.1).

This section will describe the company's historical establishment. The following section 6.2 will provide the information related to the elements constituting the hotel's organisational culture and its operational management. It highlights that organisational culture is customer-orientated and the corporate policies, practices and programmes of the hotel are supportive empowerment. Shangri-La Care training courses are compulsory to the hotel employees and the hotel has reward system to promote good service performance. Section 6.3 will address the meaning of the notion of employee empowerment perceived by managers, and further evaluate the extent to which the managers intention and leadership lead their subordinates. Managers delegate authority to customer-contact employees but feel it should be restricted within different limits according to the employees' job positions. In general, managers trust their employees' abilities and they are quite tolerant of mistakes. Taiwanese people have quite different perception in relation to communication in their workplace. Section 6.4 will address the employee's behaviours and motivation, which based on psychological state of empowerment as subordinates perceiving four dimensions combine with empowerment themes. Employees regard sharing of information and rewards have no impact on how they do their job as they believe to provide a high standard service to their customers is part of their job duty. They also provide some elements which motivate them the most on their job performances. Employees are positive about training programmes and admit they have certain degree of power to deal with minor issue during service encounter. They believe the power should have different limitations according to the job positions. Section 6.5 will discuss the extent to which culture impacts on the work place. The hotel has many management layers and the hierarchy also happens between

different operational units. In addition, Taiwanese customers often expect management levels to deal with their problems in order to show that the hotel has sincerity to deal with their cases. Section 6.6 will conclude the results gained in this chapter and the analysis in combination with the other two hotels in Taiwan will be further discussed in Chapter 9.
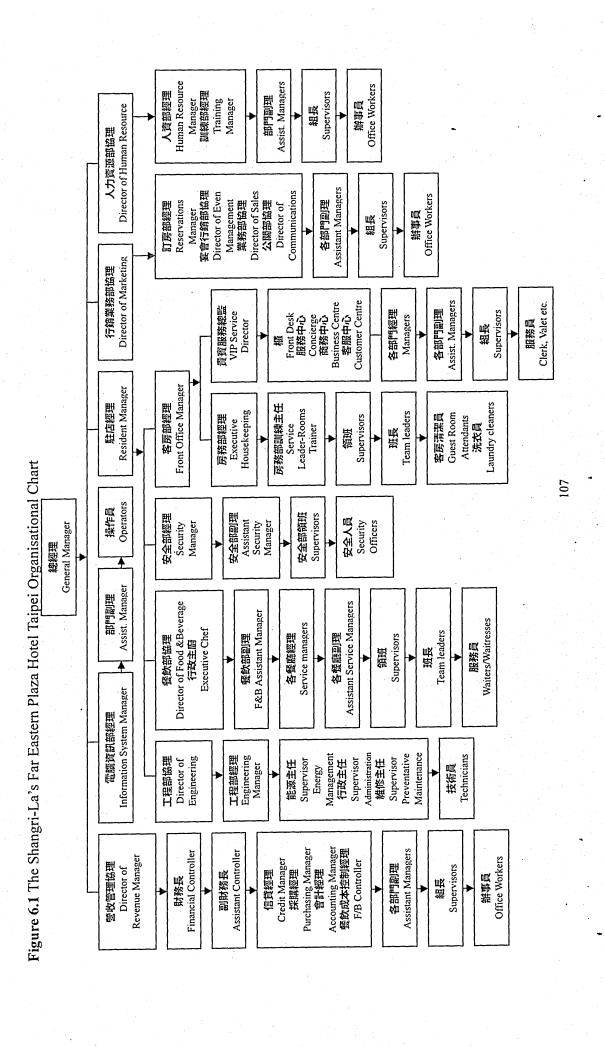
Table 6.1 Participant interviewee in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei

No.	Date	Interviewee	Gender	Length of interview
1	22 April 2004	HR Manager	Female	1 hour 16 minutes
2	22 April 2004	Director of Human Resources	Female	45 minutes
3	30 April 2004	Front Office Manager	Male	55 minutes
4	11 May 2004	Service Leader-Rooms Trainer	Male	1 hour 12 minutes
5	11 May 2004	House Keeping Supervisor	Female	1 hour 23 minutes
6	12 May 2004	Concierge Supervisor	Female	1 hour 30 minutes
7	12 May 2004	Concierge Clerk	Male	1 hour 21 minutes
8	13 May 2004	Service Manager	Female	1 hour 30 minutes
9	14 May 2004	Service Manager-Banquet	Male	1 hour 28 minutes
10	17 May 2004	F&B-Banquet Part-time team leader	Male	59 minutes
11	17 May 2004	F&B Intern in Shang Palace	Female	45 minutes
12	8 June 2004	F&B Intern in Shanghai Pavilion	Female	41 minutes
13	8 June 2004	F&B Intern in Restaurant Suntory	Female	47 minutes
14	8 June 2004	F&B supervisor in Lobby Court	Female	37 minutes

6.1.1 The historical establishment of Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei

The information in relation to the hotel and the company were generated from the hotel and the Far Eastern Group company websites. Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei was established in 1994. The hotel is under the Far Eastern Group and managed by Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts where based in Hong Kong. The Far Eastern Plaza Hotel has led the industry in terms of occupancy rate and average room rate over the past years. The hotel is constantly innovating and improving and has made enormous investments in renovating its guest rooms and dining facilities. The hotel's growing revenues testifies to its commitment to service quality. The Far Eastern Group strives to improve employee benefits and treat everyone with sincerity to create new value for customers and shareholders. These goals have strong similarity with Shangri-La's philosophy and business vision. Thus Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel has merged with Far Eastern Group culture and Shangri-La culture to complement each other.

The hotel has 420 exquisitely appointed guest rooms, including 53 suites. The hotel has 8 different restaurants and bars. These are Lobby Court, Cake Shop, Shang Palace, Yi Café, Li Bai Lounge, Restaurant Suntory, Marco Polo Restaurant and Lounge, and Shanghai Pavilion. The hotel also has 13 banquet and conference rooms.

Figure 6.1 The Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei Organisational Chart

6.2 Organisational Culture and Orientation

6.2.1 Company vision and business goal

Mr. Y. Z. Hsu, the Far Eastern Group's founder always believes the guiding principle of his business management is trustworthiness. Thus, he has enshrined four spirits as Far Eastern Group's founding motto. They are sincerity, diligence, thrift, and prudence (see Table 6.2). The Far Eastern Group's firmly held goal is to create maximum value for its customers and shareholders, and continue to fulfil its social responsibilities as a good corporate citizen in Taiwan. For its employees, it not only provides comprehensive training and a superior working environment, but also encourages employees to engage in lifelong learning and constantly absorb new knowledge and skills. The Group's highest goal is to make every enterprise under its flag a leading company in the respective industry.

Table 6.2 Far Eastern Group's founding spirit

Sincerity *Cheng* in mandarin	Customers, the general public, and colleagues must all be treated with sincerity; cooperation and teamwork must be based on mutual trust
Diligence *Qin* in mandarin	Everyone must always work diligently to renew themselves and the company. With diligence we may make up for our inadequacies and overcome hardships.
Thrift *Pu* in mandarin	Live a simple life and cherish your blessings; thus one may live a happy life with few earthly desires.
Prudence *Shen* in mandarin	Always make a careful assessment before undertaking any task; those who plan ahead are those who will succeed.

Source: http://www.feg.com.tw/tw/company/index.htm

According to the Shangri-La company profile, Shangri-La culture is encapsulated by Asian hospitality values, which include respect, sincerity, helpfulness, courtesy and humility. These core values of Asian hospitality have built Shangri-La's philosophy and simply put, it is "Shangri-La hospitality from caring people". People here apply to everyone they meet, for instance, customers, employees and their families alike. Thus, Shangri-La aims to exceed expectations through consistently providing quality and value to its customers each time and every time they stay with Shangri-La. Each Shangri-La hotel has its own individual character reflecting the local region with an attention to design elements. In order to delight its customers, Shangri-La proves that people are their most important asset and demonstrates their commitment to providing regular training to existing staff and new recruits to allow them to achieve their potential. The progressive training methods focus on critical thinking, problem solving and empowerment and aim to equip their people with confidence, knowledge, practical skills and professional attitude necessary to develop a successful management career in the hospitality industry. The most important training programmes provided by

Shangri-La are Shangri-La Care Modules (see Table 6.3). In addition, Shangri-La guiding principles (see Table 6.4) assist the company to achieve its vision "The first choice for our customers, employees, shareholders and business partners."

Table 6.3 Shangri-La Care Modules

Module 1: Shangri-La Hospitality from Caring People   Launched in 1996
Addresses how to make our guests feel special and important by focusing on the five core values of Shangri-La Hospitality: Respect, Humility, Courtesy, Helpfulness and Sincerity. It also imbues the value of 'Pride Without Arrogance' as the service hallmark.
Module 2: Delighting Customers   Launched in 1998
Focuses on the importance of guest loyalty and how it can only be achieved by delighting our guests not just the first time but every single time. Employees must be guest obsessed, doing more for guests by 'going the extra mile', being flexible and never saying no, anticipating and responding quickly, and recognising the guest's individual needs.
Module 3: Recover to Gain Loyalty   Launched in 2003
Highlights the importance of recovery when a mistake is made. When recovery is done well, it may be an opportunity to gain further commitment and loyalty but if there is no or poor recovery the lifetime value of the guest is lost in addition to at least 25 others who may hear of the incident through word of mouth. The module teaches the five steps to recovery - Listen, Apologise, Fix the Problem, Delight - the Extra Mile and Follow Up.
Module 4: Take Ownership   Launched in 2005
Addresses the importance of our employees taking ownership - to show care for our customers, colleagues and company. The driver of ownership is "SELF", which means S - Show commitment, E - Eager to take initiative, L - Lead ourselves, and F - Filled with passion. This module attempts to create in our employees the mind-set to live in an environment that is filled with Care for guests, Compassion for colleagues and Pride in our Company.

Source: http://www.shangri-la.com/en/corporate/careers/care

Table 6.4 Shangri-La Guiding Principles

We will ensure leadership drives for results.
We will make customer loyalty a key driver of our business.
We will enable decision making at the customer contact point.
We will be committed to the financial success of our own unit and of our company.
We will create an environment where our colleagues may achieve their personal and career goals.
We will demonstrate honesty, care and integrity in all our relationships.
We will ensure our policies and processes are customer and employee friendly.
We will be environmentally conscientious and provide safety and security for our customers and our colleagues.

Source: http://www.shangri-la.com/en/corporate/aboutus/mission/ourguidingprinciples

6.2.2 Employee involvement, service quality, and customer-orientated culture

In line with Shangri-La cultural profile, managers in all interviews clearly reported that hotel's mission is "to be the first choice for our staff, customers and business partners". In order to achieve this mission, managers mentioned the employees training courses that are provided by Shangri-La is the key element for its business success and further proves that the hotel is service quality orientated. Shangri-La Care is regarded as the major quality initiative of the hotel, as it aims at providing customer-driven service quality by a continuous training programme based on facts and daily experiences

through the involvement of all members of the hotel. Service Manager-Banquet stated "Shangri-La Care is like a service bible for me, as it provides clear guidelines to enable me to follow step by step methods to deal with customers during service encounters. In sum, it makes things systematic." Managers in all interviews admitted they have confidence in their subordinates who have undergone Shangri-La Care training programmes to deal with customers' complaints and regain customers' loyalty. Shangri-La Care is a clear guideline for all staff during service, as it gathers any possible situation based on the past experiences and daily operation then makes them into a systematic approach to work. Thus, it makes it easier for employees to follow and meet Shangri-La service standards. The Service Manager expressed

> "The outcome of Shangri-La Care Modules is very good, as it highlights that the Shangri-La Far Eastern Plaza Hotel is service orientated. The courses teach staff they need to be flexible and respect customers etc... those courses were created to meet the customers' expectations. I always hear my staff say we were already in which step during service encounters, because there are 5 steps of service recovering...any staff that have attended this course should have ability to answer which step they were in during service encounters, because each step is very clear."

In addition, managers in all interviews reported that the meetings with other managers and staff are regarded as another method for quality improvement progress. A daily briefing meeting in each department not only delivers today's working tasks to their staff, but is also used to discuss and identify the problematic areas that happened recently and to learn the solution, and to encourage the staff to maintain and keep up the good work. For example, the Front Office Manager commented

> "...briefing meetings everyday is about the details of today's job tasks, to discuss any service encounter, what should be maintained and what should be improved. It is also a good communication channel that for us management to deliver details of the important decisions and policies changed to the employees, and for the employees to share and tell the management their opinions during briefing meetings."

For employee involvement the most frequently mentioned was through their participation in departmental meetings, which provides the opportunity to the staff to become informed of any changes in their department and the hotel in general. Most importantly the staff also has the opportunity to contribute ideas, report work related problems, express and share their opinion or other issues of concern to them during departmental meetings. One example was provided by the Service Manager as she described

> "...other companies signed the contracts with the hotel when they had functions here, and one of our cashiers noticed there are couples of loopholes in the contracts, as she experienced twice that people went through these loopholes, so she brought up this issue during the department meeting to see if anyone had the same experience. We had a discussion with all the participants in the meeting and came out with our solution in our department. Then I had another meeting with financial department within two days to discuss and provide them our solution. It is more like my staff and I have the meeting related to any job issues in our work place and later I will present our conclusion during inter-departments meetings to have further discussion. I think because we care and listen to the problems my staff provided they can make contribution to the hotel, this kind of accomplishment is also one of their motivations at work."

Another form of employee involvement that is most welcome by Taiwanese employees is an informal chat with their direct or line managers within or outside their working hours. For example, Service Manager stated "it is difficult to tell a staff member that I am going to have a meeting with him/her, as they will panic and assume they have done something wrong... it needs to be informal as if you do it in a very formal way it's always fails." The opportunity of this form is gives both employees and managers to listen to each other in a very relaxing way and to further   build their relationships based on mutual support in honesty and trust. It often creates the in-group emotion and friendship. The Service Manager further described "this kind of communication makes my staff comes to me asking for a chat not always I go and ask them. I believe it is because we have a good relationship based on trust." Four participant managers in Front Office and Food and Beverage mentioned this sit down and have a chat is regarded as

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an open door policy, employees can contribute their suggestions and ideas, and any other issues of concern to them in relation to work or even their personal life. The Human Resource Manager also stated "the door is open during working hours, everyone who works in the hotel is welcome to have a chat on any issue they may be concerned about." Managers often mentioned that any superiors are there to show their concern and care towards their employees, and also to talk about what the staff has done well and what else they need to improve, as the managers believe in their staff ability they can perform better. Managers in all interviews said that they welcomed and encouraged employees' suggestions and ideas; this open door policy is two-way communication. Four participant managers in Front Office and Food and Beverage considered because their direct manager always has time to communicate with them and listen to their suggestions and achievement, and provide support and trust in their ability. Therefore, they feel that they have the same responsibility and obligation to their staff in their department.

The extent to which information is shared with employees at the lowest level also can be regarded as employee involvement in the hotel. The Human Resource Manager and Director, Service Manager and Service Leader-Rooms Trainer responded that the information in relation to company plans, goals, and development were known by employees via traditional channels, such as notice boards on the staff corridor where every employee would walk through every time they go to work, Shangri-La Care training courses, and notably the hotel inner Intranet. Employees have access to extensive information about the company and the detailed information of each operational unit in the hotel. The Human Resource Manager further stated "the information is open to everyone who works in the hotel, if they can not find what they needed, they can request it."

6.2.3 Training

Managers in all interviews have very positive support for Shangri-La staff training courses. The training courses that every employee has to attend are orientation and Shangri-La Care. The Director of Human Resources and Service Manager mentioned the advantage of Shangri-La Care is all the trainers are from different departments and they still operate in the business on a daily basis, therefore, they know what is happening and what the problem points are within the hotel. Thus, the case studies they employ are much updated and also employees are familiar with. The outcomes of

training are very proactive and successful. It is very different from other hotels in Taipei, even though the hotels emphasise staff training there is only one full-time trainer who is doing the training, therefore, he/she lacks of up to date daily operational experience to improve the training content. The Service Manager further claimed

> "The key point that makes Shangri-La training courses better than other hotels in Taipei is that all the trainers are still doing management jobs and we have lots of experiences to share with employees... its unlike some trainers in other hotels who are only trainers, they lack experiences in operation, thus it is hard for them to provide day-to-day working experiences...We need to add the discussion related to the up to date day-to-day business in the hotels, so we can provide the examples that happened inside the hotel to make employees to learn in a realistic way. We can talk about a case that happened yesterday or last week as the employee will know the case that will make them to understand easily."

Three of the six participant managers are trainers in Shangri-La Care, including the Service Manager, the Service Manager Banquet, and the Service Leader-Rooms Trainer; thus, they have shared their experiences well in these training programmes. All trainers in Shangri-La care are selected and trained by the Director of Human Resources, and the candidates have to attend a five day training course and pass the examination to ensure they meet the Shangri-La standards to be a trainer. For example, the Service Manager mentioned

> "We had to attend a 5-day training course and we were trained by the Director of Human Resources. There were many practices and role play during these five days. We needed to go on the stage to present and exercise some cases to ensure we carried out and covered all the details that the master was looking for to meet the Shangri-la standard. All the trainees and the Director of Human Resources were the judges to score each individual's presentation; we must pass every test to become a trainer and also meet the standard of Shangri-La Care."

The Human Resource Manager stated "all employees undergo the Shangri-La Care modules within three months of starting, and every six months the hotel will evaluate all

of the staff's performances." The research fieldwork was conducted in the year 2004, therefore, at the time of Shangri-La Care (see Table 6.3) was divided into three modules and all members of staff undergo the modules within three months of joining the group. Managers mentioned all staff have to repeat the Shangri-La Care training programme to remind and refill knowledge and skills on service recovery to ensure customers are delighted every time. According to the hotel website which was last accessed on the 27th September 2007, Shangri-La Care added a new Module. Module four was launched in 2005 and employees undergo the modules within six months. Thus, the information gathered from the interviews regarding the training process in the hotel is only accurate at the time of the research fieldwork was conducted.

In addition, the Far Eastern Group and Shangri-La also offer various training courses, which include job and non-job related training for their employees to absorb new knowledge and skills. For example, the Service Leader-Rooms Trainer stated that

> "Employee training can be divided into three sectors, one is Shangri-La Care that is about Shangri-La's culture and service concept; another is individual department's training that is in relation to job skills; and the other is hotel life plan training that is according to individual interests and learning ability."

The Service Manager further elaborated

> "The company provides many different training courses, such as English, English business writing, computer, Chinese food and Western-style food manners, and costume and make up etc. In general the trainers from Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel teach service and management training courses, and other particular subjects the company will hire trainers in their professional field to teach the employees."

The Director of Human Resources also stated "all employees are also very welcome to attend the training courses that are provided by the Far Eastern Group, we always encourage our employees to absorb new knowledge and skills for their career development and lifetime plan."

6.2.4 Reward system

Two participant managers from the Human Resource Department reported the reward scheme is when employees receive any customer delight card, they will receive a Shangri-La dollar voucher of various values depends on the case that customers write on the card. If the employees receive three customer delight cards within one month, they will become members of this programme, and their photo will be posted on notice boards; eight times in one year the company will pay flight tickets and accommodation for the employee travelling to other countries. In addition, Shangri-La Care Module 2 (see Table 6.3) states " Employees must be guest obsessed, doing more for guests by "going the extra mile", being flexible and never saying no, anticipating and responding quickly, and recognising the guest's individual needs." Furthermore the Shangri-Li guiding principles (see Table 6.4) stresses "enable decision making at the customer contact point". This is in fact the aim of the "employee of the month" reward schemes, which strive to formally recognise employees excelling in customer service.

6.3 Management Intention and Leadership

6.3.1 What does empowerment mean to people?

Managers in all interviews hold quite similar opinions on the operational definition of empowerment but they had a very diverse understanding of the term empowerment itself. The assumption is that empowerment was taught via Shangri-La Care; thus, the managers implement empowerment without knowing what the meaning of empowerment is. The meanings of empowerment that were given by managers in all interviews could be divided into four different sections and are presented in Table 6.5. It is striking that managers in all interviews understood the term empowerment in quite different ways, but all of them during the interviews quite often stressed that delegating authority and decision-making power should be restricted within limits and employees in different levels should have various limitations in order to distinguish between different job positions in an organisation. In addition, the Service Leader-Rooms Trainer mentioned "empowerment has already existed for a long time, and western scholars have brought up and conceptualised it." The Director of Human Resources also mentioned "empowerment is not western management, as we have War Strategy and others to teach how to encourage the good side of human nature."

Table 6.5 The meaning of the term empowerment

Service Leader-Rooms Trainer considered empowerment is about trust and nothing to do with delegating power or authority to subordinates, as it is difficult to define how much power and allowances given to the subordinates is enough to be regarded as empowerment. Thus, it is believed empowerment is trusting employees that they have enough ability and confidence to serve customers well and handle customers' complains or problems.
Service Manager considered empowerment is about upward communication. The superiors listen to subordinates' ideas and respect their opinions, give them advice when needed, always support them, and the most important thing is to adopt their suggestions and implement them.
Front Office Manager and *Service Manager-Banquet* believed that empowerment is when employees deal with service encounters without constantly running to the manager, they only need to report the result and key points to their superior not every detail.
Director of Human Resources and *Human Resource Manager* both regarded empowerment is allowing employees to make decision and taking responsibility. Empowerment only applies to people who would like to be empowered and to raise their confidence and practice the duty to ensure they are ready for the next promotion.

6.3.2 How important is empowerment?

It is not a surprise managers in all interviews agreed that empowerment is very important. However, it is interesting to understand the reasons why they consider empowerment is important. For example, the Service Manager-Banquet mentioned

"Empowerment is a market trend and more and more companies implement empowerment in Taipei. If a superior did not empower staff, the staff would prefer not to communicate with their superior, and then it would prevent the team functioning correctly. Moreover, due to the shortage of manpower in the hotel less staff still have to do the same amount of work, thus, the manages have to empower their staff to ensure the job can be done without delay to maintain the service quality",

since the employees do not have to run back to a manager all the time for small issues. Furthermore, the Front Office Manager and the Service Manager stressed the above point that managers cannot be everywhere and do not have the time to do everything, they have more important things to do in running the department, therefore, when it comes to decisions about minor issues employees should be able to resolve customers' problem on their own but they have to report the issues and results back to the managers in the shortest time. The Director of Human Resources and the Human Resource Manager indicated that a hotel requires many different kinds of people to run the business they assign people to do different jobs that fit them the best. The Human Resource Manager went on to explain "empowerment is necessary for potential

candidates to ensure they will be ready for the next promotion." The Director of Human Resources also stated "in order to reduce the heavy workloads of managers, it is necessary to train and educate potential successors and job deputies, and explain to them why taking responsibility is good for their future career development and promotion, but it depends on employees themselves."

Managers in all interviews considered the hotel is customer and service quality orientated, thus empowerment is important. The most important factor is to build mutual trust in between superiors and subordinates. For example, the Service Manager stated

"How we managers and employees get along and to build a good relationship based on trust is essential for the work place. For example, when an employee does not feel well or in a low mood we should notice that immediately to help them...I believe there is nothing really difficult in the service industry and the key method is communication. That is why my management style is an open door policy any employee in any level is welcome to talk and discuss problems with me when they are not happy about their tasks or do not feel comfortable with any issue, and I always have time for my employees."

She went on to explain that

"I always observe in my staff what their individual skills are then I find a chance to sit down and have a cup of coffee to chat with them in an informal way. This could be in the staff dining room or somewhere outside to let them know I have more expectation from them and they could do much better etc. because of doing this my staff think I trust them and we are all in the same boat. I am just a leader of the team and I trust them."

The superiors trust their subordinates are competent and reliable at servicing customers and resolving customers' problems; and the subordinates perceive that they are trusted by the managers and feel able to exercise initiative without fear of recrimination. Furthermore, the Service Leader-Rooms Trainer stated

"...in order to gain employees' trust and respect, we not only show our

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concern towards their working abilities and attitudes, we also assist them to resolve any issues they have on a daily basis. We hold many social activities after work to socialise with staff in order to build friendship and brotherhood, thus we are like family and work as a team to support each other."

Managers also mentioned when employees are given responsibility, they are proud of themselves as their abilities are recognised. Thus, their self-confidence will increase and they will enjoy being involved with their job more and gain experience and grow in the job. However, all participant managers agreed only after the subordinates received a full training course can they be empowered and exercise initiative. In addition, Managers from the Human Resource Department asserted that empowerment only applies to people who would like to be empowered. The Human Resource Manager further mentioned "to implement empowerment at the very beginning, the hotel required a clear organisational culture but it has to be modified to fit into local culture. Taipei is very different from other cities in Taiwan, as it is an urban city and an international city, thus it does not really represent Taiwanese local culture."

6.3.3 Delegation of Authority

Managers in all interviews admitted every manager has a different management style and this actually effected how they delegate and encourage employee initiative and decision-making. Shangri-La Care Module 3 "recovery to gain loyalty" (see Table 6.3) provides the clear guideline for employees to conduct service recovering step by step, as the module clearly taught the staff what they can do and what they cannot do for going the extra mile according to their level of job positions. Managers mentioned it is essential for first line employees to make good decision at the first contact with customers' complaints or special requirements in any cases and the staff should have the ability to ensure any small cases can be closed by themselves. If employees always need to ask managers' approval in every case, it is not only a delay to the customers but it also increases the managers' workload. Four of the participant managers in Front Office and Food and Beverage stressed the bottom line employees have some room to make decision according to their own judgement; however, they must report to their direct supervisor in the shortest period of time and the supervisor must report to the line manager in order to ensure good decisions have been made and customers were delighted. The Service Manager highlighted "reporting to the managers is regarded as

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one part of service recovering processes to enable us to have full knowledge of the cases. Therefore, we can decide if any further action should be taken to delight the customers and to maintain quality standards." Managers in all interviews expressed the managers should appear to customers and make a second apology and also support the decision that has been made by their staff after the case is closed. This not only affects customers' emotions to feel that hotel really has sincerity in dealing with their case but they also gain the confidence in first line employees. However, managers admitted in serious and huge cases managers should take over the case and accompany the staff, as it is like on the job training the Service Manager and the Service Leader-Rooms Trainer even said actually they have full confidence in their staff for making good decisions but in most cases the staff themselves lack confidence in themselves to make a good decision, thus they always seek for supervisor's advice. Managers from the Human Resource Department emphasised it is necessary that managers should be aside and give the evaluation of the result and assist employees when they are dealing with customers' complaints for the first time. For example, the Director of Human Resources expressed

> "...different levels of employees should have various limits of authority. An employee who is first time to deal with a customer's complaint, the line superior should be beside him to evaluate the results and assist. If employee made a wrong decision, they should train them and make sure they understand the point and concept. Human Resource would also speak to employee directly to ensure their superiors take responsibility of looking after their staff."

The Human Resource Manager also explained that

> "Some staff is afraid of being blamed by customers and their superiors if they do not resolve customers' complaints well. This is because they lack confidence in themselves and feels their skills are not good enough to deal with customers' complaints. Thus, it is essential for a superior to assist his/her staff when they deal with customers' complaint for the first time to encourage and help them to gain their confidence. If the staff receives a good result and experience the first time, they will be more likely take initiative the next time."

Both managers from the Human Resource Department, the Service Manager, and the Front Office Manager emphasised that there is a need for different limits in different levels to distinguish their job positions. Managers frequently mentioned there are still quite a few people who consider if a superior solves a problem it makes a difference to guests and sincerity always comes first. For example, the Service Manager expressed

"customers would have different affections and feelings when higher levels of management come to solve their problems... the customer would feel they were looked after well... the results were always different and more positive when there is a manager came to resolve the problems."

In general, managers emphasised that decision-making and initiatives need to occur according to guidelines and within limits based on their job levels and positions. They did not specify these in terms of their degree but they did claim that these guidelines and limits are clearly communicated to and known by employees via Shangri-La Care training courses, informal communication and on job training based on daily practice. The Human Resource Manager stated "all the staff here has full training courses on handling emergencies to help them understand what is the best solution for different situations, this is covered under the third section of Shangri-La Care." They also argued, the hotel business is unpredictable and each customer is unique, thus even though the hotel has established prescribed guidelines and boundaries of the employees' authority. To ask a superior is always a means when the employee is uncertain about anything and they learn from there.

6.3.3.1 Empowered behaviour

The information provided by managers regarding the delegated authority to customer-contact employees shows the difference between the Front Office and Food and Beverage departments.

Customer-contact employees in the Front Office are allowed to make decisions according to their judgement even if these involve monetary transactions. The Front Office Manager mentioned that "the staff can give rebates, make small adjustments to customers' bills, offer upgrades and discounts in rates etc. However, the offering amount cannot exceed their limits according to their job position, which the hotel set the clear guidelines. Different job positions and levels have different allowances." In general,

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when a serious problem occurred it should have managers involved in dealing with the case, as their authority and allowances are greater than employees. However, the Service Leader-Rooms Trainer highlighted "not all the problems should involve monetary transactions to resolve the customers' issues. Offering compensation to the customers for service recovering is not the only way to resolve the issues; the most important thing is that the customers perceive your sincerity." Thus, attitude, communication skills, and expression are very important things that customer-contact employees should have.

Customer-contact employees in Food and Beverage seem to have less authority compared with their colleagues in the Front Office. Mainly only staff is supervisor and above can carry out financial concessions to customers. The staff is allowed to offer a complimentary glass of juice, a side dish on the house etc., but only manager can make discounts in the customers' bills. The Service Manager provided a case to claim managers empower first line employees in Food and Beverage to some extent. She stated "a regular customer Dr. Yung, he comes here to have lunch everyday and all my staff knows we would offer him a glass of juice for free when he is dining here, it is kind of a routine. I think it is empowerment, as the staff does not need to ask if they can offer free drink to Dr. Yung." Thus, a bottom line employee can offer a complimentary glass of juice for a valued regular customers without asking a manager but any treats need to be reported to the managers afterward, as she went on to explain that "the reason they could not give free drinks away without reporting to me is to ensure the customers are looked after well and are delighted after my staff offer the compensation, and to see if there is anything more that I can do or follow up to gain customers' trust and loyalty."

6.3.3.2 Form of employee empowerment

Aforementioned, managers are very positive on encouraging employee participation in decisions affecting the organisation of work and the work process. The Service Manager provided an example, which is regarded as a form of employee empowerment. At the Yi Café during the renovation, managers gave employees an assignment for the beverages menu. She stated

> "We had few workshops for all the staff to take part and to discuss what
> drinks would be good to sell in the restaurant. Each section, everyone

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could provide their ideas and then take a public vote. The products on the menus you can see now, the names and even the recipes were all from the results of the workshops. My staff made a great contribution in this part, as I think it would be too rigid if only I could make decisions without their participation."

Thus, it shows the staff had taken full responsibility and made a great contribution in beverage menu, as the beverage menu in Yi Café and even the recipes were from the results of the workshops. She further emphasised

"...there are certain effects on employees, as they felt that the hotel took their ideas seriously and even implemented them into day-to-day business; thus, they are more enthusiastic about their jobs. The corporate business achievement in beverage in Yi Café increased five times compared to the same time last year. I believe it is because of the staff put a lot of effort into it during the renovation, they tried very hard to work on it and that is why we had great results."

6.3.4 Management style

Managers in all interviews claimed to very much encourage employee initiatives in serving customers, as it is part of Shangri-La standards, in which employees are trained in the first three months of their employment with the hotel. Four of the participant managers in Front Office and Food and Beverage reported they encourage their subordinates to take initiatives and make decisions within the commensurate level of authority allocated to their position. Both managers from the Human Resource Department expressed authority delegation should only apply to the employees who are willing to take responsibility and be enthusiastic about their job and enjoy contacting with customers. Furthermore, managers in all interviews noted that the extent to which they encourage initiatives and decision-making might depend on the individual employees and notably on their personal working experience and the length of their employment within Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei.

6.3.4.1 Trust

Managers in all interviews claimed to be quite tolerant of mistakes and wrong decisions, as it is part of the learning process and are in fact evidence that employees take

initiatives and try to do their job well. One of Chinese aphorism, 'everyone makes mistakes but the most important thing is to learn from the mistake and do not make the same mistake twice'. Managers mentioned how much they trust their employees to make good decisions depends on individual working attitude, communication skills, personal experience and the competence that he or she has demonstrated in the past. For example, the Service Manager stated

> "How much I trust my employees on dealing with customers' complaints depends on their working experience and how long they have been working here. If someone has just been working here for a very short period of time, then I would doubt their abilities in dealing with customers' complaints so I would follow them more closely. If anything happened I might just take over to deal with the case. However, if the staff has been working here for a long time and attended all the training courses then I have confidence in them and trust their abilities in dealing with any small cases in related to customer's complaints."

In terms of the way that managers deal with mistakes and wrong decisions, Service Manager Banquet stated "I would first to finish the customers' cases, and then come back to the employees and explain to them what areas could be improved in their decision and also recommend an alternative solution that is better for the future." It is important for managers to ensure after the staff makes a mistake or a wrong decision, they need to show great comfort to the staff and be proud of them for taking initiatives and give them more confidence. As aforementioned, a report to the supervisors and the line managers is a part of the service recovering process, therefore, all the cases actually received by all trainers in Shangri-La Care. The trainers as a team can exchange the opinions and address the problems with additional training and update their training content to ensure the interests of the company while maintaining quality standard. Managers claimed that they deal with mistakes and wrong decisions carefully and they would never do anything to diminish staff self-confidence. The Service Leader-Rooms Trainer stated "our role is there to provide assistance and share staff' life experience to ensure my staff builds up their competence for their future career, no matter weather it is within the hotel or even other jobs."

6.3.4.2 Communication

Different managers have diverse management styles and this affects the departmental meetings structure and frequency. During the departmental meetings, managers would provide immediately answer to respond to staff's enquiries within their authority. If the case involved other departments then they would seek a solution and reply to their staff within the shortest time possible. The Human Resource Manager mentioned "all managers have thirty minute meetings Monday to Friday with managers in different levels and departments to ensure each department is well coordinated with each other to ensure the communication is flowing through the hotel." In addition, managers mentioned there is an informal "speak up" meeting once a month and the participants include one bottom line employee from each operational unit, the General Manager, and the Head of Human Resource Division who plays the role as a translator during the meeting because GM is English and not all the staff can speak English fluently. The advantage of this meeting is the participants in this meeting present their team or operational unit's opinions; thus, it is anonymous and confidential. The Service Leader-Rooms Trainer further explained that "this speak up meeting was designed for employees to express their thoughts and aspirations or anything else of concern to them directly to the GM, thus they can tell anything they wanted to as none of their superiors will attend this meeting." However, in general, all managers mentioned in order to maintain harmony, any issue in relation to work problems should be reported to their direct supervisor first, and if the problem could not be solved then they can report it to one level higher management.

Both managers and employees during the interviews mentioned different management styles indeed exist in the hotel. The Front Office Manager stated "some are very liberal and some are very conservative." Furthermore, the Service Manager expressed

> "…if we use percentage from zero to one hundred, I wish I could
> empower them at least 80 so they could have a big space to bring their
> skills and talents into the workforce. I think every manager would have a
> different score in how they want to empower and be empowered. The
> management styles are various as some might even have a higher wish
> than me, some might really be very close to zero."

6.4 Employee Behaviour and Motivation

6.4.1 Meaningfulness

Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei is regarded as a customer and quality orientated hotel and this is further confirmed by employee perceptions. Employees in all interviews considered one of the hotel goals is the commitment of all personnel to provide high quality service to customers to ensure every customer is satisfied. They all believe as the hotel presents a five-start business hotel image, thus every employee should provide a high standard and better service to their customers. For example, an F&B Intern in Shang Palace stated "when servicing customers we need to perform well, comprehend the customers' needs, and entertain hospitably with attention and courtesy to achieve service quality that meet Shangri-La standard." An F&B Intern in Restaurant Suntory highlighted "the customers spend a lot of money to dine in a high-class restaurant, thus they would expect better service, and therefore we should perform the service that meets their expectation." An F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion also mentioned "in order to satisfy customers, we need to read the customer profiles and to remember the regular customers' preferences, thus we can provide their need as soon as they walk into the restaurant." However, the House Keeping Supervisor and F&B interns in Shanghai Pavilion and Restaurant Suntory mentioned because of the shortage of manpower in the hotel, it is easy for the service quality to diminish when the hotel or restaurant is busy.

6.4.1.1 Sharing of information

Employees in the interviews mentioned their managers would inform them about company results and unit results compared to other hotels in Taipei during the weekly departmental meeting. For example, an F&B intern in Restaurant Suntory stated "in our departmental meeting, my manager would tell us about the outcomes of our revenue and compare it with other hotels in Taipei, and also the expenditure of our restaurant etc." Employees in the interviews also confirmed that the hotel posts the photos of Shangri-la hotels worldwide, catchphrases of service mind and hotel goals, and the photos of the best employees of the month in different operational units in the corridor. However, nearly all-participant employees regarded information sharing in relation to above-mentioned areas has no any impact on them. They often mentioned through the interviews it is their responsibility to get the job done well and provide good service to their customers, as an F&B supervisor in Lobby Court stated "we are the first line employees who contact customers directly, thus we should do our best in order to

reduce service failure."

6.4.1.2 Rewards

Employees in all interviews explained that the hotel has a reward system and each operational unit has their own reward depending on their managers. They often mentioned the reward from the hotel is that when they received a good commend card from customers or they win a place in the competition programme, they would receive a voucher, which they can spend in the hotel. However, nearly all of them admitted that they are not affected by this reward, except an F&B intern in Shang Palace stated "I like the voucher because I can use it to buy things in the hotel." The Concierge Clerk mentioned

> "...except receiving vouchers, if we received 3 good commend cards from the customers in one months or 6 in a half year, our photo will be posted in the corridor. I had them all in the past and my photo was posted in the corridor for a long while, but the fact is that I did not feel anything special about it at all. The rewards actually meant nothing to me and what I am doing is just do my best on my job"

He further went on and stated "the reward makes me famous in the hotel so everyone knows if they need help they can look for me." The House Keeping Supervisor also mentioned "if we have any good suggestion that is adopted by the hotel, we will get a voucher as well." She further went on and stated

> "The rewards provided by the hotel did not have an affect on my work attitude. I do my job well and service customer with high standard not because I want that monetary reward. To provide high quality service to customers is my responsibility and it is also a part of my job duties."

This statement actually presents the principle of working attitude that most participant employees have. To share tips or rooms up sale between peers is regarded as another reward the employees have in the hotel. F&B intern in Restaurant Suntory explained "if a customer puts the money in a red envelop then I can keep that tip for myself." The Concierge Clerk and F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion mentioned they would rather have one night free accommodation in the hotel or a day off than monetary reward.

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The only different reward system is for part-time waiting staff. An F&B-Banquet Part-time team leader mentioned

> "…increasing salary is one of rewards for part-time waiting staff. For example, when we start our job the hour pay is NT$65 during the basic training and it normally takes 4 hours and after 4 hours working the hour pay increases to NT$110. We have a grade up exam every six months if we passed the exam and our superiors think we had very good performance in the last six months then our salary will be increased one level higher. The top grade hour pay is NT$150" He further went on and stated "one grade salary higher is equal to one level of position higher, thus the higher position has to take more responsibilities, therefore to get pay more which is right. We need to coach new part-time waiting staff and also make sure things operate smoothly."

6.4.1.3 Motivation

Nearly all employees in interviews concluded the support from their superiors, the good relationship between working peers, and the encouragements from the customers are main factors that motivate them the most in their job performances. For example, F&B-Banquet Part-time team leader described

> "…a good competition between peers made me enjoy working here as it was fun, and I would do my best to finish the tasks and to win the competition. Most of us become very good friends. Sometimes when we had outstanding performance, my superiors would buy us a meal in the hotel or we went out for a meal. This built up a harmonious relationship between my superiors and us and this made us like to work hard for our superiors."

F&B intern in Shang Palace stated

> "My superior is my role model, I wanted to learn from her because she is very young and already an assistant manager. I always ask her opinion when I do not know how to deal with the customer's situation, she always

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teaches me and supports me and encourages me to take initiative. I have
limited authority to deal with customers, thus I feel that my superior trusts
my ability. Everyone works hard as a team in the restaurant in order to
gain more customers, this kind of atmosphere at my working place
motivated me at work."

F&B intern in Restaurant Suntory mentioned "the interaction between customers and I
and the encouragement from them motivated me at work the most, and also I get along
very well with my colleagues and my superiors, all of these made me enjoy working
here." In addition, F&B supervisor in Lobby Court stated "the good support from my
line manager and the encouragement from the customers have a strong impact on me.
When I service the customers and they appreciate my service performance at that time
that motivated me lots." Furthermore, the House Keeping Supervisor stated

> "I disliked my job two years ago but there was no one to take over my job,
> as the hotel did not hire a new employee for this position. I am still doing
> this job because I think I have responsibility to the hotel to ensure this
> department can operate smoothly, and I will stay in this job until the hotel
> can find a new person to do this job."

She further went on to mention "the good relationship with other peers was another
factor to make me stay, as we Chinese/Taiwanese people believe *Ren Qing* (humanised
obligation) and *Ren Mai* (public relationship) dynamics, and it is true because I get
along so well with others, this made my job as coordinator easier ." The Concierge
supervisor and clerk both mentioned to assist customers and solve their requests to win
customers' smile and thanks that motivate them at their work lots. The Concierge Clerk
further stated "promotion can motivate me the most at work." It is worth mentioning
that nearly all participant employees regarded themselves to have a strong sense of
responsibility and they are willing to learn, thus to perform well and work hard is very
basic. Quite a few of them actually mentioned some of their colleagues work here
because they need to earn money for their living they have no interests to work in the
hotel. Thus, they are less enthusiastic at work and do not want to take extra
responsibility.

6.4.2 Competence

The participant employees referred the Shangri-La Care training programmes and other training courses actually are the means to equip them to deal with all kinds of people and increase their abilities to serve customers better, especially module 3 (see Table 6-3), recover to gain loyalty emphasised in decision-making, problem solving and complaint handling skills. The Concierge Clerk stated

> "It is impossible that what the trainers taught in the class would be exactly the same as day-to-day operation. We could only learn the general concept in the class, but at least that gave me an ideal what formal regulations should be followed when dealing with service encounters. The more I gain in my brain, the more abilities and skills I have when I am dealing with any problems at work."

A similar statement was made by the F&B supervisor in Lobby Court, as she stated

> "...after attending Shangri-La module three, I learnt when facing different service encounters; I could follow five steps to deal with the customers' case. I had a clear idea what is the better method when dealing with customers' complaints. I would say it might not be the best way but at least it is a better way."

The F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion expressed "the design of Shangri-La Care training course is very good but maybe because there are many people in a big class, thus some people were hiding themselves at the corner I do not think they learned much from the class but others who were willing to participate the role plays would be different." In summary, all employees were very positive towards the job- related training courses that are provided by the company and the hotel, as it enables them to provide better service quality and to have effective communication with customers.

However, in practice it is not easy to implement, for example, the House Keeping Supervisor mentioned

> "My superior gave me some guidance to deal with customers special requests but it was not a very clear guideline, thus sometimes when things

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went wrong I did not know what would be the best way to resolve the problem for this kind of case. When I asked for my superior to assist me, they did not give me much support. I do not mind to take responsibility but I think it would be better to have my superior to assist me when I make a decision to resolve the customer complaint in different cases for the first time."

She went on and stated

"even though I have some decision making power to deal with customer's complaints, I am not sure if my manager will think I offered too much to the customers, thus, in general in my department we front-line employees are more likely just note down customer's complaint and then pass onto the line manager to deal with customer complaint."

F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion also mentioned

"I have some limited authority but I was very confused at the beginning because each single case even in a similar situation according to the different customers the solutions would be different, it was very difficult to recognise the boundary at the beginning but I am getting better now."

6.4.2.1 Knowledge and training

The three participant employees who are F&B interns doing their university placement mentioned the training course they have to attend is no different from other full time staff. However, the employees who are permanent part-time waiting staff do not have to attend the orientation and Shangri-La Care training course provided by the hotel. The F&B banquet part-time team leader waiting staff stated

"I only attend the orientation that was held by my own department and other training courses that were relevant to my job...I have been working here for three years and my line superiors would observe my working performance and decide whether I need to learn more skills then they would ask me to attend other training courses that I needed."

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He went on to explain that "the training courses provided by the hotel itself seem more about service concept and what is the better way to serve customers etc., but the training courses provided by the individual department itself are more about the operational skills."

Employees from Front Office and Food and Beverage had quite diverse opinions toward non-job related training courses. The non-job related training courses are mainly held between three to five o'clock. The employees from Front Office mentioned the shortage of manpower in their department so they have a very heavy workload, thus it is impossible for them to have an extra two hours to attend any training courses. In addition, even though the class only happened once in a week, the employees in Front Office do not have two hours break during their shift. In general, the employees from Food and Beverage regarded the courses are very helpful but still had its disadvantage. For example, the F&B intern in Shang Palace stated

> "I attended F&B English, cosmetic make up, and western food etiquette
> courses. I think it is very good that the hotel provides a channel and
> resources for us to learn and improve our skills in many subjects and
> some classes even hired teachers from outside, the hotel provides an
> opportunity for employees to grow up."

The F&B supervisor in Lobby Court stated

> "the hotel provides seven to eight different training courses every month
> and we can sign our names on the list if we want to participate the
> classes...I think most of the training courses are very good but a few
> courses took a long time to finish, it could take two to three months. The
> training courses are mainly held between 3pm to 5pm during our break
> time in between two shifts, therefore I need to give up my break to attend
> the classes."

Another employee F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion further expressed

> "You need to attend the course every time once you sign up to the course.
> If you have any absences then you will be in the blacklisted and no longer

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eligible to participate in the courses. However, it is very difficult to ensure you could attend each class…as sometimes you needed to work overtime and you can not leave work to attend the class. It is not flexible no matter what reason if you did not attend the class once then you lost your qualification."

The participant employees in F&B often mentioned the best way to learn is on job training and they also mentioned only when they believe they are capable of performing task activities skilfully would they be comfortable to perform task. For example, F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion stated

"I am just a waitress, thus I should only serve the food and drinks. I should not take customer's order and check out the bills because the person who is doing these jobs should have more experience. Thus, they can provide better service and knowledge to the customers, as the customers pay huge amounts of money to dine in a high quality restaurant, they should receive the same value of what they spend. I feel I am not good enough to take these job tasks."

She further went on and stated

"I would do it but at the beginning I would like to be trained slowly and step-by-step…for example, I told my superior that I did not feel comfortable to take customers order and check out the bills; but they think I have been working here for quite a long time, thus I should learn and do more practice. The solution was they put me to serve the area with fewer customers so they could coach me slowly."

6.4.3 Self-determination/choice

Employees in the interviews expressed they have certain degree of autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes. For example, the F&B-Banquet Part-time team leader mentioned "I have space to widen my skills and talents in the banquet department because the outcomes of functions are more important than the process of how we get the job done. Thus, the way we conducted the job tasks was flexible if we could achieve the same or better outcomes of the functions." The

F&B intern in Restaurant Suntory also expressed

> "...my placement is one year so I have set up my schedule of learning
> new skills. I prefer learning one thing at a time and do not rush myself.
> Thus, if the time comes for me to learn a new skill, I would just tell my
> line manager that I wanted to learn certain skills. She would be happy to
> teach me, and she also encouraged and asked me if I wanted to learn new
> skills."

The House Keeping Supervisor mentioned "to deal with customers special requests very much depends on if I have enough ability and time. If the case is over my ability and takes a long time, I would ask for my superior to deal with customer."

6.4.3.1 Power (delegation of authority)

The answers provided by employees in the interviews in F&B actually support most of points compared to managers' perception. The employees agreed that their superiors generally trust their ability making decisions in their job and they have certain degree of delegating authority to deal with minor issues in relation to customer' requests and complaints. For example, the F&B-Banquet Part-time team leader stated

> "...mainly everything in relation to service if we could handle it in the
> functions then we could just do it without asking my superior. To learn
> what we could do and what we could not do it seems the only way is to
> work on different functions and build up the working experience.... I
> could sort out customers requests without asking my line supervisor's
> permission if it was not involving any monetary issues."

The F&B intern in Shang Palace mentioned

> "The assist manager told us very clearly at the training and briefing
> meetings what we could do and what we could not do when we deal with
> the customers complaints. For example, if the customers complained
> about the cuisine or drinks, I could provide a replacement to the
> customers without asking my line manager but I had to inform and report
> to them afterward, and if the case involved monetary issues I would have

to ask my line manager to deal with customers."

The F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion also stated

> "My line manager told me very clear there were certain ranges of
> products that I could offer to customers for compensation or treat.
> According to the situation if I considered it was necessary then I could
> offer to the customers without asking the manager but report to them
> afterward. If anything was involved with monetary issues we could not
> deal with the case, it should be the line manager to resolve the problem."

She further mentioned "in many cases we first line employees could not resolve the problem because the guests in our restaurant were mainly of high social status, they would not expect first line staff to deal with their case, they only wanted management level to came out to resolve their problem." In general, all participant employees in F&B agreed that they have enough limited authority to provide better service and deal with customer requests and complaints.

Employees in the interviews in Front Office regarded their superiors trusted them to a certain degree but their lacked support. The Concierge Clerk stated

> "...because my superiors trust my ability to a certain level, thus I have
> limited authority in dealing with customers' complaints; however I have
> nothing to do with serious problems or issues. All the big cases we need
> to pass onto senior managers. The managers may just come to us and ask
> some details before they start to deal with the customers."

Employees in all interviews indicated that delegating authority and power should have different limitations according to the job position, as they believed their superiors have better knowledge and working experience and better understanding to enable them to determine which patterns of behaviours are acceptable and encouraged by the hotel and at the same time to delight the customers. For example, the Concierge supervisor expressed "it might be right that different administrative levels have different authorities as most high-level employees have been working in the hotel industry for many years so they would have more experience in dealing with more complex cases." Furthermore,

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nearly all the participant employees expressed delegating authority power should only apply to employees who have a sense of responsibility and are willing to learn. For example, the F&B supervisor in Lobby Court stated "if an employee has interest in doing this job, has a sense of responsibility, and also has potential and enough ability, I would step by step to teach him/her in order to delegate authority power to him/her." She went on and stated "actually Shangri-la has its very systemic operation. It is very clear what job tasks belong to which position and what you can or cannot do. Other than that, how to deal with the customers complaints depends on each line manager and how they operate their departments."

6.4.3.2 Trust (empowerment management style)

All participant employees from Food and Beverage considered their superiors generally encouraged them taking the initiatives and gave them support, and coached them to ensure they learned new skills and knowledge to build their confidence and grow in the job. They also mentioned when they made mistakes during service encounters, after the case was closed their superiors would talk to them privately and first listen to their explanation then recommend alternatives for the future. For example, the F&B intern in Restaurant Suntory expressed

> "My line manager would not tell me anything in front of the customers but she would speak to me in private to let me know what solution would be more appropriate in this case, but she would not blame me at all... I think it is good as I could learn and improve myself from the case, especially the working experience is very important in the Food and Beverage sector this could help me to build up my experience and it is valuable to my future career."

The F&B intern in Shang palace stated

> "My line manager always calls me young sister, thus she is like a big sister to me. If we made a mistake at work, she would teach us and tell us directly with patience without any blame, thus we feel she is there to assist and help us we would not be afraid to talk to her when we need help...we have some spaces to widen our skills and talents. For example,

having limited of authority is one of them; she gave us some authority to handle customers' requests and complaints. We have very good two way communication, we can ask questions or provide our suggestions and opinions to the manager, and she always responds to us very quickly and helps us to improve ourselves. This kind of communication makes me feel we are valuable to the hotel because the manager respects us a lot and she always takes our suggestions into account. The good communication and strong interaction are keys to work in a pleasurable working environment."

However, three participant employees from Front Office provided quite different answers from their colleagues in Food and Beverage. They felt less support from their superior and they would be blamed for making mistakes. For example, the Concierge Clerk expressed

"My line manager in concierge is always over dramatic when you do something wrong even if it was not a big mistake. He will ask you to go into the office and start to blame you...I can understand why the line manager got angry when things went wrong as it might cause serious trouble or delay for the customer, but the more important thing is we should work together to do our best to resolve the problem first not ask the person to go to the office and blame him."

They considered their line managers are more traditional in management style as the managers have some ages "are older" and they showed less trust in their staff' ability in doing their job. In addition, the House Keeping Supervisor mentioned

"My line manager seemed not satisfied with what I have done to deal with customer's complaints most of time, no matter how hard I have tried and even if the customer was happy with the result. Thus, when I deal with customer's complaints, I tend to ask my line manager if I can do this before I actually do it. We need to report to the line manager each step of what we were doing when dealing with customer's complaints, thus the manager can have full knowledge of the case."

Both of them asserted they would rather not be empowered in this condition of lacking support from their superior. The Concierge Clerk stated "what happened in this case makes me think if anything happens in the future and I am not sure what I do is right or wrong, I would rather do nothing as the line manager will not offer any support." And the House Keeping Supervisor mentioned "I wanted to be empowered when I started my job, as I could offer better service to customers, but now I would rather not be empowered as my line manager did not show her trust and support most of time when I dealt with customer's complaints or special requests."

6.4.3.3 Empowered behaviour

All participant employees expressed, they have certain degree of delegating authority to deal with minor issues in relation to customer' requests and complaints but anything involved with monetary issues they would have to pass onto their line manager to deal with the cases. For example, House Keeping Supervisor mentioned "if a customer's request involves monetary transactions, I would ask for my line manager to approve all the time before I do it." The employees in F&B expressed they can offer a certain range of drinks, soup, and side dishes to customers without charging them if the case is appropriate but they have to report to their line manager afterward. For example, the F&B intern in Restaurant Suntory mentioned

> "My line manager allowed us to treat the customers to drinks or side
> dishes, however the manager told us that we could treat the customers
> these but it did not mean we need to treat them everything. We need to
> learn where the balance is as if we treated the customers then we had to
> know this expense could be covered by what we earned."

6.4.4 Impact

It is a surprise those employees from Front Office and Food and Beverage have two very diverse perceptions toward departmental meetings. In general, the content of the meetings has no difference between Front Office and Food and Beverage. For example, the concierge supervisor from Front Office stated "we have regular meetings with the line managers on different days each week...the managers and supervisors would attend theses meetings to pass on any information or policy change made by the hotel and also to discuss any issue that happened or to see if we had any questions or problems we

wanted to report and ask." The F&B supervisor in Lobby Court also stated "during the meetings the manager passed on the information that we should know that were made during the higher management meetings, to examine any service failure during the service encounters, and also the manager would ask the staff if there was anything we wanted to discuss and talk about." All three participant employees from Front Office gave a very negative response to departmental meetings, they provided very similar answers of how they became negative. The Concierge supervisor stated

> "…in fact many times when managers asked if there are any suggestions
> or opinions, we all kept silent. It is not because we did not want to provide
> our opinion; it is because we could not see the point to speak out. For
> example, most of employees who work in valet parking have been
> working here for a long period of time. They might have suggested
> something a long time ago but things had never been changed since then,
> thus they had given up suggesting anything…but more than that is no
> matter what our suggestion to the managers, they always told us that it is
> impossible to do that way because it is different from the hotel policies.
> There are many higher managers above my line manager so my line
> manager just wanted us to do what other managers above him wanted us
> to do. Therefore, we would think not to voice, as the line manager would
> not take it into action."

The House Keeping Supervisor highlighted "I would only speak out about the issues can be solved, otherwise, I would just keep silent and not tell, as it is important to see the change after we told the problem." However, all five participant employees from Food and Beverage mentioned the meetings were very helpful because they could receive any changed made by the hotel and also they could bring up any issues to discuss during this meeting and it was quite good and convenient. For example, the F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion stated "I am quite satisfied with recent issues I suggested to my line manager, as I got a response and the situation was resolved." This actually implies that how employees perceive his/her management style would have impact on their intrinsic motivation.

6.4.4.1 Openness of communication

However, more interesting here is that employees in all interviews indicated they would prefer informally personal communication. This is correspondent with managers' perception that the distribution of information to Taiwanese employees the best way is through informal channels. Except the Concierge Clerk and House Keeping Supervisor, the other six participant employees regarded communication is open in their department, and they were always given the opportunity to express their ideas. They also felt free to contact their superior in their department about a work-related problem and even personal issue. One participant employee, House Keeping Supervisor, provided a strong disagreement in relation to the informal speaking up meeting and it was actually against the answer that was provided by the managers. There was precondition, as some issues could not be brought up during this meeting. She stated "you could not say shortage of manpower and to adjust wages during this speak up meeting. Then what other issues of concern to us that we could say?" Furthermore, in order to maintain group harmony, people needed to use great caution when dealing with any issue in the department. Employees' perception is corresponding with managers' perception. For example, the Concierge Clerk stated "it will harm the relationship between me and my line manager if I reported to one level higher than him because he might think I did not respect him...think carefully he is my line manager and I am under his authority so I had better not do it." He went on and gave an example

> "It happened once a bellboy who was quite closed to the line manager. He was chatting with Human Resource Manager in an informal way about the holiday arrangement in the concierge was not good enough etc. The Human Resource Manager came to speak to the line manager toward this issue, and then the line manager had an argument with the staff. They had not spoken to each other since then."

Furthermore, the House Keeping Supervisor mentioned "it is regarded as disrespectful behaviour if anyone reported to one level higher, not his/her immediate superior."

6.5 The Cultural Impact on Workplace

6.5.1 Organisational system and structure

According to the study's conceptual framework, national culture and some external influences and factors of individuals might affect employee empowerment implementation. Maxwell (1997) and Riley (1996) have identified an empowering organisation should be a flattened structure and also it is essential to reduce the amount of the intermediate management and supervisory in hierarchical layers. Surprisingly one question originally was devised in the interview to examine the respondents' exercise concerning empowerment behaviours in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei; however, the resulting finding provided extra information about the organisational structure. The question respondents were asked: "What are employees expected to do when dealing with customer complaints or special requirements?"

Four participant managers from Front Office and Food and Beverage indicated that their employees in different level have different authority. According to the degree of the cases and customers complaints should have different levels of staff to deal with the case. However, the procedure in dealing with the customers' complaints or special requirements is the same in each level but authority to provide compensation in each level have different limitations. All of them expect their subordinates need to report to their direct superior and each level upwards until the service manager who is in charge the operational unit in the shortest time to ensure the necessary action is taking place when they are dealing with customer complaints or special requirements. The hierarchical layers not only happen on personal job position, even between different operational units. The Service Manager mentioned

> "One of the team supervisors after she worked eight months at Yi Café
> was transferred to work at Marco Polo Restaurant and Lounge because
> she has excellent knowledge in administration, training and service
> sectors. It is a good challenge and experience to work at Marco Polo for a
> good employee and help them to develop their future career. I will only
> send staff to work at Marco Polo when they are ready and can fit into
> Marco Polo."

Far Eastern Plaza Hotel has many levels of hierarchy and a high proportion of supervisory personnel. In addition, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts has carefully selected

the members of its executive team and in these talented professionals most have more than 20 years working experience in the hospitality industry and many have moved up the ranks in Shangri-La over the last 10 years. Shangri-La assigned the General Manager, Resident Manager, and Director of Food & Beverage directly from the company to manage the Far Eastern Plaza Hotel. They present Shangri-La and ensure Far Eastern Plaza Hotel meets the Shangri-La standard; therefore, they are centralised final decision-making. The Service Manager Banquet stated "these three people hold a strong triangle relationship and their decision represents Shangri-La. They gave us very clear guidelines of what we can do and what we cannot do."

6.5.2 Relationship between managers and employees

6.5.2.1 Manager perception

Managers in all interviews asserted attitude is the most important factor for every member of staff. The attitude involves work attitude and attitude towards working colleagues and customers etc., as skills can be trained later. The managers consistently mentioned superiors should feel obligated to be concerned with subordinate welfare and interests. For instance, they all mentioned a good manager should not only assist employees to understand and finish their work tasks, but also has responsibility to look after their subordinates on a daily basis and take initiative to guide subordinates to plan a life scheme. For example, the Director of Human Resources stated "to make a good employee requires a good working environment and a good superior along with good training. A good superior can lead them to absorb good concepts and then implement them in their jobs. A good superior also needs to assist them to resolve the problems that they have at work and have no other worries to affect their work performance to ensure that the work place is where a place where they can feel comfortable." Both managers from Human Resource and two other managers from Food and Beverage indicated a good role model is essential at work place. Staff is always looking for the best employee in each level above their position to be a role model and wish they themselves could be like he/she one day. Thus, this role model affects other working colleagues' working attitude and staff wants to be in the team to create the learning environment. For example, the Service Manager Banquet stated "it is important for me to improve myself and make sure my staff is well trained, I always present myself as a role model for my staff to learn from me." Indeed managers should expect to present themselves as this role model for their subordinates and have good knowledge about their jobs and skills in order to assist staff in resolving problems at work.

The Human Resource Manager, Service Manager Banquet, and Service Leader-Rooms Trainer actually mentioned the superior should run his/her operational unit like a family; thus, people are concerned for each other and support the team decision. The Service Leader-Rooms Trainer stated that

> "...front office has a fund system and the money is used to hold some activities, such as birthday party to tie-up employees' emotional response in order to overcome any other factors that would affect their working interests. We run our operational unit like a family so we often socialise with staff after work, as this can lead team members to feel great pleasure in working together."

Both managers from the Human Resource Department, two managers from Food and Beverage, and the Service Leader-Rooms Trainer stated to encourage their subordinates to learn is very important. Both managers from the Human Resource Department and the Service Manager Banquet even suggested the best way of learning is to train their subordinates with full service concept and clearly express their thoughts and targets to their subordinates, and then coach them without interfering in order to make the subordinates grow from their own experiences. The Service Manager Banquet and Service Leader-Rooms Trainer highlighted the superiors should create a culture in which subordinates are not afraid of making mistakes, as it is part of learning process. The most important is the subordinates bravely admit their mistakes and learn from them. No matter what happened the superiors are there for their subordinates to share and support every movement they make. The Service Leader-Rooms Trainer expressed

> "...the most troublesome thing is many people would shirk their responsibility and shift the blame onto others, and this would affect harmony between different departments. Personally I think the biggest problem is not making a mistake if you were willing to learn. The biggest problem is after making a mistake you do not admit...most Asians would feel making mistakes is wrong, thus they would rather not do it to avoid the mistake happening. If you do not try then it is impossible for you to know whether you can achieve it or not."

6.5.2.2 Employee perception

In order to further explore and discusses the relationships between superiors and their subordinates in Taiwan from employees' perspectives. The same questions were devised in the interview with the words manager and employee swapped position. The answers provided by managers strongly corresponded with employees' answers. Employees in all interviews regarded an ideal employee should have a good attitude, as it is the most basic element. They often mentioned a good employee should be hard-working and enthusiastic at work, take the job seriously with full responsibility, and learn constantly to improve service skills and absorb knowledge. For example, the F&B supervisor in Lobby Court stated "an ideal employee needs to have a right working attitude and is willing to learn all the time. It is impossible for staff to know everything so it is important that you always want to learn and to be an earnest worker, and also need to take responsibility for their own working attitude." The House Keeping Supervisor mentioned "a good employee should have a sense of responsibility and ability to deal with work pressure."

These basic elements make an ideal employee proved that Taiwanese employees considered they should build up themselves and do their work with a moral responsibility to their work place.

Six of the eight participant employees considered a best manager should feel obligated to be concerned with subordinate welfare and shoot for their rights and interests. For example, the House Keeping Supervisor stated "a good manager should have more concern about his/her subordinates, and consistently shoot for their rights. He/she should understand their hard work and value, and respect them." A superior should listen to his/her subordinates' needs, ideas and suggestions to build good two-way communication, and always support and trust his/her staff. The F&B supervisor in Lobby Court stated .

> "a good manager needs to stand up for his/her staff…my line manager
> always listens to me first and even if it was my fault, she would teach me
> the better solution instead of blaming me in private… I think managers
> who can trust his/her staff he/she can hold the staff' royalty, and the staff
> are more willing to share the jobs duties at work and have the same
> common consensus towards the job."

She further went on and stated "a good manager would also observe the staff' working attitudes, and if he/she considered the subordinates have ambition and willing to learn in this field. He/she would do his/her best to coach and assist the subordinates with great patience in order to develop their career." Five of the eight participant employees also mentioned they would expect their managers to have good ability and knowledge, thus, they can learn from their superior, as he/she could be a role model for them. For example, the F&B intern in Shang Palace expressed

"a good manager needs to be strict with the staff whenever it is necessary and to make him/herself a role model for the staff to lean and imitate, but he/she would not represent him/herself in a very high hierarchical position, he/she would help staff out when we needed help. Actually, we always observe our superiors, and if they have good knowledge and can do their job well, we would develop our loyalty and commit ourselves to the work, and be more willing to work for my boss and to work as a good team."

Four of the eight participant employees actually mentioned a manager should be a majestic figure but also an amiable person at the same time. They also mentioned the informal chatting with their superior at work and outside work has a strong impact on them, as they felt there are no boundaries between them and their superior, they are more like friends or sisters and brothers, but they still respect their superior at work. For example, the F&B-Banquet Part-time team leader stated

"We respect my manager at work and we understand clearly work is work do not involve any personal issues, but after work we are just like friends and everybody is the same. It is like a big family outside work we are all good friends, we hang out together and eat out together, but at work boss is boss, staff are staff and we still need to follow the principles."

The F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion also stated "a team leader needs to have very good relationship with all the team members, otherwise, no one is willing to work for him/her." This in-group emotion builds their relationship is based on mutual support and trust and further increases their royalty to their superior, as they believed based on *Ren Qing* (humanised obligation) they have obligation to work hard for their superior. Six of the eight participant employees actually used the Chinese word *Jia* (family) frequently

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when they referred to their operational unit.

6.6 Conclusion

The information generated from the interviews with the managers and the employees from Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei were concluded into three following sections, organisation, management, and employee perspective. There are some elements and issues in relation to the impact of Taiwanese culture on empowerment and the comparison with another two hotels in Taiwan will be discussed in chapter 9.

Organisation perspective

The Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei is managed by the Shangri-La International Hotel Chain. Shangri-La is a multinational and internationalised hotel chain company. The company has completely planned programmes to ensure each of its hotels provide high quality of service to its customers. Shangri-La Care Modules and Shangri-La guiding principles assist the company to achieve its clearly vision to be the first choice for its customers, employees, shareholders and business partners. The hotel provides ongoing training courses and regular meetings with all members of staff in order to improve service quality. Different regular meetings in each departments and the hotel involve with various levels of employees and the meetings provides the opportunity to the staff to become informed of any changes within the hotel and most importantly the staff can also contribute ideas, report work related problems, express and share their opinion or other issues of concern to them during departmental meetings. However, it is notable that informal chat with the superiors in private is most welcome by Taiwanese employees. The hotel has a clear reward scheme and "employee of the month" is to formally recognise employees excelling in customer service. Employees perceive that the hotel culture is very much customer-orientated because sustained and ongoing training and the reward system to promote excellent performance. It is indeed the corporate policies, practices and programmes of the hotel offer an environment supportive to empowerment.

Management perspective

Managers in all interviews considered that empowerment is very important for the hotel as the hotel culture is customer and service quality orientated. Managers generally delegated decision-making power and authority to customer-contact employees but they emphasised that decision-making and initiatives need to occur according to guidelines

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and within limits based on the employees' job levels and positions. They claimed these guidelines and limits are clearly communicated to and known by employees via Shangri-La Care training courses, informal communication and on job training based on daily practice. In addition, when employees make decision to resolve customer's case during service encounter, they would have to report back to their line superior in the shortest period of time as it is one part of service recovering processes to enable the superior to have full knowledge of the case. From Taiwanese customer perspective, it is important for manager to appear to customers to make a second apology and also support the decision that has been made by their employees. Taiwanese customers often expect that management levels to resolve their problems, as it makes a different to guests and sincerity always comes first. Managers claimed to very much encourage employee take initiatives in serving customers as it is part of Shangri-La standards. Managers quite often expressed how much they trust and encourage initiatives and decision-making might depend on the individual employees and notably on their personal working experience and the length of their employment within Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei. Managers claimed to be quite tolerant of mistakes and wrong decision, and if it happened they would explain to the staff what areas could be improved in their decision and also recommend an alternative solution that is better for the future. The hotel has an informal "speak up" meeting once a month, but employees have to follow the instruction that was given by Human Resource as some of issues cannot be mentioned in the meeting. In general, communication is open in the hotel but in order to maintain group harmony, any issue in relation to work problem should report to direct superior first not other levels of management.

Employee perspective

Employees considered one of the hotel goals is the commitment of all personnel to provide high quality service to customers to ensure every customer is satisfied. They admitted because the hotel culture is service and customer orientated, thus every employee should provide a high standard service to their customers. They mentioned the manager would inform them about company results and unit results etc but employees often expressed that sharing of information and rewards has no any impact on how they do their job, as they believe it is their responsibilities to get the job done well and provide good service to their customers. Employees' motivator at work comes from their superiors' support, good relationship between working peers and the encouragements from the customers, these highlight the importance of *Guan Xi*

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relationship in Taiwanese society. Employees are generally positive towards the training courses that they received from the hotel as these training courses can build up their competence, however, there are some issues about non-job related training courses. Employees agreed that their superiors generally trust their ability making good decisions in their job and they have certain degree of delegating authority to deal with minor issues in relation to customer' requests and complaints. They often mentioned their superiors told them clearly during the meeting and training what they can do and offer and what they cannot do when dealing with service encounters. They believe the authority power should have different limitations according to the job positions. The employees from the Front Office and Food and Beverage have diverse answers in relation to the support from their superiors and this issue may be influenced by *Guan Xi* relationship in Taiwanese culture. It also affects how employees believe they can have impact on the hotel operation. For communication, employees regarded in order to maintain group harmony, people needed to use great caution when dealing with any issue in the department.

Chapter 7 The Empowerment Process in Practice: A Case Study of The Splendor Taichung

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the outcomes of the qualitative research, that is derived from the information generated from the 13 interviews conducted with the 6 managers and 7 employees from one of the participating hotels, The Splendor Taichung (see Table 7.1). In order to understand the delegation of authority in a chain of command from the top to the bottom of an organisation, The Splendor Taichung organisational Chat was presented in (Figure 7.1).

This section will describe the company's historical evolution in order to understand the changing of its ownership. The following section 7.2 will provide the information related to the elements constituting the hotel organisational culture and its operational management. It highlights that organisational culture is autocratic orientated and with a traditional management style. Both managers and employees do not have clear idea of the hotel mission and the hotel also lacks of implementing substantial regular training programmes. Section 7.3 will address the meaning of the notion of employee empowerment perceived by managers, and further evaluate the extent to which managers intentions and leadership affects their management style to lead their subordinates. The top management holds great power to make the final decision and the middle managers and the employees do not have much decision-making power. The formal meetings were rather disappointed by both middle managers and employees, as the top management opinion cannot be challenged. Most managers would like to delegate some degree of authority to customer-contact employees but it is hard for them to implement because they do not have enough power to do so. How much managers trust their employees very much depends on the individual employee's circumstance. In addition, the diverse management style affects how the managers communicate with their employees. Section 7.4 will address the employee behaviours and motivation, which are based on a psychological state of empowerment as subordinates perceiving four dimensions combine with empowerment themes. In general, employees considered their managers are open to communicate but the top management had no intention to agree with their ideas. There is not much information was shared with employees in the hotel and the reward scheme was not clearly known by the employees. What motivate

the employees the most at work shows the differences between female and male employees. Section 7.5 will discuss the extent to which culture impacts on the work place. Taiwanese customers quite often expect management to deal with their case during service encounter. Section 7.6 will conclude the results that were gained in this chapter and the comparison with other hotels in Taiwan will be further discussed in Chapter 9.

Table 7.1 Participant interviewee in The Splendor Taichung

No.	Date	Interviewee	Gender	Length of interview
1	11 April 2004	Front Office Assist. Manager	Female	50 minutes
2	20 April 2004	Front Desk Supervisor Daytime	Female	42 minutes
3	20 April 2004	Front Desk Assist. Manager	Female	43 minutes
4	5 May 2004	Back of House Assist. Manager	Male	53 minutes
5	5 May 2004	Front Desk Supervisor Nighttime	Male	49 minutes
6	6 May 2004	Concierge Manager	Male	1 hour 24 minutes
7	20 May 2004	F&B Intern in Euro A	Female	30 minutes
8	20 May 2004	F&B Intern in Japanese Teppanyaki	Female	35 minutes
9	26 May 2004	F&B Assist. Manager	Male	1 hour 43 minutes
10	27 May 2004	F&B Intern in Montaigne	Male	1 hour 15 minutes
11	13 June 2004	Service Manager	Male	1 hour 27 minutes
12	15 June 2004	F&B Intern in Banquet	Female	50 minutes
13	16 June 2004	F&B Intern in Mistral	Male	52 minutes
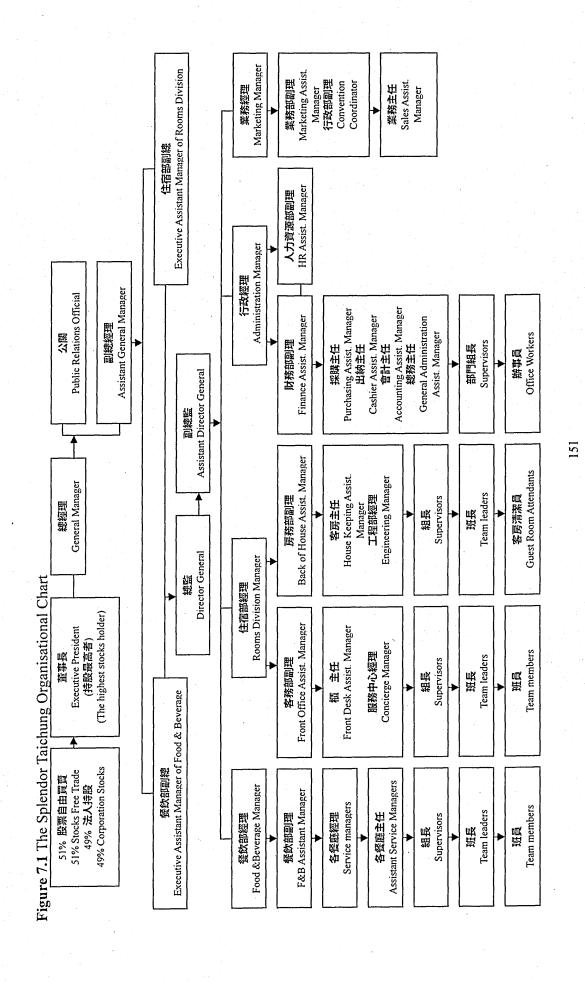
7.1.1 Company's historical evolution

The information in relation to the hotel and the company were generated from the hotel and the companies websites. In 1973, Mr. X. R. Pan, the Formosa International Hotel Corporation's founder predicted Taipei would develop into a financial centre in Asia, thus the market would demand 5 star commercial hotels in the future. He planned to invest and build luxurious commercial hotels. Until 1984, Mr, Y. H. Chen, the Tuntex Group's president joined Grand Formosa Regent Taipei team management and signed a contract with Regent International Hotels and Resorts on the 24th December of the same year, this investment finally could be operated. In 1986, the Tuntex conglomerate the Tuntex Construction was responsible for building work under Regent International Hotels and Resorts technological guidance, as Regent International Hotels and Resorts was responsible for operational management. The hotel was established in 1990 and was first named The Regent Taipei. They signed the 10 years technological service, hotel management and marketing contracts with Regent International Hotels and Resorts in Hong Kong, thus, the hotel was under Regent's supervision and management. In1993, because Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts purchased Regent International Hotels and Resorts, thus the hotel revised contracts and because of the idea of managing and setting up its own brand continuous management, the hotel was renamed Grand Formosa

Regent Taipei. The new contracts with Regent and Four Seasons were based on a consultancy and marketing relationship. However, Regent International Hotels and Resorts had a strong influence on the Grand Formosa Regent hotels operational management and systems. The company used Grand Formosa Regent Taipei as its blueprint to launch its own hotel chain. The company established Grand Formosa Regent Taroko Hualien in 1997, Grand Formosa Regent Kaohsiung in 1998, and Grand Formosa Regent Taichung in 1999. In April 2000, Mr. S. L. Pan, the President and the Chief executive of Grand Formosa Regent Taipei reached the agreement with the Tuntex Group on the stocks right shifts; the Pan Family became the controlling shareholders of Grand Formosa Regent Taipei and Grand Formosa Regent Taroko Hualien. The Formosa International Hotel Corporation entered a brand-new stage.

The Splendor Taichung was established on the 2nd of May 1999, and was first named Grand Formosa Regent Taichung. The hotel was under the Tuntex Group and the Formosa International Hotel Corporation. The Formosa International Hotel Corporation assigned a Foreign General Manager and operated Grand Formosa Regent Taichung for only 2 years, as the Tuntex Group had a financial crisis The Tuntex Group assigned Ms. Y. S. Hu as Executive President and General Manager of Grand Formosa Regent Taichung in 2001. On the 1$^{st\,of}$ July 2002, both Grand Formosa Regent Taichung and Kaohsiung formally finished cooperation with the Formosa International Hotel Corporation, and were renamed The Splendor Taichung and The Splendor Kaohsiung in order to distinguish themselves from the Formosa International Hotel Corporation. Ms. Y. S. Hu has been being the Executive President and General Manager of The Splendor Taichung and Kaohsiung both hotels since then.

The Splendor Taichung hotel has 222 comfortable guest rooms, including 15 suites and 1 president suite. The hotel has 8 different restaurants and bars, which are Connoisseur Card VIP Club, Montaigne, Rendez Vous Café, Wine and Cigar Bar, Japanese Teppanyaki, Euro A, Mistral and Splendor Garden. The hotel also has 10 banquet and conference rooms.

Figure 7.1 The Splendor Taichung Organisational Chart

51% 股票自由買賣 51% Stocks Free Trade
49% 法人持股 49% Corporation Stocks

董事長 Executive President
(持股最高者) (The highest stocks holder)

總經理 General Manager

公關 Public Relations Official

副總經理 Assistant General Manager

住宿部副副總 Executive Assistant Manager of Rooms Division

餐飲部副副總 Executive Assistant Manager of Food & Beverage

副總監 Assistant Director General

總監 Director General

行政經理 Administration Manager

住宿部經理 Rooms Division Manager

餐飲部經理 Food &Beverage Manager

業務經理 Marketing Manager

業務部副副理 Marketing Assist. Manager
行政部副副理 Convention Coordinator

業務主任 Sales Assist. Manager

人力資源部副副理 HR Assist. Manager

財務部副副理 Finance Assist. Manager

採購主任 Purchasing Assist. Manager
出納主任 Cashier Assist. Manager
會計主任 Accounting Assist. Manager
總務主任 General Administration Assist. Manager

部門組長 Supervisors

辦事員 Office Workers

房務部副副理 Back of House Assist. Manager

客房主任 House Keeping Assist. Manager
工程部總經理 Engineering Manager

組長 Supervisors

班長 Team leaders

客房清潔員 Guest Room Attendants

客務部副副理 Front Office Assist. Manager

櫃 主任 Front Desk Assist. Manager
服務中心總經理 Concierge Manager

組長 Supervisors

班長 Team leaders

班員 Team members

餐飲部副副理 F&B Assistant Manager

各餐廳經理 Service managers

各餐廳主任 Assistant Service Managers

組長 Supervisors

班長 Team leaders

班員 Team members

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7.2 Organisational Culture and Orientation

7.2.1 Company vision and business goal

According to the hotel website, the Splendor Taichung is regarded as one of the grandest deluxe hotels in Taichung. For years, the hotel has been devoted to upgrading the facilities and services to provide the best-quality accommodation. Therefore, it has become a well-know hotel among Taichung hotels. Ms. Hu emphasises the hotels operational characteristics are intimate, graceful, and unique in order to be distinct from old style of hotel operation. She graduated from law school at National Taiwan University and was also devoted to ballet and modern dancing. She has had various careers in different fields, which include retail, entertainment, art, hotels and the Tuntex Group. She sees herself as a dancer and had many experiences in management field. However, according to the Service Manager and the Concierge Manager, they regard the disadvantage of the hotel is one person being the Executive President and General Manager at the same time, and she doesn't have clear knowledge or enough experience in relation to hospitality management. For example, the Service Manager mentioned "the hotel is autocratic orientated, however, the boss has her own ideas about running business but it might not necessarily fit well in hotel management, and the ideas might even run against what we learnt from hospitality management at the university. However, because she is the boss, we needed to respect her ideas. We had to give up what we thought was better for the operational unit."

Managers in all interviews reported they did not have clear idea of what exactly the hotel mission is, however, they provided very similar answers of the hotel mission. They believed it is to create the image that the hotel is a 5 star luxurious hotel in Taichung and to provide high quality service to its customers. For example, the Service Manager stated "the business goal and development of this hotel is to sell its image as a 5 star luxurious hotel in Taichung in order to overcome its competitors in the Taichung region." The back of House Assistant Manager also mentioned "the business goal of this hotel is to create the image that the hotel is the most high class hotel and provides the best quality to its customers in the Taichung region." The Concierge Manager further expressed "according to the information gathered from the hotel meetings and Ms. Hu's announced and published articles to the mass media, the business goal and development of the hotel is to present the hotel as a 5 star luxurious hotel and further to develop its own brand and have its own hotel chain in the domestic hospitality market."

7.2.2 Employee involvement and service quality

Managers in the interview reported the meetings with their staff in each operational unit are regarded as one of the methods for quality improvement progress. Daily briefing meeting mainly deliver today's working tasks to their staff, and also verbal reward to the employees who have had a good performance in order to encourage the staff to maintain and keep up the good work. For employee involvement the most frequently mentioned was via once a month departmental meetings, as it provides the opportunity for the staff to be involved and interact with managers and other staff for any problems of concern to them. For example, the Back of House Assistant Manager mentioned

"...during once a month departmental meeting, we deliver the important decisions and policy changes that were made by the Executive President to the employees, and remind them of the areas that need to be improved. The staff can report work related problems, provide their ideas, and present any issues of concern to them or our guests. Because most of time our guests would suggest something for the hotel to the room attendants directly but the room attendants do not normally tell management right away. Thus, this meeting provides them a channel to tell management and we can consider adjusting to meet the guest's needs in the future."

Another form of employee involvement is having an informal chat with their managers. For example, the Front Office Assistant Manager stated "there is a two hour informal meeting with staff in each operational unit each month. The form is like having a staff party, food and drink is provided and everyone can talk about anything of concern to them, everyone just chats really." This form gives both employees and managers a chance to chat and listen to each other without any boundary and further to build their relationships based on mutual support in honesty and trust. It often creates the in-group emotion and friendship. The Front Office Assistant Manager further described "because of this form of communication, all the staff look after each other, get along very well, and have a very good friendship." Managers in all interviews often mentioned that it is the basis for any superiors there to show their concern and care towards their employees, and the staff is welcome to have a chat on any issue they may be concerned about. For example, the Service Manager stated "my staff are first line employees to deal with the customers, thus they can gather more information in relation to customers needs and

suggestions. Therefore, it is important for me to understand and have a chat with my subordinates in order to improve our service." The other form of employee involvement in Food and Beverage is writing a report to F&B Assistant Manager. For example, the F&B Assistant manager stated

"…all the restaurant assistants are internship. They are university students who are doing their placement for six months or one year at the hotel. Thus, they need to write a report and hand it in each month on the 15th. There is a meeting on the first Monday of each month to discuss their reports. We treasure students' opinions, as they are educated at the university and have good knowledge in relation to hospitality management. The meetings mainly discuss service, situation handling and improvement. It is of benefit to the students and the hotel. The hotel also keeps students improving records so after they graduate from the universities and if they are interested to work for the hotel, we will offer them a place according to their past performance."

7.2.3 Training

Managers in all interviews mentioned the training that every employee has to attend consists of orientation, fire training, and on job training for the employees' working skills. However, most managers did not have positive support of the staff training programme that was provided by the hotel. For example, the Concierge Manager stated

"In fact a lot of things now continue using the systems from when we were Grand Formosa Regent Taichung. However, the systems are continuing but the actual content has lost its meaning. For instance, the staff training programme, the hotel used to have a professional trainer in the Human Resource Department and each operational unit had its own trainer that was trained by the professional trainer. I am one of the trainers, we used to have a meeting every week with all the trainers to review and discuss what happened and what problematic points occurred within the hotel, and then we came out with the solution and implemented the new training to every employee. This training programme involved two way communications and had good interaction between trainers and employees. We always examined the results of

training to see whether any new problems had happened in order to look for improvement. However, the training programme we have now is more like we trainers in each operational unit have to write a report to the trainer in the Human Resource Department each week and there is no further training implemented. Therefore, we trainers are not keen on training really. The result of training course we have now is that the staff only has basic service standards in the hotel industry. If the hotel could implement substantial regular training and further training again, the employees would have the ability to provide better quality service. Thus, the employees not only know how to smile, they will think before the guests and act before the guests' requests. I think that is what really quality service is....to be honest, I only need to put twenty percent effort to achieve the service standard of The Splendor Taichung from what I had leant and trained when it was Grand Formosa Regent Taichung."

The Front Office Assistant Manager also stated "...employees have to attend the training course every Monday, and the main purpose of this training course is to refresh their service mind, discuss customers' complaints to ensure there is no communication error." The Back of House Assistant Manager mentioned "each week has one key point for employee training, and it is the key point to be examined by the superior during this week. Thus, the employees will pay more attention on achieving high standards in this key point and relatively other areas would be less care." The Service manager also mentioned "the hotel does not have a training course for every employee. The actual training for employees is provided by each trainer in individual operational units and it is mainly about on job training for service skills."

7.2.4 Reward system
Managers in all interviews mentioned when the employees receive a customer commend card, they will receive 200 New Taiwan Dollar as the reward for their excellent performance. They also will receive a commendation point. The hotel also has reward scheme for every employee based on business volume each month, but not individual performance. For example, the Service Manager mentioned

"...a bonus system used to be a fixed amount of money, as everyone works in the hotel would receive a monthly bonus and different job

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positions would receive different amount of money. However, because of the financial crisis of the hotel the bonus system was changed half a year ago. It now depends on the business volume in Rooms and F&B. If F&B meets the monthly target, then all employees in F&B will share the achievements bonus. Thus, the amount of money we receive each month is not fixed. However, because the bonus is not a great amount of money, it does not affect employees much."

The Concierge Manager further expressed

"...basically most employees' welfare and reward system continues using the system from when we were the Grand Formosa Regent Taichung. We used to receive two-month wages every Chinese New Year as a year bonus. However, we have not received this yearly bonus for two years now. We receive 5,000 New Taiwanese Dollar gift voucher as a year bonus now....if they receive a customers' commend card, the employee gets 200 New Taiwanese Dollar and a commendation point, and it also will be posted on the notice board. However, it has become a formalisation, and it has not much affect on employees"

7.3 Management Intention and Leadership

7.3.1 What does empowerment mean to people?

The meanings of empowerment were answered by managers in all interviews are presented in Table 7.2. Managers in all interviews understood the term empowerment in very similar ways; in general they considered empowerment is about delegating limited power or authority to subordinates in order to achieve their work tasks.

The Front Desk Assistant Manager further stated

"Empowerment has its advantages and disadvantages and it is not necessarily the best. For example, the empowered employees may not want to take extra responsibility and there are no clear guidelines to know how much power is enough. To implement empowerment practice the company is taking a risk and I consider most Taiwanese firms will not take this risk....in addition, I am not sure about the affect of

Taiwanese or culture, we tend to do what we have been told. For example, I teach you one thing then you will follow this procedure to finish the task, but you will not think if there is another way to achieve the task. I consider most of Taiwanese are like this. They only do things the way you taught them."

The Concierge Manager also referred

"I believe empowerment has already existed for a long time, and western scholars brought up and conceptualised it. However, it might be more western style, as in East when we were young we did things that parents and teachers wanted us to do. From our childhood growing up, what we learnt is do what we have been taught and told without question....however, this kind of tradition also has its advantages, of course, the leaders are required to have capability and virtuously....I consider it may be better to find the balance and mix of these two to manage the people."

Table7.2 The meaning of the term empowerment

Front Office Assistant Manager mentioned "empowerment is the company giving you certain limited authority to operate your job in order to run your work tasks without a hitch within the company's policies and regulations"
Front Desk Assistant Manager stated "empowerment is delegating authority to subordinates, thus when employees deal with service encounter and they cannot find their manager at the time, they can make decision to resolve the problem."
Concierge Manager mentioned "empowerment is superiors willing to delegate power and authority to his/her subordinates, therefore, the subordinates can perform their jobs smoothly and get a better results."
Back of House Assistant Manager stated "empowerment is delegating limited power to subordinates, and the subordinates bring their skills and talents into full play within this limit of power."
Food and Beverage Assistant Manager mentioned "empowerment is delegating power and authority to subordinates, thus they can be a duty deputy"
Service Manager stated "empowerment is delegating certain authority to subordinates, thus they can make decision when they deal with a service encounter."

7.3.2 How important is empowerment?

Managers in all interviews agreed that empowerment is important but not all managers consider empowerment can be implemented in Taiwanese hotels. It is interesting to understand the reasons why they consider empowerment is important and what problems they may face when implementing empowerment. The Front Office Assistant

> "Empowerment is important as the employees can do their jobs more
> smoothly but it needs to be restricted. Because employees could easily
> abuse the power once they have more power and further it may work
> against the company's policies. Thus, implementing empowerment
> requires clear guidelines and only can be used with normal transactions.
> The hotel has many principles that every employee cannot work against
> or make mistakes. I would like to empower my subordinates but I am
> afraid of doing it because the hotel does not have clear guidelines for
> implementing empowerment."

The Front Desk Assistant Manager considered empowerment is very important but it
may not be practicable in Taiwanese hotels. She explained the reasons based on superior
and subordinate perspective, as she stated

> "Personally I think the superiors in the higher level are not necessarily
> willing to empower their subordinates, as they are afraid of losing their
> power. It is like if the employees can make decisions without
> acknowledging me, then it seems there is no value for me to exist in the
> hotel. If employees and even myself consider we can make any decision,
> then I can do the General Manager's job, there is no need for the General
> Manager to exist in the hotel. Therefore, I consider empowerment is
> inappropriate.... everyone is different and in fact, many employees
> would consider that they do not want to be empowered, as all they want
> is a stable and easy job. They do not want to take extra responsibility and
> they consider it is good enough just to get the job done within their job
> duty....to implement empowerment requires superiors and subordinates
> both to have the same understanding towards work goals, and very clear
> guidelines to follow."

The Concierge Manager regarded empowerment is quite important but it is difficult to
implement empowerment in a traditional management workplace, as he stated

> "...the advantage of implementing empowerment is that the front line

employees can resolve customer's problem and special requests at the first point of contact. Because they have decision-making power to deal with customers so they can make the incident yield twice the result with half the effort. If employees do not have any power, then they can not solve the incident at the first point of contact, they would have to come to their superior to ask for help all the time....however, most of employees' working attitude is no matter what happened, they do not want to take responsibility for making mistakes. Thus, empowerment is a learning process, the empowered employees would have to be willing to learn from making mistakes and taking responsibility. I started my job here as a Bell Boy six years ago when it was still Grand Formosa Regent Taichung, we had training courses and meetings with our managers regularly. My line superiors always communicated with me and taught me the benefit of being empowered. I doubted at the very beginning, but after practicing a few times I enjoyed having certain limited power and authority, as I could learn from dealing with customers' problems and special requests and had better achievements in my job. I could deal with service encounters without constantly running to my manager and it was not like the managers tried to avoid dealing with customers. It was because it would be better to resolve the customers' problems and special requests at the first point of contact, as it might be more difficult to resolve the incidents if it extended to another issue.... However, I consider limited of power and authority would be more appropriate, as if you gave too much power, people might abuse the power. I would say 7 in 10 should be enough and 8 should be a maximum, as you should always keep last counters.... It does not mean how good empowerment is, it is one would be only too glad to do it because he/she can resolve the problem at the first place."

The Back of House Assistant Manager considered the superiors need to trust their subordinates fully before empowering employees, he stated "I only can empower my subordinates when I believe and trust their ability because I am afraid of any problem might occur, thus I would rather not empower my subordinates. It would be difficult and take a very long time to trust my subordinates." The F&B Assistant Manager and the Service Manager referred the customers in Taiwan would prefer management to resolve

their problems and they often prefer waiting for management to deal with their problems, thus implementing empowerment seems not necessary in this perspective. The F&B Assistant Manager mentioned "...in service encounters Taiwanese customers often ask to see the manager and their attitude changes once the manager comes to resolve their problems. The customers believe management level can offer better discounts and compensation." The Service Manager also said "Taiwanese customers always think that if the higher management level resolves their problems they can receive better discounts. The customers would respond differently with the same answer provided by first line employees and managers. They would accept what managers told them but not first line employees."

7.3.3 Delegation of Authority

Managers in all interviews expressed the managers should appear to customers to deal with the situation when service encounters occurred. This is not only because it affects customers' emotions to feel that the hotel really has sincerity dealt with their case, but also not all the first line employees have received training courses on complaint handling. Managers also mentioned that even they do not have enough power and authority because the Executive President is not willing to delegate power and authority to her staff. The Front Office Assistant Manager mentioned "...employees have very limited power to deal with customers. For employees who have been working here more than one year to one and a half years would know what they could do within their limited authority, as they were trained on the job. They can make decisions within their limited power and try their best to meet customers' needs." The Front Desk Assistant Manager also mentioned

> "It would be difficult to set a clear guidelines for employees to follow
> when dealing with service encounters, as in the hotel industry the
> methods to resolve the problems would be different according to the
> situations and the customers.... even employees have limited power, I
> believe a new employee will be afraid to deal with service encounters
> and he/she will run to the manager or supervisor and ask them to resolve
> the problems. He/she will not take the risk to make a decision because
> our educational system makes us do what we have been told. In addition,
> even if first line employees and managers have the same ideas to resolve
> the customers' problems. Most of the customers would think they are

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respected if managers appeared to deal with their case.... I consider
quite a few customers would think only management have authority
power, thus they do not want to waste their time talking to the first line
employees. They would rather wait and speak to the manager, as they
only want the person who has authority and power to deal with their
cases. It is also very likely when managers appear to them, they tend to
be not as angry as before."

Back of House Assistant Manager, F&B Assistant Manager, and Service Manager said
that the bottom line employees do not have much authority or power in order to deal
with service encounters. The appropriate limited authority and power only applies to the
employees whose position is supervisor or above. The Back of House Assistant
Manager mentioned

"...only superiors can deal with service encounters because the bottom
line employees did not receive any training course on situational and
complaint handling. If customers have any problems or special
requirements, it would be better for the superiors to deal with the case,
so the superiors would know the situation and make sure the problem
was solved and the customers had no further complaints....there is
always a manager in the office, thus employees should make a phone
call to the office when dealing with customers' special requirements and
the manager will make the decision....In fact, I consider each position
has different working contents and duties. Thus, if the superiors
empower their subordinates, this would increase the subordinates'
workload. If their workload was increased, then their position should be
raised....in addition, empowerment may be inappropriate, as to let
employees deal with customers' problems and special requirements, the
customers would consider the hotel does not have enough sincerity to
deal with their cases."

The F&B Assistant Manager said the restaurant assistants are university students doing
their placement and they do not have much responsibility as they come and go after six
months or one year. They did not receive training courses on complaint handling, only
supervisor positions and above are trained and have a handbook for them to follow. He

stated

> "...the first line employees should apologise to customers during the service encounter, then pass the case to their line superior to deal with customers' case. There are no huge cases in F&B compared to the Front Office, thus I trust my subordinates have good ability to resolve service encounters. I would support them and take responsibility if anything went wrong. They can always come to me if they are uncertain about anything."

The Service Manager also mentioned

> "When dealing with a service encounter, the employees should pacify the customers first then pass the case onto line supervisor or manager to deal with the case.... Taiwanese customers would prefer management to deal with their case, for the same solution the customers would accept what management offered them but not first line employees."

The Concierge Manager reported the same perspective that when service encounters occurred, Taiwanese customers would often ask to see the manager to deal with their case. However, the employees should ask the customer if there is anything they could help to resolve the customer's problem first. The employees should listen attentively and avoid interrupting, and then apologise to the customer and thank the customer for his/her comments. If the case still has to be passed onto managers, the employee should explain when the follow-up will be carried out and who will do it. Thus, at least managers would know what happened and will be well prepared before appearing to the customers. The employees should know what the situation with the customers is before passing onto their line superior, and to learn if there is any chance they can solve the problem at the first place. He further stated

> "There are huge differences between when the hotel was Grand Formosa Regent Taichung and now The Splendor Taichung. For example, it is like before we were well-trained soldiers with full equipment to go to the war, but now we have guns without bullets. Thus, how can we fight in the war now.... for instance, before when customers queue at the front

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desk, the staff were allowed to offer a complimentary glass of juice or cup of tea to customers without asking their line superior but now even this kind of very basic service is not allowed....the employees would not be afraid to take responsibility when it was the Grand Formosa Regent Taichung. We felt easy in mind to deal with service encounters, we took responsibility of making decisions, and even though we made mistakes sometimes we knew at least our superior would support us. However, now in many cases   the employee takes his/her own responsibility in making decision without any support, thus no one would like to take responsibility....even we at management level do not have much authority or power either, we often need to ask the Executive President or the Director General for approval. Thus, what employees learn from us when dealing with service encounters, they would tell the guests to wait, as they need to ask their line superior. This is the Splendor's organisational culture....to be honest, I would like to empower my subordinates and have two way communication and build mutual trust between my subordinates and myself. However, it seems not easy in the Splendor Taichung."

7.3.3.1 Empowered behaviour

The information provided by managers regarding the delegated authority to customer-contact employees show the employees only have very limited power. For example, the Front Office Assistant Manager and the Front Desk Assistant Manager mentioned the employees are only allowed to make decisions on late check out and upgrade fruit baskets, and the first line supervisors are allowed to offer room upgrades. The Back of House Assistant Manager also mentioned the room attendants are allowed to offer customers more bottles of water, tea and coffee. The F&B Assistant Manager mentioned the customer-contact employees include interns are allowed to offer a complimentary glass of juice, a side dish on the house etc. The Service manager further stated "basically if the guests complaint about the dish, and chef has no problem to cook a new one. The employees are allowed to make decision to offer the customers a new one and take away the previous dish but they have to report to me right away, so I can explain and apologise to the customers."

7.3.4 Management style

Managers in all interviews admitted every manager has different management styles and this actually effected how they operate their operational units and the relationship between superiors and subordinates. For example, the Front Desk Assistant Manager stated "...each managers have diverse management style, thus the employees should observe how their superiors deal with any situation and learn from there to build up their working experience." The Front Office Assistant Manager regarded human beings are passive, thus the employees need to be encouraged in order to perform well. Thus, when employees receive any customer commend cards, they will receive a monetary reward and a commendation point. However, when employees make mistakes because they do not follow SOP (standard operating procedure), they will receive a demerit points. The reason of this scheme is based on everyone having a sense of honour. The Back of House Assistant Manager mentioned "In fact, I will observe my employees to find out their working purpose and intentions in the hotel. If they are interested in working in the hotel industry and have ambition and a good attitude to meet the standards of promoting, then I will pay attention and train the person."

The Service Manager and Concierge Manager expressed many Taiwanese organisations, the owners have boss attitude and everything should be boss centred. The Service Manager further stated

> "I suggested some good policies that I leant when I studied abroad.
> However, the Executive President did not think the same way as I did.
> Therefore, it was just like nothing happened....in addition, because I do
> not have much decision making power, thus when my subordinates
> suggest something good to me. All I can do is to explain the reasons and
> tell them because the hotel's policies and regulations, we cannot change
> and have to follow and obey. I have no alternative because in this hotel
> we can only follow the boss's idea."

The Concierge Manager supported the above point, as he stated the Executive President holds the power, even the Assistant President does not have much decision making power. Therefore, he always needs to ask for the Executive President's opinion before making decisions. He further stated

"In the Splendor Taichung it is like a monarchy, the emperor and empress are above everyone, what they say is everything. It is not like when it was Grand Formosa Regent Taichung, the superiors were willing to listen to their subordinates and believe and trust their subordinates were no different from themselves. They would like to improve, relatively we felt our voices and suggestions were heard and had feedback. Thus, the interaction between superiors and subordinates was very good....I prefer the empowering management style, as it makes the working environment much better. However, I consider the hierarchy should be preserved, the higher position should have more power, but the superiors should know how to delegate power and authority to their subordinates....it is good for the employees to have limited power so they can deal with service encounters at the point of contact."

The F&B Assistant Manager regarded that superiors should always show their concerns to the subordinates to make sure the staff are well. In each operational unit, different levels of management should play different roles to the employees. He stated "...one should be strict, and the other should be affable. It is like when we were kids in the family, father always plays strict one, and mother plays the kind one. This kind of management style actually helps the unit run more smoothly."

7.3.4.1 Trust

The Front Office Assistant Manager and Front Desk Assistant Manager said how much they trust their employees in making good decisions depends on individual working experience, as they regarded working experience is very important in the hotel industry. Thus they only trust the employees who have been working in the hotel for a long period of time and have received enough training. The Back of House Assistant Manager considered he lacks trust in his employees when it comes to making good decisions because the employees' level was not good enough. He further stated "...however, I would trust and feel relaxed with an individual who is at a good level, having a sense of responsibility, willing to learn, working attentively, and enjoying the achievements at work....they would be ready for the next promotion." The Concierge Manager said that it is important for the superior to trust their subordinates' ability and delegate power to the subordinates, as it can increase their enthusiasm at work, as he stated

"I delegate limited power and authority to my subordinates and I trust their decisions when they deal with a service encounter. I consider resolving the customers' problem at the first point of contact is important. However, if there is anything of which they are uncertain, they should ask for help. I will take over to deal with the case, and then later I will discuss the case with my subordinates and listen to their ideas, and recommend an alternative solution for the future. This can motivate them at work and they can learn from the experience."

The F&B Assistant Manager and Service Manager mentioned in general they trust their employees when they deal with service encounters. They stated that because the employees have very limited power and most of the cases are minor issues in the restaurants. They claimed to be quite tolerant of mistakes and wrong decision and they always support their employees. If the employees made a wrong decision, they would try to understand their thinking first and then recommend an alternative solution for the future. They further expressed Taiwanese customers quite often change their attitude when the manager appears to deal with their case. The customers would be more aggressive towards the employees, but soft with the managers.

7.3.4.2 Communication

Managers in all interviews expressed the Executive President does not send far and wide to accept others opinions. She is very subjective and not willing to listen to her subordinates' ideas. Thus, there is no one who would suggest anything to her, as nothing can be changed. The staff in the hotel just follows whatever she asks them to do. Because the managers do not have huge power and authority, thus it is very limited they can do when their subordinates suggest any good ideas in relation to work. In addition, the managers mentioned in order to maintain harmony, any issue in relation to work problems should be reported to the direct supervisor first, and if problem could not be solved then could report to one level higher management. They often mentioned it is important for the managers to build up friendships and an emotional connection with their subordinates. Managers in all interviews also mentioned they have a once a month meeting with their staff in each operational unit. However, the hotel does not hold a meeting which involves the whole staff of the hotel. The Concierge Manager stated

"We used to have a meeting with all managers and employees in the

hotel, when it was the Grand Formosa Regent Taichung and was managed by a Foreign General Manager. Because the meeting involved every level of staff and anyone was free to bring up any issues and problems of concern to them the solutions provided had a strong public trust and all staff had a common understanding and that helped the hotel's operation. However, after the Executive President Hu took over the place, the hotel did not hold this kind of meeting anymore."

Managers in all interviews admitted different managers have diverse management styles and this actually affects how they communicate with their subordinates. For example, the Service Manager mentioned

"I know some managers in other operational units are very strict with their subordinates. They even blame their staff in front of customers when their staff makes mistakes, and that puts the staff in an embarrassing situation. The staffs are afraid of their manager and do not enjoy their work. They complain to me in private sometimes, as we all know each other quite well. I consider if the employees are not happy at work, then how they can provide good service to the customers.... I assumed the factor to make their management style like this is because they considered they were brought up this way when they started their job, thus they force their staff into this system and what they say is what goes."

The Concierge Manager considered building up a relationship with the subordinates should be based on mutual support and trust and it is essential, because it can increase the interaction between the superiors and the subordinates, and then have better communication and understanding of each other.

7.4 Employee Behaviour and Motivation

7.4.1 Meaningfulness

Employees in all interviews considered they do not have clear idea of the hotel goals. The daytime Front Desk Supervisor mentioned "the hotel goal might be toward domestic development and to provide high quality service to customers compared with other Taichung Hotels." The nighttime Front Desk Supervisor stated "the hotel presents

a 5 star hotel image and wants to achieve a higher occupancy rate than other Taichung Hotels." F&B interns in Euro A and Japanese Teppanyaki considered the hotel goal is to set The Splendor Taichung and Kaohsiung as its blueprint to launch its own hotel chain in order to expand its business. Others provided the answers that correspond to the managers' answer that the hotel goal is to create the image that it is a 5 stars luxurious hotel in Taichung and to provide high quality service to its customers.

7.4.1.1 Sharing of information

In general, employees in the interviews mentioned there is not much information shared with employees in the hotel. Only the daytime Front Desk Supervisor mentioned "the hotel has meetings and during these meetings the managers will inform the emplyees what plan and achievement the hotel is heading to."

7.4.1.2 Rewards

Employees in the Front Office explained that the hotel has a reward system and each operational unit has their own rewards depending on their managers. The daytime Front Desk Supervisor stated "we have an achievement bonus each month depending on monthly targets. If the whole front office has a profit that month, then everyone in front office will share the profit, except the employees who received a demerit point that month." They also mentioned the reward from the hotel is that when they received a good commend card from customers, they would receive 200 New Taiwan Dollars. If the employees have good performance then they will receive a commendation point. However, they admitted that they are not affected by this reward. Employees in Food and Beverage considered there is no reward at the hotel. An F&B Intern in Banquet mentioned "receiving a commendation point is meaningless. I think monetary reward or salary rises is better." An F&B Intern in Japanese Teppanyaki mentioned "we do not really have any reward, but my superior would treat us to a meal sometimes and everyone in our operational unit would share the tips each month." It is interesting that Front Office Supervisor Nighttime, F&B Interns in Mistral, Montaigne, and Euro A considered to receive an verbal reward from their superiors is important and better than others, as that means their superiors approve their working abilities. They also mentioned customers' commendation comes second. For example, an F&B Intern in Euro A stated "...if my superior gives me an oral commendation in public is the best reward and it means a lot to me."

7.4.1.3 Motivation

It is striking that all answers provided by the employees in relation to what motivates them at work was divided into two main groups. Female employees considered the good relationship between working peers is the main factor that motivates them at work, and male employees considered the encouragements from the customers is main factor that motivates them the most on their job performances. For example, the Front Desk Supervisor Daytime mentioned "...the good relationship and comradery with my colleagues make me enjoy working here and also motivates me at work. This kind of interaction with working colleagues is a strong factor." The F&B Intern in Japanese Teppanyaki also stated "to get along with my working peers and everyone working as a team, and this team work functions very well motivate me at work the most. My superior being fair in attending to business comes second." F&B Interns in Euro A and Banquet said that it is hard work and often high pressure. There is no guarantee that all the customers are kind, thus the motivation that keeps their work going is a good relationship with their working peers. They enjoy the feeling that everyone works as a team. However, the male employees provided different answers compared with their female colleagues. For example, the Front Desk Supervisor Nighttime mentioned "Of course, to receive the customer's commend cards motivates me at work the most, as it means customers have noticed who I am and they also consider I provided them excellent service." F&B Interns in Mistral and Montaigne also mentioned to receive commendation from the customers motivates them at work the most, as that makes them feel happy, as customers satisfy their service and it is a kind of approval in relation to their working ability. In addition, the F&B Intern in Banquet further mentioned something that is quite interesting, as she stated "...sometimes my superior considers that I do not have ability to achieve some work tasks, then that makes me feel I want to prove to my superior how capable I am and to get the job done with better results."

7.4.2 Competence

Employees in all interviews considered they have competence to do their job within their job duty. They often mentioned when dealing with customers' special requirement and complaints, they will try to deal with the case first, but anything they are not sure they will pass onto their superior. The employees in Front Office mentioned the employees should explain to the guests and deal with the case at the first place during the service encounter, but the employees are required to confirm with their superior of what decision they have made before the guests leave the counter. Thus, if anything

went wrong, the superior would take over the case right away to deal with the case. The employees in Food and Beverage considered they only have very limited power to make decisions, thus if anything is within their power and ability, they would deal with the case themselves. They would only pass the case to their superior when they did not have enough authority power to resolve the service encounter. They often mentioned working experience and good training can improve their working ability and knowledge, only when themselves think they are ready they would like to take the initiative.

7.4.2.1 Knowledge and training

The participant employees often mentioned the training programme they received in the hotel is mainly on job training and they also had diverse opinions towards this training. The Front Desk Supervisor Daytime mentioned "the departmental trainner or superior will coach new employees to conduct on job training. Every Monday we have one subject to do the training in the department. The results of training depends on employees learning attitude." the Front Desk Supervisor Nighttime stated

> "...the departmental training might be useful for new employees. I found it quite a waste of time because the course was repeating all the time and nothing new. I consider if the training can bring in the cases of what happened and what problematic points occurred within the hotel, and then discuss and come out with the solutions. It will be more useful, as every employee can learn and understand how to deal with a service encounter for the future. Because we do not have this kind of training, all we can do when dealing with service encounters is following the hotel policies and it is not flexible within our limited scope of power.... quite often there is no deep discussion on subject training each Monday, it becomes a routine but the training content is meaningless"

Employees in Food and Beverage mentioned they have on job training in each operational unit. The training is mainly focused on their knowledge in relation to the products they sell in each operational unit and service skills. These interns also mentioned sometimes they have compulsory training courses to attend during their break between two shifts. The training courses are various which include wine knowledge, service mind, basic service manner etc. However, they all admitted that the hotel does not have any training courses on complaint handling.

7.4.3 Self-determination/choice

Employees in the interviews expressed they have very little autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes. For example, the Front Desk Supervisor Daytime mentioned "anything I am not certain of, I would definitely request instruction from the Director General. Because many times in the past she blamed us badly when we made any mistakes, thus we tend to ask her everything before we make a decison to avoid being blamed." The F&B Intern in Japanese Teppanyaki stated "my placement is one year and I need to stay in one operational unit for at least six months before I can work at other operational unit. Thus, I told my manager once, I am tired of doing the same job eveyday if it is possible I can do other job. She assigned me to do other work tasks next day. I am quite happy about that"

7.4.3.1 Power (delegation of authority)

The answer provided by employees in the interviews actually supports most of the managers' perceptions. F&B Interns mentioned, in general, they were told during their on job training that if the customers complained about the cuisine or drinks, they could change a new one for the customers without asking their line superior but they had to inform and report to line superior afterward, and if the case involved monetary issues like offering a discount they would have to ask their line superior to deal with customers. They often mentioned when dealing with service encounters, they would apologise to the customers first, and if the case could not be closed they would have to pass onto their superior to deal with the cases. For example, the F&B Intern in Japanese Teppanyaki stated

> " I can change new dishes for customers if they complain about the cuisine, but I cannot offer them any complimentary dishes. I consider my superiors have better ability than me, thus it will be better for them to deal with customers' cases. In addition, if customers have any requirements, they would rather have someone in a higher position deal with their case than listen to me."

Employees in the interviews in Front Office considered the first line employees have not much power to deal with service encounter, even first line supervisors have very limited authority power. For example, the Front Desk Supervisor Daytime mentioned

"...first line employees should appease customer first when dealing with service encounters, and then inquire for supervisors assistance....They can only deal with very minor issues, if the case invloves monetary issues likes upgrading the room or modifying the room rate, or customers have huge complaints, they have to pass the cases to the supervisors....to be honest, even we supervisors have very limited authority and power, thus we only can do our best to delight customers within our limited power."

The Front Desk Supervisor Nighttime also expressed

"We supervisors actually are the people who are in charge of the front desk counter during working shifts. My subordinates do not have power to upgrade rooms or change the room rate for the customers when dealing with service encounters. However, they know how to appease customers and they also will inform customers what kind of offers they might receive from the hotel, and the person who is in charge would make the final decision.... but even so, we are the people in charge but we do not have much authority or power either. We cannot make decisions in many cases, our superiors or we would have to inquire with our Director General for approval. The procedure is very complicated because the top superior does not delegate much authority or power to her subordinates."

However, employees in all interviews considered the superiors delegating authority to their subordinates should depend on the subordinates working attitudes and abilities.

7.4.3.2 Trust (empowerment management style)

Because the employees do not have authority to make decision, thus they did not mention to what extend their superior trust them in relation to make work-related decision. However, F&B Interns in Euro A and Banquet mentioned they believe their superior trusts their working ability because their superiors assigned them to coach part-time waiting staff. The F&B Intern in Mistral also mentioned his line manager trusts his ability, as he does the supervisor's job sometimes. He also referred "...my line manager generally encouraged me in taking the initiatives and gave me support. He always teaches me the better solution to resolve the service encounter to ensure I grow

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in the job." The F&B Intern in Montaigne considered his superior trusts his capability at work, as he often does the cash up for the operational unit at the end of night. However, the Front Desk Supervisor Nighttime mentioned he sometimes could not find the superior during late night when dealing with service encounters. He had to make decisions in order to close the case. However, the Director General would review his decision next day and if the Director General considered his offer and decision to customers were inappropriate, he would receive an oral reprimand or a demerit point.

7.4.3.3 Empowered behaviour

All participant employees expressed, they have very limited authority to deal with minor issues in relation to customer's request and complaint and anything involved with monetary issue they would have to pass onto their line manager to deal with the cases. In general, employees in the Food and Beverage department are allowed to change dishes and drinks for the customers. They also mentioned they can offer customers a few more parking redeem tickets but not too many. For example, the F&B Intern in Banquet stated "my superior told me I can offer few more parking redeem tickets to customers, as it is quite flexible. I only offer extra tickets to the customers who I considered easy to get along with."

7.4.4 Impact

Employees in all interviews have negative perceptions toward operational unit meetings. They often mentioned they could bring up and suggest anything of concern to them during the operational unit meeting. Their voices were heard by their manager and passed onto the Executive President and Director General but no further action was taken. For example, the F&B Intern in Mistral stated "...there is a channel for our voices to be heard but it is useless, as there was no response and nothing had been changed." He further expressed "...once a customer had a complaint and I asked the customer to write a letter to the General Manager, it was the same no action was been taken."

The Front Desk Supervisor Nighttime also mentioned

"I do my best on my job but I seldom say anything to my superior when I am not happy about anything....there is a time that a customer made a complaint and I wanted to offer something to the customer, as he is a

regular VIP guest, but after speaking to the Director General She did not agree with me so there was nothing I could offer to the guest. We do not have much authority but we can suggest things to the top management. However, they always refuse our suggestions, thus the outcome is bad."

7.4.4.1 Openness of communication

The participant employees in Food and Beverage regarded communications are open in their operational units, and they were given the opportunity to express their ideas during monthly operational meetings. However, most of them expressed they would prefer to speaking to their superior privately not in the operational meetings. The F&B Intern in Mistral mentioned "I consider if there is anything I want to communicate with my line manager, it would be better in private than in the meeting." The F&B Intern in Montaigne also stated "my superior often asked me if I have any ideas or problems in relation to work in private, thus, if I have anything to tell my line superiors, I would communicate with he/she privately." They felt free to contact their superior in their operational unit about a work-related problem and even personal issue. However, in order to maintain group harmony, they also mentioned they needed to use great caution when dealing with any issue in their operational unit. Their perception corresponds with the managers' perception. Nevertheless, they expressed because their line supervisors do not have much authority, thus their line supervisors often to ask them to speak to the line managers or assistant managers directly. They said they should respect their assistant managers, thus they seldom speak to their line managers directly, unless they consider the issue is of concern to them and only their line managers have power to resolve their issues, then they would speak to their line managers directly.

The participant employees in Front Office mentioned they rarely have formal communication with their top management, and the results of the communication were not what they wanted. The Front Desk Supervisor Daytime stated "we do not have a Front Desk Manager, we only have an assistant manager, thus I only consult with my assistant manager and then she makes a decision whether to communicate with the Director General is required." The Front Desk Supervisor Nighttime also mentioned "I only write the reports in relation to service encounters which I could not resolve the problem to the Director General. If I could close the case, then I would not write the report....the Director General rarely commends us for what we did well but she always blames us."

7.5 The Cultural Impact on Workplace

7.5.1 Organisational system and structure

Managers in all interviews indicated that their employees in different levels have different authority but it is very limited. They often mentioned according to the degree of the cases and customer complaints should have a different level of staff to deal with the case and only supervisor positions and above can offer monetary discount. They do not expect that their bottom-line employees can resolve service encounters but at least the employees have to apologise to the guests first and pass the case to their line superior in the shortest time to ensure the necessary action is taking place. The hierarchical layers happen on personal job position and the hotel is autocratic orientated. The top management holds great power and only delegates very limited authority to their subordinates, even the middle management do not have much decision making power.

7.5.2 Relationship between managers and employees

7.5.2.1 Manager perception

Five participant managers in interviews asserted the sense of responsibility is the most important factor for every staff, only the Concierge Manager asserted attitude is the most important factor for every employee. For example, the Back of House Assistant manager mentioned "...that the employees have a sense of responsibility is very important, because the person who has the sense of responsibility will accomplish his/her work tasks and achieve the best result and performance....the person who has the sense of responsibility also is more willing to learn and share others jobs." The Front Desk Assistant Manager confirmed the above point, as she stated "the employees who have the sense of responsibility tend to work conscientiously and they not only accomplish their work tasks, but also often assist their working colleagues on the initiative. Everyone works as a team and based on mutual help." Managers in all interviews mentioned the most important for a good manager is to know how to control his/her emotions, and feel obligated to be concerned with subordinate welfare and interests. They often mentioned a good manager should assist employees to understand and finish their work tasks, understanding the employees' thoughts and ideas, and have a good communication with their subordinates. For example, the F&B Assistant Manager stated "to make a good subordinate required a good superior. A good superior should know what he/she wanted and lead the subordinates to absorb good concepts and then implement them in their jobs....also to understand the subordinates' interests and

working abilities and assign them the work position and tasks that fits them the best." In order to run the operational unit smoother, the Back of the House Assistant Manager and the F&B Assistant Manager said the superiors in one operational unit are required to have different roles, as one should be strict, and the other should be affable to balance management style. The managers often mentioned the superior should not let his/her emotions affect his/her management; otherwise he/she would make decisions on an impulse without concerning justice. The consequence is they would not be trusted and respected by their subordinates.

The Front Office Assistant Manager, Concierge Manager, and Service Manager also mentioned to gain the respect from the subordinates and to make the subordinates completely accept their leader to lead them; the superiors are required to have good knowledge and abilities at work. The Service Manager further expressed

> "The manager's morals also have an impact on the employees perception towards the manager. Most of the employees would completely accept your leadership if they regarded your image is of one who tries not to offend anybody like a good father. Conversely, if they consider you are the opposite to those, likes you enjoy drinking and are not faithful to your family, then they would not trust your ability to lead them."

7.5.2.2 Employee perception

The answers provided by managers strongly corresponded with employees' answers. Six participant employees in interviews regarded an ideal employee should have a good sense of responsibility to accomplish his/her work tasks, which are assigned by his/her superior. Only the F&B Intern in Montaigne considered an ideal employee should have a good attitude and be willing to learn. The Front Desk Supervisor Nighttime also mentioned "…an ideal employee should have a sense of responsibility to accomplish his/her work tasks within time and without making any mistakes. In addition, he/she should take the initiative to deal with customer's minor issues, only asking for help when dealing with the huge issues. He/she should think before the superior indicated the direction, to ask for help was only to confirm the action would be taken correctly." The F&B Intern in Euro A also stated "…an ideal employee should devote himself/herself to the hotel and take greatest responsibility at work. He/she not only considers of saving costs for the hotel but also have misgivings about customer's feelings at the same time.

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The colleagues should help each other and never be lazy at work."

Five of the seven participant employees considered a good manager should understand the employees' thoughts and ideas, and have good communication with the subordinates. For example, the F&B Intern in Mistral mentioned "...a good manager should know what his/her subordinates' thought, as we are the first line employees who are serving customers, we might have a better idea of how to do the job but it depends on whether we want to suggest it to our superiors. Thus, it is important they have good two-way communication with us first line employees" The Front Desk Supervisor further stated "...the superiors should commend their subordinates, and not just always blame them so the subordinates can build their confidence and believe they have ability to do the job. Thus, good communication and interaction between superiors and subordinates is important." Five of the seven participant employees also mentioned they would expect their managers to have good ability and knowledge, thus, the superiors can deal with service encounters. The F&B Interns in Mistral and Montaigne also said the manager's morality and virtue are important and the superiors should set a good example with one's own conduct. Only the Front Desk Supervisor nighttime actually mentioned a manager should be a majestic figure but also an amiable person at the same time. He further expressed the superiors outside work should be like good friends with their subordinates, but they still respect their superiors at work. An F&B Intern in Euro A mentioned the manager should run his/her operational unit like a family but clearly separate business and private. All staff are like brothers and sisters who should care and show understanding to each other. The F&B Intern in Montaigne also mentioned the superior should behave like senior brother, as the status would be different but not much, and always support the subordinates.

7.7 Conclusion

The information generated from the interviews with the managers and the employees from The Splendor Taichung were concluded into three following sections, organisation, management, and employee perspective. There are some elements and issues in relation to the impact of Taiwanese culture on empowerment and the comparison with another two hotels in Taiwan will be discussed in chapter 9.

Organisation perspective

The Splendor Taichung is managed by the Executive President and is regarded as a domestic chain hotel. The hotel was first named Grand Formosa Regent Taichung and

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managed by the Formosa International Hotel Corporation. On the 1^{st of} July 2002, Grand Formosa Regent Taichung formally finished cooperation with the Formosa International Hotel Corporation, and were renamed The Splendor Taichung. The hotel continues using many operational programmes when it was Grand Formosa Regent Taichung. However, many programmes are still implementing have lost their substantial meanings. Both managers and employees assumed the hotel goal is to create the image that the hotel is a 5 star luxurious hotel in Taichung but they did not have clear idea. The hotel organisational culture is autocratic orientated, thus all members of staff have to respect and follow the General Manager's instructions and ideas. The training programmes that the hotel implements have lost substantial meanings, thus mangers did not have positive support of the staff training programmes. The formal meetings did not have great outcomes, but informal meetings give the opportunity for managers and employees to build their relationship based on mutual support in honesty and trust. Because the hotel organisational culture is autocratic orientated both managers and employees seldom provide their opinions for improvement as nothing can be changed if the General Manager has different opinions. The hotel has reward system to promote excellent performance but it did not affect how the employees do their job. It is indeed the corporate policies, practices and programmes of the hotel are consistent with a traditional management style.

Management perspective

Managers considered empowerment is about delegating limited power or authority to subordinates in order to achieve their work tasks. They regarded empowerment is very important but it cannot be implemented in The Splendor Taichung as the hotel is boss centred. The top management holds great authority and power and makes the final decision. The middle managers and the employees do not have much decision making power. Most managers would like to delegate limited decision-making power to customer-contact employees in order to maintain service quality and ensure customers' satisfaction, but it is hard for them to implement because they do not have enough authority or power to do so. Managers expect the bottom-line employees should ask the customer if there is anything they could help to resolve the customer's problem first during service encounters. The employees should listen attentively and avoid interrupting, and then apologise to the customer and thank the customer for his/her comments. If the employees cannot resolve the customer's case they should pass onto manager to deal with the case. Managers mentioned bottom-line employees still have

very little limited power to make some decision during service encounters. Different levels of employees would have different predefined authority and decision-making power but very limited because the Executive President is not willing to delegate power and authority to her staff. Managers often expressed they should appear to customers to deal with the situation when service encounters occurred because it affects customers' emotions to feel that the hotel really has sincerity dealt with their case. In addition, most Taiwanese customers would think they are respected if managers appeared to deal with their cases and quite often for the same solution the customers would accept what management offered them but not first line employees. Managers quite often expressed how much they trust their employees in making good decisions depends on individual working experience. They claimed to be quite tolerant of mistakes and wrong decision and they always support their employees. If the employees made a wrong decision, they would try to understand their thinking first and then recommend an alternative solution for the future. Managers believe it is important for managers and employees to trust each other, as it can increase their enthusiasm at work. Manager admitted different managers have diverse management style in the hotel and this affects how they communicate with their employees. Managers mentioned in order to maintain group harmony, any issue in relation to work problem should report to direct superior first not other levels of management. They also considered it is important for the managers to build up friendships and an emotional connection with their subordinates.

Employee perspective

Employees considered they do not have clear idea of the hotel goals. Because the hotel is boss centred thus there is not much information shared with employees in the hotel. The reward scheme was not clearly known by all employees but employees often mentioned the substantial rewards have no impact on how they do their do. They considered to receive a verbal reward from their superiors is important and better than others, as that means their superiors approve their working abilities. Female employees considered the good relationship between working peers is the main factor that motivates them at work, and male employees considered the encouragements from the customers is main factor that motivates them the most on their job performances. Employees considered they have competence to do their job within their job duty. If anything is within their power and ability, they would deal with the case themselves during service encounter. They would only pass the case to their superior when they did not have enough authority power to resolve the customer's case. Employees have

diverse opinion towards to the training programmes and they admitted that the hotel does not have any training courses on complaint handling. Employees expressed they have very little autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes. They often mentioned when dealing with service encounters, they would apologise to the customers first, and if the case could not be closed they would have to pass onto their superior to deal with the cases. They also considered the superiors delegating authority to their subordinates should depend on the subordinates working attitudes and abilities. Employees agreed that their superiors generally trust their working ability. Employees have negative perceptions toward operational unit meetings as whatever they suggested in the past nothing had been changed. Employees would prefer to communicate with their superior in private and in order to maintain group harmony, people needed to use great caution when dealing with any issue in the department.

Chapter 8 The Empowerment Process in Practice: A Case Study of Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the outcomes of the qualitative research, which are derived from the information generated from the 11 interviews conducted with 3 managers and 8 employees from one of the participating hotels, Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung (see Table 8.1). In order to understand the delegation of authority in a chain of command from the top to the bottom of an organisation, the Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung organisational chat was presented in (Figure 8.1).

This section will describe the company's historical evolution in order to understand the changing of its ownership. The following section 8.2 will provide the information related to the elements constituting the hotel organisational culture and its operational management. It highlights that the corporate policies, practices and programmes of the hotel is kind of a traditional management style but the top management intended to implement empowerment in the hotel. Managers considered to socialise with employees would create better communication outcomes. Training is mainly focus on employees working skills thus only on-the-job training was implemented. The hotel has a very strict scheme of rewards and penalties system. Section 8.3 will address the meaning of the notion of employee empowerment perceived by managers, and further evaluate the extent to which managers intention and leadership that affects their management style to lead their subordinates. Managers would like to delegate authority to customer-contact employees but it is hard for them to implement because the high employees turnover in the hotel means that the employees do not always have enough knowledge, working experience and confidence to deal with service encounter. Only supervisors levels and above can carry out financial concessions to customers but the amount of money cannot go over their limited allowance. Section 8.4 will address the employee behaviours and motivation, which based on psychological state of empowerment as subordinates perceiving four dimensions combine with empowerment themes. Employees do not have clearly idea of the hotel mission and they have more knowledge on penalties scheme than reward scheme. The good relationship between working peers and good support from the superiors are the main factors that motivates employees the most in their job performances. Employees felt that it was hard for them to improve their service

because of the hotel did not provide enough training courses to them. Employees only can make decision according to their job description, and they only communicate with their superiors who they concern are in-group. Section 8.5 will discuss the extent to which culture impacts on work place. Section 8.6 will conclude the results were gained in this chapter and the comparison with other hotels in Taiwan will be further discussed in Chapter 9.
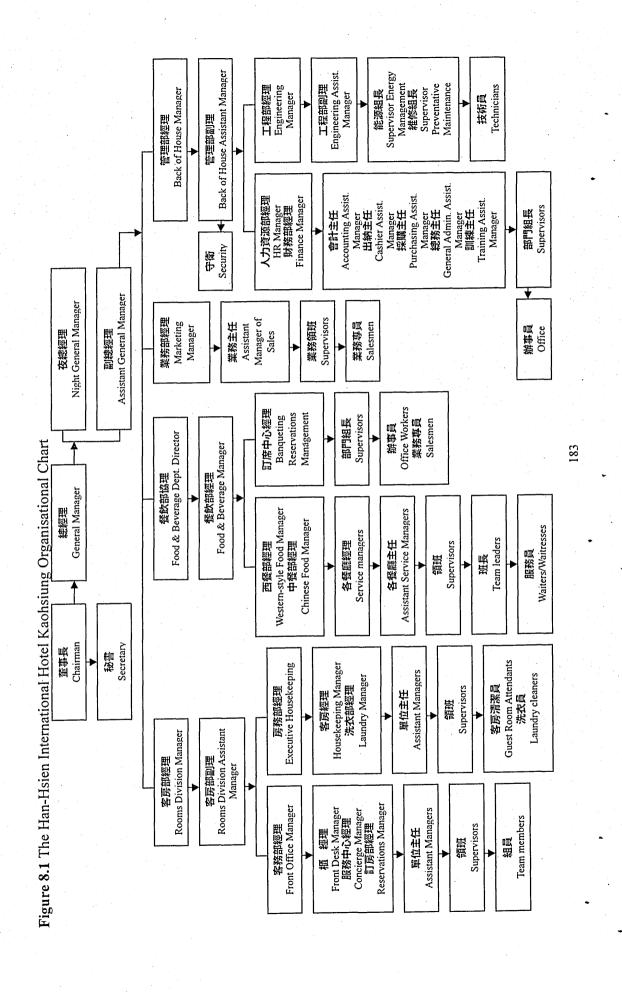
Table 8.1 Participant interviewee in Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung

No.	Date	Interviewee	Gender	Length of interview
1	20 July 2004	Back of House Manager	Male	1 hour 52 minutes
2	21 July 2004	F&B Dep. Director	Male	1 hour 6 minutes
3	21 July 2004	Room Division Manager	Male	1 hour 39 minutes
4	27 July 2004	F&B Intern Day Shift	Male	49 minutes
5	27 July 2004	F&B Trainee Supervisor	Male	59 minutes
6	28 July 2004	F&B Supervisor	Female	1 hour 9 minutes
7	28 July 2004	F&B Intern Nigh Shift	Female	1 hour 2 minutes
8	2 August 2004	Concierge Clerk	Male	46 minutes
9	2 August 2004	Bellboy	Male	58 minutes
10	3 August 2004	Hygiene Captain	Female	56 minutes
11	3 August 2004	House Keeping Supervisor	Female	1 hour 5 minutes

8.1.1 Company's historical evolution

The information in relation to the hotel was generated from the hotel and the companies' websites. Mr. W. L. Cai, the Lin Yuan Group's founder assigned the Lin Yuan conglomerate the Cathay Real Estate to build a 5 stars commercial hotel in Kaohsiung, and the hotel was established in December 1994 and was first named the Linden Hotel. The hotel was owned by the Lin Yuan conglomerate Cathay Financial Holding Co.,Ltd and had a management contract with the Landis Management Consultant Co. Ltd for the first two years. In 2001, Han-Hsien Hospitality Group was commissioned and managed the Linden Hotel. In May 2004, Han-Hsien Hospitality Group rented the hotel building from Cathay Financial Holding Co., Ltd and took over operational and management authority of the hotel, thus the Linden Hotel was renamed Han-Hsien International Hotel in September of the same year.

Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung has 380 guest rooms, including 22 executive suites and 1 presidential suite. The hotel has 5 different restaurants and bars, which are Bar the 42, Skyline Restaurant, Chinese Sky Restaurant, Tivoli, Tea Lounge, and Passage Patisserie & Café. The hotel also has 3 banquet and conference rooms, and 7 designer VIP rooms.

Figure 8.1 The Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung Organisational Chart

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8.2 Organisational Culture and Orientation

8.2.1 Company vision and business goal

Han-Hsien Hospitality Group was established in May 1993. Mr. T. Z. Cui, the Han-Hsien Hospitality Group's founder always believes the life principles should base on sincerity, honesty, morality, and justice, and he always insists to be the best one for conducting business. In 2003, he established Chang-Hsien International Hospitality Management Consultant Company and intended to expand its business into the hotel industry in China. He deeply believes that this would be a good opportunity for the company, thus he has begun to require the executives to travel to China in order to understand the hospitality industrial market in China (Tang, 2008).

According to the hotel website (http://www.hhih.com.tw/), the Han-Hsien International Hotel is one of the most popular five-star hotels in Kaohsiung. The hotel's aim is to provide the warmest service to ensure the comfort of its guests, look after the guests in a way none of the others do and be the destination of choice whenever they visit this promising city of tomorrow. The hotel is regarded as a five-star commercial tourist hotel. The President Mr. T. Z. Cui emphasises the spirits of Han-Hsien Hospitality Group operational characteristics are service, teamwork, and innovation. He also initiated the policy that the hotel does not accept tips, thus if any customer insists on tipping, all tips are donated to a charity The Physical and Psychological Obstacle Alliance of Kaohsiung. The hotel also implements best quality service to its customers. Furthermore, he believes that only if the employee trusts and identifies with the company this will lead to the customers trusting the staff and the company. Therefore the mutual trust established between the employee, company, and customer is the central element to running the business successfully. He encourages all employees to take their responsibilities seriously to ensure the business success. He often says that the company belongs to everyone, thus his guiding principle is to enhance individual development to its full potential and build mutual trust. He also believes that the work is most basic dignity of conducting oneself, therefore the more bottom-line staff should receive more care and respect. Because he firmly believes that the staff are the most important asset of the company, thus he insists four major principles on operating and managing the business, which are 1) sincere morality and justice, 2) management by objectives, 3) every year half of the profits are given to the staff, and 4) never employs family and friends. In addition, he encourages the in-service training of staff. The company also organises and pays for the staff to travel abroad every year, on one hand in recognition

of their achievement and effort for the company; on the other hand to inspect and learn from other's work. This is a chance for the staff to actually experience and to be affected, and then to learn and improve themselves (Tang, 2008). Managers in all interviews supported the above points and will be presented through out the following sections.

8.2.2 Employee involvement and service quality

Managers in all interviews reported that the daily briefing meeting in each operational unit is regarded as one of the methods for quality improvement progress. For instance, Room Division Manager mentioned "during briefing meeting, the staff can report work related problems and present any issues of concern to them. Then everyone discusses in the meeting and comes out with the solution." For employee involvement the most frequently mentioned method was via once a week departmental meeting, however the meeting only involves the supervisors level and above, and there are no bottom-line employees participating in the meetings. The bottom-line employees have their own once a month operational unit meeting and this meeting provides the opportunity to the bottom-line staff to involve and interact with their line managers and other staff for any problems of concern to them. If any issues cannot be resolved during this meeting, the line managers will bring up the issues at their weekly departmental meeting to discuss with their peers and higher management. The hotel also has monthly meetings with all the interns who are doing their placements. For example, the Back of House Manager stated "the purpose of the meetings with all the interns is to examine what they have leant from working in the hotel and they can also give their feedback to the hotel from what they learnt at their vocational schools and universities to suggest how the operation of hotel can be improved."

Another form of employee involvement is having a one to one formal chat with their departmental manager. For example, the Back of House Manager stated "I have one to one meetings with every employee every three months in order to examine their potential. The staff can talk to me about what special request they have in mind, this gives us an opportunity to have a face-to-face communication. In addition, the office door is always open to our staff, they are welcome to have a chat about anything of concern to them." Managers in all interviews admitted the outcomes of the formal meetings were not great but these meetings had to be implemented. They considered the more popular form of employee involvement for Taiwanese employees is an informal

chat with their direct or line managers outside their working hours and this actually creates the better outcomes. For example, the F&B Dept. Director mentioned "the working colleagues often go out to have a meal together after work, or go travelling together, and some people have the same interests in sports they play together." This method has given both employees and managers the opportunity to talk and express their thoughts to each other in a very relaxed and informal way and further build their relationships based on mutual support in honesty and trust. It often creates a better connection within the team and friendship.

8.2.3 Training

Managers in all interviews mentioned the training sessions that every employee has to attend are orientation, and on job training for the employees' working skills. For example, the F&B Dept. Director stated "Human Resource is responsible for the first stage of the training to ensure the staff understands their rights and obligations at work and welfare, and also make sure the staff clearly knows their job role and duties. The second stage is that each operational unit is responsible for training their staff' working skills." In addition, the Back of House Manager mentioned

> "different operational units have different training programmes and the
> training also includes complaint handling. The training programme has its
> weekly training topic to ensure the staff are trained step by step and meet
> the target. This on the job training lasts different periods of time
> depending on the operational units...the outcomes of the training depends
> on each individual, as everyone has a different speed at which they learn
> new skills. Thus, the trainer must make sure the staff pass a test before
> he/she trains them in the next subject...the hotel also cooperates with
> other associations, thus if it is necessary, we will send the staff to do the
> training outside of the hotel. There are two university lecturers who are
> responsible for training the trainers inside the hotel."

The Room Division Manager supported the above point as the work skills element mainly relies on on-the-job training. However, he had a different opinion of the training, as he stated

"The outcome of the training is very different. For instance, most staff in the front office have been working here for a long time. Therefore, a new employee has an advantage working with them because everyone can coach and train this new employee. He/she can learn and train very easily and efficiently. However, in an operational unit which lacks long term employees it is difficult for them to find time to coach and train the new employees while everyone is busy with their job. Therefore, it is not right to put new staff straight in to do their post without basic training but sometimes we have no choice, as we need staff to work urgently…in addition, the hotel used to have other training courses for the employees to attend but we do not have them now. For example, until last year we had at least two training courses running every month, which included language, extra educational training, complaint handling etc. However, due to a shortage of manpower, the staff have no time to attend these additional training courses. I think it is unreasonable to ask the staff to attend training courses during their break and days off. Even though these training courses are their fringe benefits…we will try to implement more training courses in the future, as I believe the business want to change, then it has to start from the basic. You have to let your staff understand how the hotel is operated to overcome many problems…furthermore, this extra educational training can help the staff decide if they would enjoy the job, and perhaps discover other interests."

8.2.4 Reward system

Managers in all interviews mentioned the hotel has a very strict system of rewards and penalties. They mentioned when the employees receive a customer commend card, they will receive 500 New Taiwan Dollar as a reward for their excellent performance. They also will receive a commendation point. The hotel also has reward scheme for every employee based on business volume at the end of Chinese Lunar Calendar year, but not individual performance. For example, the Back of House Manager mentioned "we superiors would treat staff a drink or a meal to reward their excellent performance. If they receive a commendation point; the hotel would give them a 500 New Taiwan Dollar reward." The Room Division Manager further stated

"The rewards and penalties scheme in this hotel is very clear. If a member

of staff makes a mistake, all of his/her superiors would receive penalties. I have been working here for 8 years and 4 months, and I received an admonishment and one demerit point as a penalty even thought it was not me who made the mistake. I cannot say it is not my fault, as when my staff made mistakes, I am the person who is responsible for them, and thus I need to take responsibility. Any member of staff who receives a penalty, his/her superiors will receive the various penalties dependent on the scale of the mistake made. However, it is different when it comes to rewards. When a member of staff receives any reward, his/her superiors will not receive a reward. I consider a superior in this company has to bear his/her responsibility for his/her staff as if the staff made a mistake, it means that the superior did not educate them well enough to avoid making mistake. Thus, the superiors and staff will receive penalty at the same time when the staff makes mistakes...when employees receive a commendation point; the hotel would give them 500 New Taiwan Dollar as reward during monthly departmental meeting; however, when employees receive a demerit point, the hotel would deduct money from their wage...the best reward for the employees' welfare is at the end of Chinese Lunar Calendar year, every staff receives 4 to 5 months wages as a year bonus."

8.3 Management Intention and Leadership

8.3.1 What does empowerment mean to people?

The meanings of empowerment as given by the managers in all interviews are presented in Table 8.2. It is striking that the managers in all interviews understood the term empowerment in very similar ways, in general, they considered empowerment is about delegating limited power or authority to subordinates dependent on their job positions and levels in order to achieve their job duty.

Back of House Manager further stated

"When a superior says he/she wants to empower people there are two meanings. First, it means the superior is lazy and does not want to do everything him/herself. Second, it means the empowered employee has ability to do my job, he/she can be a duty deputy when I am away from work."

F&B Dept. Director also commented

"Empowerment can be implemented in Taiwan if conditions were
favourable for the business. If this hotel is located in Taipei, then
empowerment is very important...however, our traditional philosophy,
especially The Art of War has many similarities with western management
concepts.   Chinese management philosophies and thoughts have their
certain value in doing business. The Art of War has thirteen chapters and
focused on military strategy but it has been applied to business strategy.
Some of its contents emphasise working together on a project but doing
different things as a team, taking responsibility for your job. The most
important is to make a system which conforms to the will of people and
generally acknowledged truth. To make a system is not for the ruler forcing
his people to obey and serve him in order to satisfy his personal desire... It
assumes the human nature is negative, as everyone has his/her selfish
motives, thus it makes the big goal and small goal towards to the same
direction. For example, it awards people according to their contribution to
ensure personal desire benefits the main goal. It is like if you give a
salesman fixed wage without bonus, he/she will not work hard. If he/she
receives bonus depends on his/her personal business achievement, then
he/she will work hard in order to gain more money...I consider
empowerment is not western management practice, as empowerment
already exists for a long time in Chinese philosophy. Because the Han
Dynasty only esteems Confucianism, thus many other Chinese thoughts in
the Spring and Autumn Period of China have been less taught."

Table8.2 The meaning of the term empowerment

Back of House Manager said "empowerment is a means to expedite the decision making procedure and apply to guest-contact employees only. The hotel gives these employees different limited authority powers to deal with service encounters according to their job positions and levels. The higher levels have more monetary allowance to offer guest compensation."
F&B Dept. Director stated "empowerment is the superior delegating various power and authority to his/her subordinates dependent on their job positions and levels, and the subordinates bring their skills and talents into full play within this limited power and authority. They can make decision within their limited power without constantly running to the manager to ask for approval."
Room Division Manager mentioned "empowerment is delegating authority power to subordinates base on the principle of trust. The superiors trust their subordinates make decision within their limited of power will not against company's policies and regulations. Different job positions and levels have different authority power and job duty, the employees can make decision within their limited authority power."

8.3.2 How important is empowerment?

Managers in all interviews agreed that empowerment is important. It is interesting to understand the reasons why they consider empowerment is important. For example, the Back of House Manager mentioned

> "Empowerment is very important but not all of the staff require empowerment. It is important for the guest contact employees to be empowered, as when dealing with guest complaints to resolve the problem at the first place is crucial...it is necessary to empower first line employees who are working in front office and food and beverage, but back of house like housekeeping does not require being empowered, as I would say if the guests have any issues with the service, they will only make a complaint to the front desk but not housekeeping. In addition, housekeeping is the most basic and lower level of the employees in the hotel industry, and they are not required a high qualification. You would have noticed they are mainly middle age women and it is hard for them to judge whether the guest complaint is real complaint or just someone wanting a discount. Most of managers would like to empower their subordinates but it requires that employees are willing to be empowered. Of course, there are a few managers who are afraid of losing their authority, thus they do not want to empower their subordinates. However, this can be improved but it takes time to communicate and make them understand the benefit of empowering."

He further mentioned the staff and the president are two key role of implementing empowerment, as he stated "the staff's potential and working abilities has an impact on implementing empowerment. For instance, the staff can achieve the business goals and do well in their job with or without their president presence. Thus, the president would trust his staff and delegate more authority power to his staff to operate the business." The F&B Dept. Director and Room Division Manager both also regarded empowerment as important as only when the superiors empower their subordinates, it can reduce the superiors' workload. Everyone can do different things according to their job levels to achieve their job duty. For example, the Room Division Manager mentioned "the work task that the team leader can do, does not involve the supervisor; the work task that supervisor can do, does not involve with assistant manager; the work task that assistant

manager can do, do not involve with manager. Each level has its own job duty and different authority levels to achieve their work task."

8.3.3 Delegation of Authority

Managers in all of the interviews expressed the fact that bottom-line employees do not have authority to deal with service encounter. The appropriate limited authority power only applies to the employees whose position is supervisors and above. This is because a high employee turnover causes the employees lack of experience and confidence to deal with service encounter. For example, F&B Dept. Director mentioned

> "the first line employees should apologise to customers during service encounter, then pass the case to their line superior to deal with customers' cases. The hotel has the standard of dealing with service encounter, but it does not come in details. In addition, due to high employee turnover, the staff do not have enough training in relation to dealing with service encounter. Thus, they lack of professional experience and confidence to deal with service encounter. Because of the staff do not have enough quality, the superior would be afraid of delegating authority power to them to make decision when dealing with service encounter."

Room Division Manager also stated "there always has superior at the front office counter, thus if first line employees deal with service encounter, they should apologise to customers first and then pass to their line superior to deal with customer's case. However, they should be aside and to learn as one day they can be promoted to superior level." He further stated "because of the high employee turnover, if the employees have enough abilities, we would promote them when opportunity comes to make them see the vision of their future career." Managers in all interviews referred different job positions and levels have various authority power. They can make decision within their limited authority power when dealing with service encounter in order to satisfy the customers. Back of House Manager further mentioned

> "we are striving to teach our staff that they should try to resolve the customer's complaint at the first place. The staff is afraid of making decision, as they are afraid of taking responsibility. I don not blame them

because we superiors do not provide them with the full training courses on dealing with service encounter. In addition, whether the organisational culture can stand for this concept...Furthermore, most people would feel annoyed to write a report after they resolve the customer's case when dealing with service encounter. The superiors delegate authority power to their subordinates does not mean the staff are brave enough to use the power...the hotel has clear guidelines to indicate that different job positions and levels have various monetary · allowance to deal with service encounter, thus, the employees should have abilities to judge whether they can deal with the service encounter, or they should pass onto a level higher to deal with the customer's case."

8.3.3.1 Empowered behaviour

The information provided by managers regarding the delegated authority to customer-contact employees show the employees who are supervisors and above have various limited authority power, however, they did not provide much details what the employees can offer to the customers. The Back of House Manager mentioned in F&B department above supervisors levels can carry out financial concessions to customers. If the amount of money is over their limited, they should pass onto higher level of management to deal with customer's case. Room Division Manager also mentioned, in general, customer-contact employees in the Front Office are allowed to make decisions according to their judgement offer upgrades and give beverage voucher to the customers. Only supervisors and above can give rebates, make small adjustments to customers' bills, or offer discounts in rates etc. However, the offering amount offered cannot exceed their limits according to their job position, which the hotel set the clear guidelines. Different job positions and levels have different allowances.

8.3.4 Management style

Managers in all interviews claimed to very much encourage employee initiatives in serving customers. For example, the Back of House Manager mentioned

"We tend to encourage the staff, thus if any new staff have any problem, we would talk to the trainer but not the staff. Of course, when the new staff made the mistake, we would verbally teach him/her what to do for the next time at once. We would not make penalty to our new staff...it

happened before that the new staff made a mistake and I was not happy
and she was afraid and cried. Thus, we now talk to the trainer and ask
the trainer to communicate with the new staff, as their levels and ages
are more close to each other so it is easier for them to communicate."

The hotel implements management by walking around and cross-departmental
management. For example, the Room Division Manager mentioned "management by
walking around in order to discover any problem occurs in the hotel.
Cross-departmental management is if we saw anything wrong or unreasonable, we can
correct the employees whose job levels are lower than ours."

8.3.4.1 Trust

Managers in all interviews claimed to be quite tolerant of mistakes and wrong decision
and they always support their employees. For example, Room Division Manager
mentioned "I always support my first line supervisor, no matter they made right or
wrong decision when dealing with service encounter. I would take responsibility for
their action." The Back of House Manager also stated "it is ok for the employees make
wrong decision, as it is part of learning process. You cannot blame the employees,
otherwise they will be afraid of making decision for the next time. You should employ
positive way to teach them and recommend an alternative solution for the future." In
general, managers in all interviews referred they trust their employees on making good
decision. It is most important that superiors and subordinates trust each other. When the
subordinates make a decision when they deal with a service encounter, they should
report their progress to their superior and not go against the hotel's principles. All the
report should be filed in order to teach other staff what to do when they deal with
similar cases.

8.3.4.2 Communication

Managers in the interviews frequently mentioned that only the people in the same level
and frequency communicate, thus the hotel did not hold a meeting which involved with
whole staff in the hotel. They often mentioned it is important for the managers to build
up friendship and emotion with their subordinates. For example, F&B Dept. Director
mentioned "the best way to communicate with the staff and to deliver operational
concepts is via staff tour. The hotel holds staff tour once a year and pays for the tour
fees for the staff to go on holiday, and each tour has at least one centre superior so

he/she can transmit messages and service concepts to the staff during the holiday in a very relaxing way. The outcome is very good, as there is no boundary between the superiors and the subordinates in that environment." The Room Division Manager also referred "the conversation between peers has better impact than just the superior talking to the subordinates. Because when the superiors deliver the message to lower level it can sound like they are creating new rules. If the message is delivered through a less formal conversation between peers, they will take on board and encourage each other. Thus, we need to build up very good relationships with certain employees to act as messengers on a daily basis. They can spread the news for us." In addition, the managers mentioned that in order to maintain harmony, any issue in relation to work problem should report to their direct supervisor first, and if problem could not be solved then they should report it to the next level of management. This also applies to downward communication. For example, the Room Division Manager mentioned "there are many different management levels, thus I would prefer to talk to the assistant manager directly in relation to any long term issue. If I talk to a supervisor without acknowledging the assistant manager, it appears that I do not respect my assistant manager." He further went on and stated "the employees decide to communicate with their superiors also very much depends on how the superiors became management. If the superiors started from the basic level and were promoted to management level, then the staff would more likely to communicate with these superiors directly. For example, I was from a basic level until this position, therefore my staffs normally make suggestion to me in private, and I would think about their suggestion and if it was a good idea, I would speak on their behalf at the next meeting"

Managers in all interviews admitted that the managers have diverse management styles and this affects how they communicate with their subordinates. For example, the F&B Dept. Director mentioned "the subordinates are willingness to communicate with their superior depends on their superiors' management style. If the superior cares for his/her staff and always listens to his/her subordinates, they will be more willing to express their thoughts...however, it is very different in the kitchen, as the kitchen emphasises ethics and one's position in a hierarchy comparable to the family tree. The trainee and junior chef do not have the right to speak." He went on and stated "our traditional culture teaches that kids should always listen to but not speak up. Therefore, most people would rather keep quiet, even if you ask for their opinions"

8.4 Employee Behaviour and Motivation

8.4.1 Meaningfulness

Employees in all interviews considered they do not have clear idea of the hotel goals. The F&B Intern Day Shift and Hygiene Captain considered that the hotel goal is to present the hotel as a 5 star hotel, but they also mentioned the staff's professional knowledge, service attitude, restaurant quality etc. should be improved in order to present as a 5 stars hotel. The F&B Supervisor mentioned "the hotel wants to be seen as the number one hotel in Kaohsiung." The Housekeeping Supervisor stated "the hotel's goal is to be the most profitable hotel among other hotels in southern Taiwan." Other participant employees actually answered they do not know what the hotel's goals are. The F&B intern Night Shift even mentioned "the hotel would not tell us what its goals are, because we are just very basic and lowest level of the employees. All we need to know is how to get our job done."

8.4.1.1 Sharing of information

In general, employees in the interviews mentioned that there is little information was shared with employees in the hotel. They often mentioned the hotel holds the meeting every morning but only for the management level, which is for the head of operational units and above to attend. If the hotel has made any changes or introduced new policies, the head of the operational unit would hold an impromptu meeting to deliver the message to the staff, and it also would be posted on the notice board outside the staff canteen.

8.4.1.2 Rewards

The information that provided by the employees shows that they have a quite different understanding compared to managers' answers in relation to rewards. Five of the participant employees mentioned that the hotel has a system for reward and penalty. If an employee has a good performance, then he/she will receive a commendation point. However, if an employee makes a mistake, then he/she will receive a demerit point and the hotel will deduct money from his/her wage. For example, the F&B Intern Day Shift mentioned

> "If we have good performance then we will receive a commendation point but I do not know what an effect that would be. However, I know if we received a demerit point, the hotel would deduct money from our wage.

The hotel seldom gives us a commendation point but lots of demerit points. The staff who have received commendation and demerit points are posted on the notice board so every member of staff knows who received a reward or penalty. We are used to it now so I do not care as much."

The F&B Intern Night Shift and Bellboy even mentioned the hotel does not have any reward scheme, only penalties. The Concierge Clerk stated "I do not know if the hotel has any reward system, but I know we have bonuses in three festivals in the Chinese lunar calendar year." In addition, the F&B Trainee Supervisor mentioned "if you introduce the guests to the hotel and they have a banquet and over certain amount of tables at a time, you will receive some commission." Only the Hygiene Captain provided the answer that correspond to the managers' answer that the hotel has the system of reward and penalty, as she mentioned

"if you received a commendation point, then you would received 500 New Taiwan Dollars reward. This also affects the assessment of your annual personal efficiency. The better result you have, you will receive more bonus at the end of the Chinese lunar calendar year. Of course, if you received a demerit point, the money would be deducted from your wage. You will also receive fewer bonuses at the end of Chinese lunar calendar year."

8.4.1.3 Motivation

All employees in interviews concluded that the good relationship between working peers is one of the main factors that motivates them the most in their job performances. Most of the participant employees also mentioned that a verbal reward from their superiors would motivate them at work. For example, the F&B Intern Day Shift stated "if my superior gave me verbal reward, I would be in a very good mood at work and more willing to do my job well. If my superior always blames me at work and orders me to do my job, I would just apply the minimum effort required to do the job." The F&B Supervisor also mentioned "the verbal reward from my superior can motivate me at work, as at least I would feel that my hard work is worthwhile." The Housekeeping Supervisor stated "the good support from my line manager has a strong impact on me. If I suggested anything to my line superiors and they agreed and implemented my idea, I would work much harder for the hotel, as I feel I am respected at work." Half of the

participant employees also mentioned that encouragements from the customers can motivate their working performances. For example, the Concierge Clerk mentioned "the interaction between customers and I and the encouragement from them motivated me at work the most. When I service the customers and they appreciate my service performance at that time, I will be happy all day at work." Only the Bellboy considered a good reward system that motivates him at work, as he stated "if the hotel has an immediate reward measure that can motivate me at work."

8.4.2 Competence

Employees in all interviews considered that they have competence to do their job within their job role. They often mentioned when dealing with customers' special requirements and complaints, they will try to deal with the case themselves first of all, and it also depends on what kind of customers they are dealing with. If the customers are very unreasonable or the employee is unsure about anything they will pass it onto their superior to deal with. The participant employees in the Room Division mentioned that the bottom-line employees should explain and apologise to the guests in the first instance when dealing with a service encounter. They would not report to their superiors if they closed the case. The employees in Food and Beverage considered that if something is within their limited power and ability, they would deal with the case themselves. They also would not report to their superiors if they closed the case. For example, the F&B Intern Night Shift stated "if I closed the customers' cases, I would not report to my line superiors, as that would only increase my line superiors workload." They also mentioned that they would only pass the case to their superior when they did not have enough authority power to resolve the service encounter. They often mentioned working experience and good training could improve their working ability and knowledge. They also considered that it is better for management level to deal with the bigger cases, as they believed management level has better knowledge and experience to resolve the customers' cases.

8.4.2.1 Knowledge and training

The participant employees often mentioned they did not receive any training course that provided by the hotel. The only training they had received in the hotel was a one-day orientation at each operational unit when they started their job, and their job skills are mainly on job training. Only supervisor level and above received training course that provided by the hotel. For example, the F&B Trainee Supervisor mentioned "the hotel

holds the a one hour training course 3 to 4 times each month for supervisors and above at different operational unit to participate. The content of the training course involved complaint handling, service attitude and quality etc." Employees in all interviews felt they lacked training, and it was therefore hard for them to improve themselves and provide higher standard of service. They all felt it was necessary for the hotel to provide the professional training courses and training programme for the employees to participate. The F&B Supervisor also stated

"all of the bottom-line employees in F&B are students who are doing their placements. They come and go every six months, the youngest intern groups we have are the first year students in senior high school, and they do not have any professional knowledge or skills in hospitality. We spend lots of time and effort to train them and when they are good at their job, they have to go back to school to study. Thus, it is hard for we supervisors, as we have to train new interns every six month. It is tiring and hard to maintain service quality."

8.4.3 Self-determination/choice

Employees in the interviews stated that they do not really have any degree of autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes. They have to follow standard of operation (SOP), they only can do things that are included in their job description. For example, the F&B Supervisor mentioned "different job positions and levels have different authority power. I do the job according to my job duty, if there is anything that I am not certain about or is not written in the operational regulations, I would have to ask my superior before I made any decision." She further went on and provided an example, as she expressed

"I received a phone call earlier, there is a party of 34 having a birthday celebration in our restaurant and they requested that if we can provide a 6 inch birthday cake on the day for free. Personal I considered 34 people to eat in our restaurant and give them a 6 inch birthday cake is not a problem at all. However, I still have to ask my manager to approve, as according to the hotel regulations, we only can give free birthday cake when the guests celebrate their birthday in the restaurants on the 41st floors. We only can give 50 percent off for the person whose birthday is being celebrated on

our floor. I know my manager would agree but I still have to ask."

The F&B Intern Night Shift stated "there are only certain jobs that we interns can do, thus if I asked my superior that I wanted to do other jobs to learn different things at work. My superior could not do anything to change the situation, as other jobs did not belong to our level." The Hygiene Captain also mentioned "if my superior insisted on me doing something at work, I would do my best to finish the work task, even though the work task belongs to other more appropriate operational unit. I would just have to adjust myself."

8.4.3.1 Power (delegation of authority)

The answers provided by employees in the interviews actually support most of the points raised in the managers' interviews. The F&B Interns mentioned, in general, if a customer complains about the cuisine, they could change a new one to the customer without asking their line superior but they had to communicate with the chef. If the case involved monetary issue likes to offering a discount they would have to ask their line superior to deal with customers. They often mentioned when dealing with service encounters, they would apologise to the customers first, and if the case could not be closed they would have to pass onto their superior to deal with. The F&B Supervisors also mentioned that they have very limited authority to deal with service encounters. She explained "we supervisor level can only cancel the service charge to the customers. We cannot offer discount or free charge of the dishes to the customers. Thus, if the customer's case was over our limited power to resolve, we would have to pass onto a higher management level to deal with the customer's case."

Employees in the interviews in the Room Division considered the first line employees do not have much power to deal with service encounter. They often mentioned when dealing with service encounter, that they would apologise to the customers first, and then ask customer to wait for their line superior to come and deal with the customer's case. If the case involved a monetary issue, then they would have to ask their line superior to deal with customers, as they do not have decision-making power in relation to monetary compensation. However, the employees in all interviews strongly agreed that different job positions and levels should have different authority powers and job duties. They considered the staff should have certain authority power when his/her job position reaches that level. They often mentioned quite a few customers would prefer a

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management level to deal with their cases, as the customers would feel they were more highly respected.

8.4.3.2 Trust (empowerment management style)

Because the employees have very little authority to make decisions, and therefore they did not mention to what extent their superiors trusted them in relation to making work related decisions. However, the employees in F&B provided very interesting opinions towards management walk around the hotel. They often mentioned they felt their higher management was spying them. For example, the F&B Intern Day Shift mentioned

> "we always see the higher management walking around in the hotel. They walk many times in a day and they come here to keep a close watch on us in order to pick at us. They do not come here through concern for us and they make everyone feel nervous. It was very ridiculous when a few days ago, one higher manager came here and secretly took photos of a vent as evidence to prove the vent was not clean for the management meeting in the morning. He wanted our line manager to come and tell us the vent should be cleaned."

The F&B Trainee Supervisor also supported above incident, as he stated

> "one higher manager tried to use our mistake to his advantage, thus he took photos as the evidence and talked about what we had not done well during the meeting next morning. I do not think it is an appropriate behaviour, as he could have just told us to clean up straight away when he saw anything that he wanted us to improve."

The F&B Supervisor also mentioned the above incident and she further expressed

> "to manage by walking around is OK, but if they see any problems, they should tell us directly and immediately so we can improve and correct the problem right away. He wanted to keep everything to himself and present it during the meeting. I think he tried to make a storm in a teacup. Personally, I feel that if the incident was presented during the meeting it should be the case that it had been notified to us many times before and there had not

been an improvement."

8.4.3.3 Empowered behaviour

All participant employees expressed that they have little authority to deal with customer's requests and complaints and anything involved with monetary issue they would have to pass onto their line manager to deal with the cases. They only can explain to the customer in accordance with to the hotel regulations during the service encounter. If the customers requirement were in relation to service and within their working abilities then they would conduct and finish the customers' cases.

8.4.4 Impact

Employees in all interviews mentioned they only have operational unit meetings occasionally and normally when everyone is not busy. The content of this meeting is mainly the superior needing to pass on any information or policy changes made by the hotel and also to discuss any issues that occurred with regard to customer service in the hotel. The staff can also report or ask any question or problem that is concerning them. However, most staff considered they would normally talk to their superior in private if there were anything concerning them. In general, the employees have quite positive feelings about their chat with their line superiors, as they trust that their line superiors would bring the issues and present them on their behalf during the daily meeting with the higher managers. For example, the Concierge Clerk mentioned "I always talk to my line supervisor the one that I consider who has more concern toward the staff in private, and I always get the response very quickly and the things of concerning me has been changed."

8.4.4.1 Openness of communication

Employees in all interviews felt that communication was open in their operational units, and they were given the opportunity to express their ideas anytime in private. However, in order to maintain group harmony, they also mentioned that they needed to be careful when dealing with any issue arising in their operational unit. Their perception is corresponding with managers' perception. For example, the F&B Intern Day Shift mentioned "my direct line superiors are like good friends to me. They often ask our opinions in relation to work tasks. If they considered our opinions were good, then they would implement our ideas." The F&B Trainee Supervisor also stated "the staff seldom speaks up during the operational meetings. The staff normally speaks to the line

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superiors in private. The superior would do their best to resolve any problem of concern to the staff." The F&B Supervisor mentioned "we seldom have meeting with the bottom-line employees, thus if they have any question or problem of concern to them, they normally talk to us in private. We all get along very well and are friends...I would only talk to my direct line manager, as we are more closed to each other. I would not speak to a higher management level, as I would not know where to start if I have any problem or question that I need to speak to them about."

The Concierge Clerk mentioned that her operational unit normally has daily briefing meeting, but there is a departmental meeting every Wednesday and each operational unit assigns one member of staff who is a service leader or above in each operational unit. She stated "the content of this big meeting is to discuss what happened in the hotel in the last 7 days and if there is anything that needs to be followed up. Everyone can provide his or her ideas and opinions during this meeting in order to come up with solutions...we all call each other by our English name so I feel there are no boundaries between my superiors and I." The Hygiene Captain also mentioned "I feel free to talk to my superiors and normally when I suggest anything to them, they always responded to me very quickly...I remember once I told my line superior that the garbage was not sorted correctly and it made my staff have more work to do to sort them out. Then he implemented a new policy that every employee in the hotel needed to have a training course at the waste yard to ensure they understand how to sort the garbage."

8.5 The Cultural Impact on Workplace

8.5.1 Organisational system and structure

Managers in all interviews indicated that their employees in different levels have different limited authority according to their job positions. They often mentioned according to the degree of the cases and the customers complaints, a different level of staff should deal with the case and only a supervisor position or above can carry out financial concessions to customers. The Back of House Manager said how he and the other two managers in F&B and Room Division have the same worry about how to implement empowerment in order to resolve the service encounter at the first place, if the staff are willing to take extra responsibilities on making decision when dealing with service encounter.

8.5.2 Relationship between managers and employees

8.5.2.1 Manager perception

Managers in all interviews had quite diverse opinions toward the relationship between managers and employees. The Back of House Manager mentioned

> "the hotel is like a small society, thus no one can complete a working task without the a team effort. You have to communicate with others and have their assistance. Thus, good communication is essential. An employee can only be good if I have expressed clearly what I want him to do. The president of the hotel often says that there are no bad or useless employees, only have incompetent managers...A good manager should know the employees' abilities and what they are good at, and then utilise their ability in the right place at work. If they have enough abilities, the manager should look out a right position to promote the employees"

The F&B Dept. Director stated "a good employee is willing to learn and devote him/herself at work, and have ambition...In addition, the employees should have a good attitudes at work and good values in life. They should know the difference in just doing the job and to do it well." He felt that managers, they should never give up on and continually educate their employees in order to bring out the employees' skills and talents at work, and also teach the employees what working values are about. The Room Division Manager mentioned "a good employee should have the sense of responsibility and is also willing to learn and share others jobs...for employees to regard you as a good manager is quite easy, but it is hard for the boss to consider you are a good manager if you do not present him a good corporate business achievement."

8.5.2.2 Employee perception

The six participant employees in interviews felt that an ideal employee should obey their superior and do their best to accomplish their work tasks, which assigned by their superior. For example, the F&B Trainee Supervisor mentioned "no matter how, because your job range is lower than your superior, thus you should obey your superior's command". The Bellboy stated "the employees should obey their superiors, if the employee did not satisfy the work task that was assigned by the superior but it is still acceptable within your limited, then you should still accomplish work task without doubt." Most employees also mentioned that the employees should do their best to

achieve their work task and avoid making any mistakes. The F&B Supervisor stated "an ideal employee should like his/her job, as only when you like your job then you will do your best at work." The Housekeeping Supervisor mentioned "an ideal employee should have the good sense of responsibility and love the company. If you decide to do this job, then you should work wholeheartedly at work."

Six of the eight participant employees felt that a good manager should understand the employees' thought and idea, and have a good communication with the subordinates. For example, the F&B Intern Day Shift mentioned "a good manager should know what his/her subordinates' think and to understand personal specific characters in order to employ the right way to communicate with individual subordinates." Five of the eight participant employees also mentioned they would expect their manager to be amiable and approachable. The F&B Intern Night Shift referred that the manager's morality and virtue are important and the superiors should set a good example with their own conduct. The F&B Supervisor and Housekeeping Supervisor also expressed that the manager should have a good ability and knowledge to avoid being irresolute and hesitant when making decisions. The Bellboy mentioned "a manager should deliver a basic concept to the staff and then delegate appropriate authority power to the staff in order to achieve their work task more smoothly." It is notable that the Bellboy worked in a hotel in Taipei before and was from Taipei. Most of employees also mentioned they would prefer the superiors and the subordinates get along well as friends after work, but they still respect the superiors at work. They often mentioned the superior who is more like friend, they would be more willing to work for him/her and get the job done well.

8.7 Conclusion

The information generated from the interviews with the managers and the employees from Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung were concluded into three following sections, organisation, management, and employee perspective. There are some elements and issues in relation to the impact of Taiwanese culture on empowerment and the comparison with another two hotels in Taiwan will be discussed in chapter 9.

Organisation perspective
Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung is managed by Han-Hsien Hospitality Group. Han-Hsien Hospitality Group is regarded as a domestic hotel chain and the group has its own management consultant company which was named "Chang-Hsien International

Hospitality Management Consultant Company". The company has joined management consultant hotels in China. Managers admitted the outcomes of the formal meetings were not great but these meetings had to be implemented. They considered for Taiwanese employees an informal chat with their direct or line managers outside their working hours actually create the better outcomes. Thus it is very important for management to socialise with workers after work. The training programmes that the hotel implemented were mainly on-the-job training to ensure the staff have basic skills to conduct their job. The hotel did not have other training courses at the time of the fieldwork were conducted because a shortage of manpower, the staff has no time to attend additional training courses. Managers and employees felt that because the hotel did not have a complete training system for the employees to improve their service and knowledge, thus it was more difficult for the hotel to be operated in a more flatten organisational structures. The hotel has reward scheme to promote individual excellent performance and also has group-based performance evaluation and incentives that reward was based on business volume. However, it is notable the hotel also implemented very strict penalty scheme. The corporate policies, practices and programmes of the hotel show that it is kind of a traditional management style but the top management intended to implement empowerment in the hotel.

Management perspective

Managers considered empowerment is about delegating limited power or authority to subordinates according to their job positions in order to achieve their work tasks. They regarded empowerment is very important but not all members of staff were required empowerment. Empowerment only can be implemented if conditions were favourable for the business. Managers admitted that bottom-line employees do not have authority to deal with service encounter. The appropriate limited authority power only applies to the employees whose position is supervisors and above because a high employee turnover causes the employees lack of experience and confidence to deal with service encounter. Managers encouraged the staff to take initiative to resolve customer's case at the first place during service encounter and they often mentioned different job positions and levels should have different allowances to offer customers during service encounter. They considered it would be better to operate the hotel in the sense of hierarchy, as the higher management should have better knowledge and working experience, thus they should have greater power than their subordinates. The hotel implemented management by walking around and cross-departmental management, managers can correct the

employees whose job levels are lower than them when they saw anything was wrong or unreasonable. Managers generally trust and support their employees to make decision and claimed to be quite tolerant of mistakes and wrong decision as it is part of learning process and they always teach employees and recommend an alternative solution for the future. Managers believe it is important for managers and employees to trust each other at work. Managers frequently mentioned that only the people in the same level and frequency can have better communication to each other, thus it is important for the managers to build up friendship and emotion with their subordinates. Managers also mentioned in order to maintain group harmony, any issue in relation to work problem should report to direct superior first not other levels of management and it also applies to downward communication.

Employee perspective

Employees considered they do not have clear idea of the hotel goals. There is not much information shared with employees in the hotel. The reward scheme was not clearly known by all employees but they all clear knew that the hotel has penalty scheme which if employees make a mistake, they will receive a demerit point and the hotel will deduct money from their wage and also posted on the notice board so every member of staff knows who received a reward or penalty. However, they quite often expressed that reward and penalty schemes did not affect how they do their job. Employees concluded that the good relationship between working peers is one of the main factors that motivates them the most in their job performances. Most employees also mentioned that a verbal reward from their superiors would also motivate them at work. Employees considered they have competence to do their job within their job duty. They would deal with customer's case themselves first during service encounter. They would only pass the case to their superior when the customers are very unreasonable or the employee is unsure about anything and they would not report to their superiors if they closed the case. Employees often mentioned they did not receive any training course that provided by the hotel, thus they considered working experience and good training could improve their working ability and knowledge and it is better for management level to deal with the bigger cases, as they believed management level has better knowledge and experience to resolve the customers' cases. Employees stated that they do not really have any degree of autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes. They have to follow standard of operation (SOP), they only can do things that are included in their job description, as different job positions and levels have

different authority power and they do the job according to their job duties. They often mentioned when dealing with service encounter, that they would apologise to the customers first, and then ask customer to wait for their line superior to come and deal with the customer's case. Employees also considered that the limited authority power should only be given when the employee reaches that job position. From the customer perception, employees expressed quite a few Taiwanese customers would prefer a management level to deal with their cases, as the customers would feel they were more highly respected. Employees provided one incident to management walk around the hotel and had very negative opinion towards this incident. Most employees considered they would normally talk to their superior in private if there were anything concerning them and they trust that their line superiors would bring the issues and present them on their behalf during the daily meeting with the higher management. Employees in all interviews felt that communication was open in their operational units, and they were given the opportunity to express their ideas anytime in private and in order to maintain group harmony, people needed to be careful when dealing with any issue arising in their operational unit.

Chapter 9 Cultural Relativity of Empowerment: A Cross Cases Discussion

9.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the outcomes of the qualitative analysis conducted in the 3 cases of the research, which are derived from the information generated from the 38 interviews conducted with 15 managers and 23 employees from 3 participating hotels. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the available literature reviews (Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis) and the findings of the empirical research (Chapters 6, 7 and 8). The analysis is to examine in what extent Taiwanese culture impinge upon the empowerment themes and the contributors to empowered behaviour in the hospitality industry in Taiwan. Since the study is focus on the hotel industry in Taiwan, thus the following section 9.2 will discuss the context of the hotel industry may have the effect on implementing empowerment in the Taiwanese hotel industry. Section 9.3 is based on employee involvement and service quality, training, and the reward system to discuss the results of the empirical study combined with cultural influences to empowered behaviour from an organisational perspective in the hospitality industry. Section 9.4 will look at it from the management perspective to discuss how culture influences management intention and their management style influences their delegation of power, trust, and communication. Section 9.5 will be based on four dimensions of task assessment combine with the themes of empowerment to discuss the employee perceptions and culture influences to empowered behaviours. Finally, section 9.6 will conclude the findings that were gained in this chapter.

9.2 The Contexts of the Hotel Industry and Exploratory Analysis

It is necessary to conduct some additional analysis within the contexts of the hotel industry itself in order to explore a range of issues that surfaced as a result of the field research.

9.2.1 The hotel ownership

The present study actually indicates the hotel ownership has its impact on empowerment implementation. For instance, Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei is owned by Far Eastern Group and managed by Shangri-La Hotel and Resorts, thus it is regarded as an international chain hotel and has management contract with

Shangri-La Hotel and Resorts. The Splendor Taichung was first named Grand Formosa Regent Taichung and was owned by Tuntex Group, and managed by The Formosa International Hotel Corporation. The hotels have to apply the organisational cultures which are held by their mother companies not the host organisations. Because both Shangri-La Hotel and Resorts and The Regent Hotel are customer and service orientated and the companies emphasise empowerment culture, thus the hotels have to implement employee empowerment. In this study, the customer-orientated culture is about anticipating customers' needs, exceeding expectations and immediately taking action to resolve customer complaints or special requests during service encounters. In practice, the hotels would have a wide range of formal processes to train, involve and communicate with their employees to ensure they have enough skills and knowledge to perform their tasks skilfully, thus at least the hotels would make this customer orientation culture more visible to ensure their employees perceive the hotel is customer orientated. However, the national cultures have certain influence on how employee empowerment is embedded in the hotels.

When The Splendor Taichung formally finished cooperation with The Formosa International Hotel Corporation in 2002, due to the Tuntex Group had financial predicament. Ms. Y. S. Hu had been the Executive President and General Manager for both The Splendor Taichung and Kaohsiung since 2001, the hotel was changed from an international chain hotel and became a domestic chain hotel. Han-Hsien International Hotel was first named the Linden Hotel, established in December 1994 and was under and owned by the Lin Yuan conglomerate Cathay Financial Holding Co.,Ltd and had management contract with the Landis Management Consultant Co. Ltd for the first two years. In 2001, Han-Hsien Hospitality Group was commissioned to manage the Linden Hotel. In May 2004, Han-Hsien Hospitality Group rented the hotel building from Cathay Financial Holding Co., Ltd and took over the operational and management authority of the hotel, thus the Linden Hotel was renamed Han-Hsien International Hotel in September of the same year. Han-Hsien hospitality Group has Han-Hsien International Hotel, Han-Hsien Heping Restaurant, Urban Hotel 33, and Chang-Hsien Hospitality Management, therefore the hotel was an independent hotel and became a domestic chain hotel. Thus, both hotels were more representative of local Taiwanese organisations at the time of the research fieldwork was conducted. Taiwanese culture is in large power distance, therefore it was not unexpected that the hotels were autocratic orientated and had a centralised power structure.

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9.2.2 Economic development and hotel revenue

The three participant hotels are located in the three major cities in Taiwan. Taipei is the capital city where economy and trading are prospering and also the biggest city which is located in northern Taiwan, the second biggest city Kaohsiung, an industrial city is located in southern Taiwan, and the third biggest city Taichung, a cultural city is located in the centre of Taiwan. The managers in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei indeed reported that because Taipei has experienced rapid economic development, modernisation, and westernisation, the employees would demand more empowerment as it has become a market trend. Taichung and Kaohsiung have less Western influences compared to Taipei, thus the Taiwanese organisations in both Taichung and Kaohsiung would reserve the traditional value of Chinese organisations. The managers also felt that Taipei did not represent local Taiwanese culture.

In addition, because the hotel occupancy rates are much higher in Taipei compared other regions in Taiwan, the hotels in Taipei generally have higher revenues compared to the hotels in other regions of Taiwan. The managers in The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung did state that because the hotels revenues were not high, thus the owner would tend to involve in operational business to avoid losing money. Thus, the less revenue the hotel has the more likely there will be centralised power in the hotel. If the hotel had a greater profit, the owner may be less likely to interfere and would probably leave the hotel for management to operate. Thus, the top management can decide and implement the better management style to fit into the hotel and its organisational culture.

9.2.3 Cross-departmental differences

Because only the managers in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei delegate authority power to the bottom-line employees, thus the output here does not include with the other two hotels. The information generated during the interviews revealed differences across the two departments, the delegation of authority is more extensive in Front Office than in Food & Beverage. The difference uncovered appears to be related to the distinct nature of service between these two departments, as the managers mentioned there are rarely large involved problems in Food & Beverage, it is not like Front Office where the service encounters are usually more unpredictable, thus the employees in Front Office require a greater degree of authority in order to cope with service encounters. It is also notable the bottom-line employees in Front Office are

permanent full time staff, are not like their colleagues in Food & Beverage who are students doing their high school and university placements for six months or one year. Thus, their working experience would be greater and they would have more knowledge when they need to make decision according to their own judgement.

9.3 Organisational Culture and Orientation

9.3.1 Employee involvement and service quality in the hospitality industry

There were various forms were considered as employee involvement and also were regarded as a means of improving service quality. According to Lashley (2001: 90), employee involvement is to '...*involve employees in some form of consultation whereby they can make suggestions upon which managers can act*'. The key requirement is to provide opportunities to employees, thus they can make suggestions and identify issues of concern to them for improvement, and further have contribution to organisational and operational performance. However, decisions remain the domain of managers (Lashley, 2001).

As previously mentioned in the last three result chapters, the hotel profiles indicate the three participating hotels are service quality orientated. In general, managers in all three hotels considered the meetings with their staffs in each operational unit are regarded as one of methods for quality improvement progress. For employee involvement the most frequently mentioned method was via departmental meetings, as the staffs have the opportunity to contribute ideas, report work related problems, express and share their opinion and other issues of concern to them. Although these meetings appear to be structured in each of the participant hotels, however managers admitted that the outcomes of formal meetings with employees were not great.

Managers in all interviews indicated an informal chat with the line managers was the most welcome method for Taiwanese employees, either within or outside their working hours. Taiwanese culture is collectivism orientated, thus the Taiwanese will emphasise group harmony. In order to maintain harmony in a collectivist culture, it is often necessary to be conservative and cautious. Therefore, it is found that Taiwanese employees would rather being silent during the formal group meetings in order to maintain harmony. In addition, the role of social face is critical in Chinese society (Tjosvold and Sun, 2000), thus Taiwanese people would seek harmony and to communicate respect between managers and employees, as speaking out ones own

thoughts in public can be seen as an aggressive act that might be interpreted as a direct challenge to other people's face. Most of Taiwanese think that direct disagreement can be seen as a communication of a lack of respect. Thus, it is not a surprise that an informal chat with managers in private is more welcome by Taiwanese employees, as this form of communication is the desire to preserve their personal relationship along with the dynamics of *Guan Xi*, *Mian Zi*, and *Ren Qing* in Taiwanese social relations (as discussed in section 3.4.2.6). The informal chat with the managers in private gives the managers an opportunity to show their benevolence and concern toward their subordinates, and further to build their relationships based on mutual support in honesty and trust. It is believed in Chinese cultures that building *Guan Xi* is of major importance in determining leadership effectiveness. When the employees consider their leaders are considerate and benevolent, they are more likely to owe strong duties of reverence and service to their superiors. Taiwanese culture is high in collectivism, employees' motivation derives from their sense of belonging, thus when the *Guan Xi* relationship is strong between a manager and employee, it often creates the in-group emotion and friendship and further increases employees' loyalty and effectiveness at work.

Managers are now often required to involve employees in the decisions that affect them. Empowerment is regarded as increased intrinsic motivation manifested in a set of task assessments that reflect an individual's orientation to his or her work role. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) outline four cognitions of task assessments that individuals use to evaluate their work environment and that these are part of the cognitive component of intrinsic motivation (see section 2.2.3). It is believed most employees will tend to prefer jobs that give them the opportunity to undertake mentally challenging work, as they can experience the sense of achievement by being involved in the decision-making process and further increase their intrinsic motivation. In Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei it was once mentioned that employees had been asked to decide what beverages were going to be sold and to help design a new beverage menu in Yi Café. The Service Manager considered the input of their employees to be very important, as they are more enthusiastic in their work. The above described that a high involvement environment favours empowerment of the employee because it stimulates individuals to assume a more active than passive role (Spreitzer, 1996).

9.3.2 Training
Empowerment is regarded as a means of giving increased power and authority, and

corresponding responsibilities and competencies to employees (see section 2.3.2). Many researchers believe that to implement empowerment the fundamental mindset and behaviours of individuals throughout the organisation needs changing. Training is probably the most frequently quoted factor for the implementation of empowerment, as it can ensure employees have the necessary skills, exercise good judgement, and enhance confidence in their job duty and role in an organisation (Dodd and Gutierrez, 1990; Brymer, 1991; Sternberg, 1992). Only the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei gives a very high priority to the development of employee training courses. The hotel has its own Training Manager to train the trainers from different departments and they are responsible for assessing employees' training needs and for organising training courses to satisfy these needs in relation to hospitality management and service concept. The hotel also hires trainers who are professional in particular subjects from outside the hotel to teach the employees. Shangri-La Care training courses are compulsory for all employees, and all employees undergo the Shangri-La Care modules within three months of joining the group, and all employees have to repeat undergoing Shangri-La Care training programmes. The hotel also has a large variety of training and development opportunities offered to employees. In addition, all employees are welcome to participate in external courses which are provided by the Far Eastern Group. All of these training courses are to help employees to absorb new knowledge and skills for their career development and lifetime plan.

The employees at the Splendor Taichung said the training is irrelevant because it has not been updated recently due to financial constraints of the owner of the Tuntex Group. The training process in the Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung was reported to be in a transitional phase, due to a shift in the operational and management authority of the hotel in 2004, from Lin Yuan Group to Han-Hsien Hospitality Group. In addition, the shortage of manpower meant the staff had no time to attend other additional training courses. In general in both hotels, employees normally receive orientation and on-the-job training usually next to an experienced colleague or the trainer from the operational unit. Interestingly, the Room Division Manager in the Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung mentioned "I consider it is unreasonable to ask the staff to attend training courses during their breaks or days off, even though these training courses are their fringe benefits". Based on the literature review, one would consider training outside working hours without being paid shows an employee's commitment to work. However, the interpretation here is that Taiwanese culture is influenced by the

teaching of Confucianism and benevolence is regarded as the highest virtue, thus management would have responsibility to look after their employees to ensure their well-being and quality of life. In addition, the Confucian ethics puts the family right at the centre of personal existence, thus in Chinese society Taiwanese people place family ahead of work. Recently, Taiwan has witnessed a new social movement of returning to the family in response to curb the over-working tendency and to restore warm and caring family life (Lu *et al.*, 2003). Thus, it is understandable that in order to ensure employees' quality of life, managers would consider training within employees' working hours to be more appropriate.

It is notable Taiwan's economic development can be divided into two stages: the export expansion period (1961-80) and the technology-intensive industries expansion period (1981-present). Different stages were accompanied by different management patterns (Zhu *et al.*, 2000). Company-sponsored training was not popular during the export expansion period. More skilled workers received formal on-the-job training than semi-skilled and unskilled workers, and foreign-owned companies offered more on-the-job training than local companies (Lee, 1995: 93). During the expansion of technology-intensive industries period, management professionalism becomes increasingly important as a response to criticism of managerial nepotism. Many family-based small and medium enterprises started to train and promote some high-ranking managers within the companies and they were not necessarily family members. Most family-based small and medium enterprises now '...*pay attention to both pre-training and continuous training in order to cope with market changes and link the skills of employees with the needs of production*' (Warner and Zhu, 2003). In terms of training, state-owned large enterprises provide both on-the-job training and professional training. Training indeed is considered as key to organisation's success, especially in the technology-intensive industries. In contrast, many Taiwanese people regarded front-line jobs in the hospitality industry are semi-skilled or unskilled jobs, thus these employees do not required professional training. Therefore it is not a surprise that both local Taiwanese firms, The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung only implemented on-the-job training to their employees and only supervisors and above received other professional training.

9.3.3 Reward system

The literature suggests if employees do not perceive the available rewards in the

organisation according to individual performance, they may not take additional responsibilities and initiative (Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991; Klida, 2001). The assumption is that how employees exercise empowerment depends on what they perceive the rewards to be linked to individual performance. However, Bowen and Lawler (1992) highlight that rewards should be based on organisational profit sharing and stock ownership, as in an empowered organisation people work as a team, thus rewards based on organisational performance will be more appropriate. Managers in all three participant hotels reported that when employees receive customer commend card, the employees will receive monetary rewards for their excellent performance. In Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei management also offers an 'employee of the month' reward scheme, employees receive three customer commend cards within one month and eight times in one year the hotel will pay flight tickets and accommodation for the employees travelling to other countries. In The Splendor Taichung managers also mentioned a monthly bonus depending on unit performance. In addition, most Taiwanese employees would expect to receive a certain amount of money of yearly bonus at the end of Chinese lunar year based on the year-end results, this bonus are paid as group incentives equivalent to one month up to several months' wages according to the financial results of the companies. The better profit the company has the more bonuses the employee will receive. This custom is influenced by religious Taoism and is regarded as a taken-for-granted culture.

Managers in both The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung reported that the hotels have a very strict rewards and penalties scheme. It is notable that Room Division Manager in Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung mentioned when an employee receives a penalty, his/her line superiors will also receive penalties depending on the scale of the mistakes. However, when an employee receives rewards, the superiors will not receive any reward. This penalty scheme is common in Chinese societies; this can be tracked back to *Qin* Dynasty (221BCE-206BCE). The unification of China in 221 BCE under the First Emperor *Qin Shi Huang* marked the beginning of Imperial China, thus in order to prevent future uprisings, the *Qin* Empire relied on the philosophy of legalism. Centralisation, achieved by ruthless methods, was focused on standardising legal codes and bureaucratic procedures. One of the legal codes that has been influencing Chinese societies since then was *Lian Zuo Fa* (to be punished for being related to or friendly with somebody who has committed an offence). It is understandable as Taiwanese culture is family centred and people regarded parents

should have strong responsibility to their child's behaviours. From the management perception, they would consider when their subordinates made mistakes, they should take full responsibility as it implies that the superiors did not coach the subordinates well enough and they have duties to ensure their subordinates follow the organisational principles. From the employee perception, they would do their best to avoid making mistakes, as it is common for Taiwanese employees to regard their workplace as like a family. The relationships between superiors and subordinates often involve friendship or brotherhood/sisterhood and the employees would feel sorry if their mistake caused trouble to others. In addition, bringing honour to the family is essential value for Chinese people, thus the employees in Chinese Taiwan organisations would do their best to prevent being shame on the family (operational unit). The cultural barrier is that if making mistakes was punished, then this would lead to a lack of risk taking. In addition, superiors take responsibility for their subordinates' mistakes may determent of responsibility of individuals. All of these will challenge empowerment implementation because empowerment should include risk taking, it opens the possibility of making mistakes and individuals should take responsibility for their ideas, decisions, and actions.

9.4 Management Intention and Leadership

The way managers themselves manage their subordinates is regarded as a critical factor in the empowerment process (Baruch, 1998; Klidas, 2001). This issue was considered in the interviews through a series of questions: **"What are employees expected to do when dealing with customer complaints or special requirements? –To what extent do you trust your employees to make work-related decisions on their own? – What happens if employees make a mistake on their job in related to resolve a customer complaint?"** The questions intended to understand to what extent the managers in their operational unit indeed delegate authority to their staff and encourage them to make decisions and take the initiative on their own, and about whether they trust their staff ability to make good decisions and what happens if the staff made an incorrect decision.

9.4.1 Delegation of Authority

To delegate decision-making power and authority to the lowest level in an organisation is regarded as one of the key aspects of empowerment from the management literature and is the central underlying theme of management approach (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Klidas, 2001). Clearly, only managers in the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel

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Taipei delegate decision-making power and authority to the bottom-line employees, and managers in both The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung only delegate decision-making power and authority to the employees whose position is supervisors and above. In general, managers in these three hotels claimed to empower employees at least to some extent, and further discussion in section 10.6.

Managers in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei reported a very high degree of delegated authority to front-line employees, as managers believe their subordinates who have undergone Shangri-La Care training courses would have enough ability to deal with service encounter. In The Splendor Taichung managers reported in most cases a low degree of empowerment, due to the fact that the Executive President is not willing to delegate power and authority to her staff and not all the customer-contact employees have received training courses on complaint handling. Some research indicates that centralised power structure in Chinese Taiwan organisations is common and normally the power core controlled by the boss (Lu et al., 2003; Silverthorne, 2005). In Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung managers also reported in most cases a low degree of empowerment, due to high employee turnover, thus employees have not received enough training in relation to dealing with service encounters and managers would be afraid that an employee lacks the experience and confidence to deal with service encounter. In summary, from the management perception, the degree of training on complaint handling that employees have received would affect how they delegate power and authority to their subordinates because the end goal is to control and enhance of product and service quality. Managers have to ensure customers were satisfied to the greatest possibility.

From the views of Taiwanese customer's perception, managers in all three hotels often expressed that managers should speak to customers directly when dealing with service encounters. In Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei, managers delegate a rather high degree of authority to employees, which could also involve financial concessions in the Front Office and complimentary drinks/dishes in F&B in order to resolve small complaints or problems, but for some serious ones employees are expected to involve the manager. Managers also stated when employees deal with service encounters, they have to report to their line superiors, as it is part of the service recovering process in order to inform managers that the customers were delighted and the issue was resolved satisfactorily. Managers would have to approach the customers to show their concern

and support the decision that the employee had made, to show the sincerity of hotel to the customers and also gain the confidence in first-line employees. In The Splendor Taichung managers often mentioned that it makes a difference to the guests, if a superior solves a problem, as Taiwanese customers would think they were respected if managers appeared to deal with their cases. In addition, most of Taiwanese customers may assume only management levels have authority power to deal with service encounters. In Confucian Taiwan, people place status before worth and highly associated with concern for feeling and respect of relationships is the concept of face. Thus, management decisions have to take emotion into consideration. Managers appear to the customers and dealing with the customers cases could make Taiwanese customers feel they are respected and having face, and further emphasised their social status. The key point is that the societal issue also has to take into consideration when implementing empowerment.

Managers in all three hotels during the interviews quite often stressed that delegating authority and decision-making power should be restricted within limits and employees in different levels should have various limitations in order to distinguish between different job positions in an organisation. It is not a surprise as Taiwanese culture is influenced by the teaching of Confucian, people believes inequality between subordinates and their superiors, thus organisations would tend to have more levels of hierarchy and more centralised decision-making power. People would tend to seek status and power as their motivation, thus different job position should have various power and limitations. In the Confucian doctrine, human beings have different duties and roles in a society. Ritual divides people into categories and builds hierarchical relationships through protocols and ceremonies, assigning everyone a place in society and a form of behaviour. Thus, employees having different limited authority powers according to their job position can be regarded as a means to distinguish people by distinguishing power hierarchy and maintain the organisational order. For most Taiwanese institutions, power and resources are centrally concentrated at the top of the corporate level, thus distributed power according to employee job position can be seen as a way of decentralising decision-making power. It implies that international competition has forced many Taiwanese firms to adopt different approaches in operating their business in order to survive. *Sun Zi Bing Fa* and the concept of *Yin* and *Yang* create an attitude which copes with the environment in an adaptive and flexible way.

9.4.2. Trust

The literature suggests that trust-orientated is a central element for implementing empowerment in different contexts (Sternberg, 1992; Lashley and McGoldrick, 1994). The answers given by all managers were quite similar in all three hotels. Managers often expressed they trust the ability of employees to make decisions on their own, especially the employees who have been working in the hotel for a long period of time and have received enough training. Occasionally managers noted that the extent to which they trust employees may also depend on the employees working attitude and sense of responsibility. Most managers claimed to be quite tolerant of mistakes and wrong decisions, and they would never do anything to diminish a member of staff's self-confidence. This is not surprising as Taiwanese culture is high in collectivism which is influenced by the teaching of Confucian, therefore the individuals attain tolerance, harmony and solidarity with others. The managers being tolerant of mistakes are a way of showing their benevolence and concern toward their subordinates. It is also the manager's duty to ensure their subordinates learn from the incidents and provide them with alternative processes for the future. Taiwanese employees would expect directive leadership, thus managers should provide answers and solutions to the employees whenever the employees are not sure about anything. By doing so, the managers can gain their trust from their subordinates. The greater trust they have from their subordinates the better effectiveness of work of the subordinates will be.

9.4.3 Communication

Only Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei has an informal "speak up" meeting once a month held by the hotel, according to the managers the participants include a bottom-line employee who represents each operational unit, the General Manager, and the Head of Human Resource Division who acts as translator. As the bottom-line employees actually present their operational unit's opinion and not their own, they can bring up any issue of concern to them directly to GM, it is anonymous and confidential. As Taiwanese employees would not feel comfortable to voice their own opinion in the group meeting but when it comes to representing the small group's opinion it would be easier for them, as people are required to act with respect in the cultures deeply ensconced in collectivism. It is notable employees have to follow the instruction that was given by Human Resource as some of issues cannot be mentioned in the meeting, such as shortage of manpower and asking for a raise. It is indeed in order to maintain harmony in a collectivist culture, it is often necessary to attain *Dao Te* (virtue or

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excellence) in the doctrine of Taoism. Ones should learn and practice a way of life into a correct pattern of behaviour. The social order of Confucian doctrine as also emphasised in human relationships has greater ethical obligation (see section 3.4.2.6). Managers in all three participant hotels mentioned any work-related issues should only report to direct line superior, and if the problem could not be resolved then the issue could be reported to another level higher superior. This also applies to downward communication. It is regarded as a lack of respect if any work-related issue is reported or communicated to other levels of management without acknowledging the direct line superior or subordinate.

Managers in all three participant hotels stated that different managers have different management styles and this actually affects how they communicate with their subordinates. The Service Manager in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei also expressed that a different management style also affects how the subordinates exercise empowered behaviour during their service delivery. In addition, most of the managers considered to talk to their subordinates in private giving them an opportunity to show their concern to their subordinates and gain their trust from the subordinates. The informal chat in private and socialise with workers are actually essential for Taiwanese management as it builds up the relationship with the subordinates based on mutual support and trust. It can increase the interaction between the superiors and the subordinates because this relationship actually creates in-group emotion and further build up friendship. Thus they could have better communication and understanding to each other. This is because Chinese societies emphasise social order, people would act with great caution and with respect in a formal environment, people would be more willing to talk and share their opinion when they feel that you are more like their friend than superior. In Taiwanese organisations harmony in working relationship is very important.

9.5 Employee Behaviour and Motivation

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) define empowerment as increased intrinsic motivation manifested in a set of task assessments that reflect an individual's orientation to his or her work role, since a shared vision of a common purpose and objectives can strengthen cooperative goals. They suggest that there are four dimensions of assessment or judgement that individuals use to evaluate their work environment and that these are part of the cognitive component of intrinsic motivation. These four dimensions are

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meaningfulness, competence, self-determination/choice, and impact (as discussed in section 2.2.3). Further, Lee and Koh (2001) define empowerment as the psychological state of a subordinate perceiving these four dimensions, which is affected by empowering behaviours of the supervisor. The perception is the higher the score in each of these dimensions the greater the sense of empowerment could be, but management intentions to empower subordinates have to be taken into account.

9.5.1 Meaningfulness

Meaningfulness is the value of a task goal that judged in relation to an individual's own ideas and standard (see section 2.2.3) to understand why people took their jobs and their motives related to work. In one study used Theory X and Y approach in relation to motivational issues in Taiwan shows that if the manager treats subordinates according to how they are expected to behave, then employees tend to behave as expected (Silverthorne, 2005). Taiwanese cultures high in collectivism where group membership dictates a person's identification and the interests of the group take precedence over than interests of the individual. As mentioned earlier, Confucianism creates a belief in harmonious interpersonal relationship, thus Taiwanese/Chinese are more likely to see success or failure as a group effort. Thus, to develop cooperative goals is more valuable than individual's own ideas and standard of a task goal. The results from three cases studies indicate the employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei have a very clear perception of the hotel goals compared to employees in The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung. Only employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza hotel Taipei perceive the organisational culture to be customer-orientated, and the employees in the other two hotels considered the hotel's goal is to be a 5 star hotel. Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei has higher degree of decentralised decision-making power and authority compared to the other two hotels, as they are more autocratic orientated. The employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei indeed reported a higher commitment to their work in order to achieve service quality that meets Shangri-La's service standard. The results show a strong positive contribution that employees who perceive the organisational culture to be customer-orientated culture would report exercising a higher degree of empowered behaviour during service delivery.

9.5.1.1 Sharing of information

Empowerment has been described as a means to enable employees to make decision and

as a personal phenomenon where individuals take responsibility for their own actions. To share information about organisational performance is regarded as one of the four prerequisites that empowered employees would require from their managers (see section 2.3). Blanchard *et al.* (1996) asserts to do so with every member of staff working in an organisation is the first key to implement empowerment, as it implies that management and employees trust each other. Thus, it is believed to share organisational information and resources with subordinates can clarify the vision and to give it meaning related to their job. However, nearly all employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei reported information sharing have no impact on how they do their job. Therefore, the results indicate that employees who perceive that they have more information have no direct impact on the degree of empowered behaviour during service delivery.

In addition, the employees in both The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung said that there is not much information was shared with employees in the hotel. These two hotels are more in the centralised power structure compares to Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei, thus this predicted that employees in large power distance cultures would receive less information sharing, as information would be kept at the top of the corporate level. Furthermore, from Taiwanese employees' perception that sharing information about organisational performance does not imply that management and employees trust each other. To gain interpersonal trust in Taiwanese society is to build good *Guan Xi* relationship, only when managers and employees regarded you are in-group then you will be highly trusted.

9.5.1.2 Rewards

Rewards are also regarded as one of the four prerequisites that empowered employees would require from their managers. Some degree of performance-related rewards was reported in all three hotels. However, nearly all employees felt the performance-related rewards had no affection on how they do their job. Therefore, the results indicate that employees who perceive that rewards are linked to individual performance would report exercising a higher degree of empowered behaviour during service delivery is not supported most participant employees actually expressed the principle of their working attitude is to provide high quality service to customers is their responsibility and also is part of their job's duties. For instance, the House Keeping Supervisor in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei mentioned "To provide high quality service to customers is my responsibility and it is also a part of my job duties." The statement implies the

fundamental virtue of benevolence in Confucian doctrine within the organisation makes employees have a high commitment to the organisation. Taiwanese employees under such influence would consider being self-disciplined and regarded hard work as their moral discipline but the essential prerequisite is that employees have to have a sense of belonging and have emotional attachment to the organisation or management. In summary, individual performance-related rewards with financial incentives have less impact on Taiwanese employees.

It is notable, employees in both The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung reported that the hotels not only have rewards system but also implement a penalty scheme. In Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung any employee who receives either reward or penalty would have his/her name and department would be posted on the notice board. It is understandable, as can be seen (in section 3.4.2.4) Chinese culture also can be described as a shame culture. Thus, the means is to make employees fear shame and want to avoid losing face.

9.5.1.3 Motivation

The literature review (in section 2.3) indicated in an organisation only internal commitment reinforces empowerment, as it is believed in contrast that external commitment is consistent with the old management style of command and control in a hierarchical organisation. Thus, the assumption is that only when individual employees are committed in defining work objectives based on their own reasons and motivations, they would be more likely to take more responsibilities for their jobs and develop internal commitment (Argyris, 1998). The results from the three hotels indicate that Taiwanese employees considered the relationship between them and their superiors and working peers as the primary factor that motivates them the most on their job performance and the encouragement from the customers comes second.

Confucianism creates a belief in harmonious interpersonal relationship, the belief of hierarchy and order in society. The centre theme is to establish the fundamental virtue of *Ren* (benevolence), the highest virtue an individual can attain within their workplace (as discussed in section 3.4.2.4 and 3.4.2.6). Under this influence, most Taiwanese employees would regard their workplace is like a family, thus it requires organisation and management to look after the interests of follow employees, while employees would have a high commitment to their management and organisation. Confucianism

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also indicates the fundamental assumption of human kind is that individuals exist in relation to others. The Chinese Five Cardinal Relationships have been holding Chinese social structure together in a relationship orientated way, thus Taiwanese culture is more collectivist. Chinese Taiwan organisations are based on filial piety, collectivism, and a strong work ethic, implying that authoritarian leadership and paternalism is the norm (Redding, 1990). The results of the employee interviews in three hotels are corresponding with the above statement. Taiwanese employees would expect strong support from their superiors, as superiors should have duties of benevolence and concern toward their subordinates. Taiwanese employees also often expect their relationship with others in the workplace to involve friendship, loyalty, and trustworthiness. When Taiwanese employees perceive this in-group emotion, they would in return give a higher commitment, self-discipline, and individual sacrifice for the common goals and so on. For instance, the House Keeping Supervisor in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei has had the intention to resign for two years ago, but she is still doing the job, the reason she mentioned "I think I have responsibility for the hotel to ensure this department operates smoothly, and I will stay on this job until the hotel can find a new person to do this job." In addition, this interdependent relational value is highly associated with concern for feelings and emphasised the sense of obligation owed to each other. Thus, *Ren Qing* (humanised obligation) and *Ren Mai* (public relationship) dynamics are true elements to motivate Taiwanese employees in an organisation. In summary, employee motivation derived from their sense of belonging is common in Taiwan and because of the influences of the teaching of Confucian Taiwan would be human-centeredness and emphasises human relationships.

To develop a sense of honour and shame is also emphasised in Chinese culture, thus recognition for good work also motivates the Taiwanese employees. When Taiwanese employees receive encouragement and commendation from the customers or superiors, they would regard their effort at work is worthwhile and be proud of themselves. They would work harder to maintain their pride and to avoid losing face. It also can be interpreted that when employees were recognised for good work, they would feel they were being trusted. Thus, they would develop a sense of moral duty to ensure their performance does not let down others.

The results from employee interviews also indicate people have different reasons to work, and in such a collectivist society people work to live. For instance, the Back of

House Assistant Manager in The Splendor Taichung mentioned "many people work here because they need money to live and most people will stay at their job unless they find something better." The F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei also said "we are doing university placement so we work hard but some people work here because they need money they are less enthusiastic at their job." It is indeed people feel that working in the hotel industry is a low paid job with long hours, thus employees must have an interest in and enjoy contact with customers. If employees have no interest in working in the hotel industry and only work in a hotel because they need to earn money for their living, they would be less enthusiastic and not willing to take extra responsibility on at work. Therefore, intrinsic motivation comes from inside the individual based on their individual interests and involvement in work. If an employee regards his/her work as career development, this type of motivation occurs, as individuals engage in work primarily for its own sake.

9.5.2 Competence

The employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei reported that because they have undergone the Shangri-La Care training programme and other training that the hotel provided, their ability to deliver a better service to the guests was increased. They often mentioned that undergoing Shangri-La Care actually enabled them to perform their tasked activities more skilfully. However, it is notable they also stated the training courses can only give them a general concept and guidance during service delivery. In addition, every individual has a different ability to absorb knowledge. In the hotel industry there is no single case that can apply to all, as it depends on the different customers and situations the solution would be different. Thus, it implies even though employees have competence on their job abilities; the support from their superiors would play a significant role on how employees take initiative. For instance, the House Keeping Supervisor mentioned

"...sometimes when things went wrong I did not know what would be the best way to resolve the problem for this kind of case. When I asked for my superior to assist me, they did not give me much support...in general, in my department we front-line employees are more likely to just note down customer's complaint and then pass onto line manager to deal with customer's complaint"

Thus, the consequence is that even though she has decision-making power during service encounters, she will be worried about her manager would think that she offered too much to the customers. Other researchers have demonstrated the linkage between competence, autonomy, and intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 1991). While feelings of competence can directly and positively influence intrinsic motivation and help people to perform task activities skilfully, individuals also need to seek support from their superiors and colleagues. The results show a positive contribution that employees who have more competence would report exercising higher degree of empowered behaviour during service delivery. However, the prerequisite is that empowered employees would need to have full support from their managers.

The employees in The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung reported they have competence to do their job within their job duties. The bottom-line employees in both hotels do not have much room to make decision when dealing with service encounters, thus their job duties do not involve complaint handling to resolve service encounters. They would only be expected to explain and apologise to the guests during service encounters. The Splendor Taichung is regarded as autocratic orientated, thus the bottom-line employees do not have much decision-making power and authority. Even managers themselves do not have much authority either. When dealing with service encounters, the employees would have to pass onto their superiors who would deal with the case. The employees in Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung commented that when the customers are very unreasonable or anything they are not sure about they will pass the customer's case to their superior to deal with. It is notable the employees often mentioned they would not report to their line superiors if the case was closed by them during service encounter. The interpretation here is that because the hotel is very much a blame culture, thus the employees were not sure if their solution is appropriate and would be supported by their line superiors. They then decide not to report in order to avoid receiving a penalty. The danger is that the superiors would never know what happened and what problematic points occurred within the hotel in order to implement proactive action.

9.5.2.1 Knowledge and training

In general, the employees in all three hotels reported the trainings held by each operational unit or department is mainly focused on job skills and product knowledge, and it is common that on-the-job training was implemented in each operational unit in

the hotels. This on-the-job training is only of benefit to the new employees and can be regarded as a burden for employees who have been working in the hotel industry for long period of time, as they already have enough knowledge to perform their job skilfully. The employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei often mentioned their line superiors would observe their working performance and the period of time of their employment within the hotel, then suggest and recommend to them new training courses and skills they would benefit from. The hotel also provided many other training courses that the employees can attend, all individual members are encouraged to learn and to develop their full potential. The training courses held by the hotel are more in relation to a service concept in the hotel industry and other non-job related training courses for personal development. The Shangri-La Care module 3 emphasises efficient complaint recovery to gain loyalty, thus all the employees would undergo complaint handling training.

The employees in The Splendor Taichung also reported that all of the interns who are doing their placement at the hotel have to attend compulsory training courses during their break between two shifts, but the hotel generally lacks training in relation to complaint handling. The employees in Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung reported only supervisors and above in the hotel received additional training in complaint handling, service attitude, and service quality etc. The employees in both The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung received less training compared to the employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei, thus they often mentioned that the employee working experience and receiving good training are the two main factors to improve their capability to perform task activities skilfully. The employees in these three hotels also considered they would like to take the initiative but only when they consider that they are ready. In summary, employees who perceive they have received a higher degree of empowerment training would report exercising a higher degree of empowered behaviour during service delivery is supported in the case studies.

9.5.3 Self-determination/choice
Only the employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei reported they have certain degree of autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes. The employees in The Splerdor Taichung reported that when the hotel was Grand Formosa Regent Taichung the organisational culture is customer orientated and

they had a certain degree of autonomy but the hotel now is very much autocratic orientated. Thus the employees expressed that they only have a small degree of autonomy as they could make decision during service encounters but now they have to enquire of the Executive President and the Director General for approval. The employees in Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung reported they do not have autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes, as they do everything according to predetermined specific guidelines. When they deal with service encounters and they cannot find the specific guidelines, then they will have to seek their line superiors' assistance. The assumption is that when an individual has a sense of having a choice on task objectives this can lead to job enrichment (see section 2.2.3). This approach involves redesigning the job, such as increasing the employee's responsibility and decision-making power so that employee's motivation will increase. Management by objectives allows employees to work with management on establishing mutually acceptable objectives or goals for the employee, and as a result, the employee becomes more accountable for his or her job outcomes at the level acceptable to the organisation (Silverthorne, 2005).

9.5.3.1 Power (delegation of authority)

The employees in F&B in all three hotels reported that if the customers complained in relation to food and beverage, they could replace the items for customers without asking their line superiors, and they have to inform their line superiors afterward. They also mentioned with authority for monetary transactions reserved only for supervisor's level and above. Only the employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei expressed that they are allowed to offer complimentary drinks or side dishes to the customers according to their judgement during service encounters. The employees in Front Office in both The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung reported they do not have decision-making power and authority during service encounters, only supervisors and above can make financial concessions. Only the employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei expressed that they are allowed to make decisions according to their judgement even if these involve monetary transactions, but the allowance can only be up to a pre-defined limit. They mentioned the hotel has a clear guideline for the pre-defined limit on financial concessions, and the higher level of job position the greater the amount of the allowance will be. Thus, when the case is over their pre-defined limit, they would have to pass onto an appropriate management level to deal with customer's case. The result from the employee

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interviews seems to be fairly in line with the reports of managers.

In general, the employee interviews indicated the F&B in all three hotels and the Front Office in The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung seem to implement 'structured' empowerment (Brymer, 1991: 59), as the hotels prescribe specific guidelines about how employees should react to predicted service situation and specific boundaries within which employees are allowed to make decisions. Only the employees in the Front Office in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei seem to have more latitude in making decision during service delivery, with broader guidelines and limits. They are allowed to make decision according to their judgement to offer financial concessions within reasonable limits but not exceed their pre-defined limit or against hotel principal guidelines. Thus, it is regarded as more in the way of 'flexible' empowerment (Brymer, 1991: 60).

All employees in these three hotels considered the decision-making power and authority should have different limitations according to the job position, as they believed that the person is in the higher position because they have enough capability and better knowledge. Thus they would have better understanding to enable them to determine which patterns of behaviours are acceptable and encouraged by the hotel and at the same time to delight the customers during service encounters. The reasons for the limited authority delegated to employees and different job position should have various duties and authority because Taiwanese people believe there is a need to drive people by hierarchy and people seek status and power as their motivation in an organisation, therefore there must be a gap between each level of job position. According to the above statement, it will not be too surprised that the employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei and The Splendor Taichung often mentioned the delegation of authority power to the bottom line employees should only apply to the employees who have a sense of responsibility, willing to learn, and good working attitudes. Because when the employees have certain limited authority power, they can perform their job better. It also implies they are trusted by their superiors and they can be a potential candidate for the next promotion. The results of three case studies showed indeed a strong positive contribution of the delegation of authority to empowered behaviour, as the employees who perceive they have a higher degree of authority in their job report exercising a higher degree of empowered behaviour during service delivery. However, the employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei also stated even though

they have certain limited authority power but the support from their line superiors actually has certain degree of affection on how they exercise the empowered behaviour. They reported when they perceived the higher degree of support from their superiors, they would exercise higher degree of empowered behaviour during service delivery.

It is notable that from the customer's perception, the F&B intern in Shanghai Pavilion in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei said "the guests in our restaurant were mainly on a higher social scale, they would not expect a first-line staff member to deal with their case, they only wanted a manager to resolve their problem." The F&B intern in the Japanese Teppanyaki in The Splendor Taichung also stated "if customers have any requirement, they would rather have someone in a higher position deal with their case than listen to me." The employees in Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung often mentioned quite a few customers would prefer a management level employee to deal with their cases. It can be interpreted here because Taiwanese culture is influenced by Confucianism, people would expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. In some cases the customers would assume the higher management level would have more authority power, thus they would receive better compensation. In addition, the influence of the Confucian doctrine people would emphasise social order, thus their social status cannot be ignored. The customers in higher social scale would consider that only when a management level deals with their case they are respected. The other reason is Taiwanese culture is based on the foundation of collectivism, people emphasise that representatives from two units should have a reciprocal status when it comes to communicating and negotiating in order to show their respect to each units. Therefore, management level in a hotel is regarded in a higher status; they are in a more appropriate position to deal with the customer's case, as it emphasises the sincerity of the hotel and their respect of the customer.

9.5.3.2 Trust (empowerment management style)

Boren (1994) defines empowerment as various skills to promote subordinates' capabilities and potentialities based on trust. The employees in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei reported their managers in general trust their abilities in relation to make work-related decision. However, the employees in F&B received better support from their superiors compared to their colleagues in Front Office. The employees in F&B mentioned their line superiors were always there to assist and help them and if they made mistakes, the superiors were quite tolerant and would speak to them in

private to ensure they learn from the cases. Therefore, they would like to take the initiative to build up their experience. The employees in the Front Office mentioned they would be blamed when they made mistakes because their line superiors are older and therefore have a more traditional view, as it was common that Chinese people believed when someone made mistakes, he/she should be punished. In addition, because the employees in the Front Office have more latitude in making a decision during service delivery, with broader guidelines and limits, thus it implies that their superiors would be afraid of losing their power they would show less support to their subordinates. Because they used to work in the environment with traditional management style, the managers in such a command and control hierarchical leadership would link their role and status to the authority levels and responsibilities vested in their post, enforcing a rigidity that it is difficult for the concept of empowerment to challenge. It corresponds with the employees interviews as both the Concierge Clerk and the House Keeping Supervisor in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei stated that they are allowed to make decisions according to their judgement even if these involve monetary transactions but because of a lack of support from their line superiors they would rather not exercise these empowered behaviours. For instance, the Concierge Clerk mentioned "…if anything happens in the future and I am not sure what I do is right or wrong, I would rather do nothing as the line manager will not offer any support." The House Keeping Supervisor also said "…now I would rather not be empowered as my line manager did not show her trust and support most of time when I dealt with customer's complaints or special requests."

The employees in The Splendor Taichung and Han Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung reported they do not have the authority to make decisions, thus they did not mention to what extent their superior trusted them in relation to making work-related decisions. However, the employees in The Splendor Taichung perceive that their superiors generally trusted their ability to perform their job roles, as their superiors would assign them different work tasks which were not included in their normal job duties. Thus, they felt their superiors had delegated a lot of responsibility to them because they are highly trusted. The employees in Han Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung reported in one particular case that they felt one of the top managers acted inappropriately. The employees would prefer the manager telling them directly if anything they needed to improve, they did not appreciate people "stabbing them in the back". One study shows that human beings are basically rational, a case study of Taiwanese people indicates that

Taiwanese people are open to being controlled by reason, and driven by intellect and an interdependent relationship (Silverthorne, 1992).

9.5.4 Impact

The employees in the Front Office in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei and The Splendor Taichung reported that they would like to give their opinions and suggestions to their line superiors but because there wasn't any change in the structure they gave up trying as they felt they did not have any impact on the running of the hotel. However, the employees in F&B in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei and Han Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung mentioned their line superiors always respond to their queries and suggestions quickly and they could see the change after they suggested something to their line superiors, thus they felt they did have an impact on the running of the hotel. The results indeed indicated that when employees perceive that they can make a difference to their workplace they would show a higher degree of empowered behaviour. Managers who show their support and apply changes play significant roles on how employees perceive this dimension.

9.5.4.1 Openness of communication

The employees in all three hotels reported they would prefer informally personal communication with their line superiors; this is correspondent with the managers' perception. All employees reported that the lines of communications are open in their operational unit, as they are free to talk to their direct superiors about any work-related problem or personal issue, except of the Concierge Clerk and House Keeping Supervisor in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei. They mentioned their line superiors are much older than they are so their line superiors are more traditional in their management style. Others employees stated that because their line superiors are like friends, brothers and sisters, they felt relaxed communicating with their direct line superiors. The employees also stated in order to maintain group harmony, they should act with great caution, they would only report to their direct line superiors with any issue of concern to them, as it would be regarded as disrespectful behaviour if anyone reported to a level higher, not his/her immediate superior. This is again correspondent with managers' perception. It is notable that the House Keeping Supervisor in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei actually strongly disagreed with the informal "speak up" meeting and was actually opposite the answer provided by managers. She stated "you could not say shortage of manpower and to adjust wages

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during this speak up meeting." It can be interpreted in order to maintain group harmony, Taiwanese employees should obey to the Human Resource Manager's order, and the employees should act with caution, thus no one would speak up these issues to the GM. The employees in Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung mentioned because whenever they suggested something to their line superiors, their line superiors always responded very quickly, thus they like to communicate with their line superiors. The results indicate that employees who perceive communication within the organisation to be more open would report exercising a higher degree of empowered behaviour during service delivery is not supported. Because the case is that only the employees who think that the communication with their line superiors is open and their suggestions would be implemented, then they would report exercising a higher degree of empowered behaviour during service.

9.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the analysis of the results of the cases studies along with the notion of conceptual framework. The information generated from the interviews with the managers and employees, and occasionally through the hotels' websites and documentation provides some answers to the aim of in this research. The interviews indicate that the organisational culture, policies, training programme would have an impact on empowerment implementation. The analysis also reveals the management intention and their leadership style have an impact on how employees perceive and exercise empowered behaviours. Thus, it corresponds with empowerment literature reviews as empowerment in one aspect is the behaviour of a superior in empowering subordinates. The other aspect is the psychological state of a subordinate from being empowered, four cognitions of task assessments were discussed along with the empowerment themes. The four dimensions of task assessments, meaningfulness, competence, self-determination/choice, and impact based on psychological empowerment perspective were supported in this empirical research. The employees score high in each dimension reported higher degree of exercising empowered behaviours. However, the findings of the empirical research undertaken for this study were against some factors where literature on empowerment has centred its attention. For instance, sharing of information, rewards, openness of communication were not supported in this study. The next chapter will present the overall research findings and conclusions and provide recommendation for further research in empowerment on cultural perspective.

Chapter 10 Conclusion and Implications

10.1 Introduction

This study seeks to have a deeper understanding of empowerment and further to analyse empowerment implementation from the cases studies in this research. The study examined the implementation of employee empowerment in 3 international tourist hotels in Taiwan in relation to any gaps between the empowerment literatures, with the intention of addressing the cultural values that have an impact on the implementation of empowerment in different cultural contexts. Thus, the aim of this research is to explore the meanings and the implementation of empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan considering the role of national cultures may impact upon the empowerment concept. In order to achieve the research aim, three objectives were considered. These were:

1. To review the literature on empowerment and its implementation

2. To critically examine the literature on culture and explore Taiwanese societal culture

3. To develop, apply and refine a theoretical framework to analyse empowerment implementation. This includes its application for case studies of three International Tourist Hotels in Taiwan.

A methodology which involved the researcher adopting an interpretive stance and a multi-method qualitative research design were employed in order to achieve the research aim and objectives. The qualitative methodology used enabled the researcher to gain the necessary depth of investigation to understand the meaning and the impact of national culture in the implementation of employee empowerment and the ways that management and employees perceive of national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice. The geographical source of empirical data has been collected in the three major cities in Taiwan. The period of the research was 2002 to 2009.

A research design involving two elements was constructed, an examination of the context to the study and the available literature in relation to empowerment and Taiwanese cultures; and empirical research. The literature interrogated what is

empowerment and how empowerment can be implemented in practice. The literature review presented a range of distinct approaches to and definitions of empowerment and also discussed its implementation in the empowerment literature is purely theoretical and fragmented, thus the study highlighting areas of lacking empirical support, and determining particular knowledge gaps between rhetoric and reality of empowerment that this study could address. Therefore, the researcher had to be careful to keep the study focused and the scope of work achievable, this study addressed the issue of the cultural relativity of the concept of empowerment by examining the implications that cultural values have in the implementation of empowerment in the Taiwanese cultural context. This could be seen to be an extension of the debate about whether organisations are culture-bound or culture-free. The study then focused on the Taiwanese cultural value of group harmony orientation and the influences of the teaching of Confucianism, the cultural relativity of the propositions of the empowerment doctrine was supported.

In order to provide answers to the aforementioned questions qualitative research was conducted in the 3 international tourist hotels in 3 major cities in Taiwan. The empirical research data was collected using multiple methods, namely in-depth semi-structured interviews with 15 managers and 23 employees from 3 participating hotels, and an examination of corporate documents and other pertinent information (such as administration information and report of Tourism Bureau Taiwan). The cases studies field work was completed between February and August 2004.

This final chapter will provide some evaluations of the conceptual framework developed in Chapter 4 in term of its application and links to the research findings and then subsequently summarise the key findings and conclusions in order to highlight the contribution of the research findings to the knowledge of the field. Following this, limitations of this study will be discussed. Finally, some recommendations for future research will be offered.

10.2 Empowerment revisited

The first research objective was to assess the meaning of empowerment and the implementation of the empowerment theory in practice. This objective was addressed in Chapter 2, here the study firstly examined the notion of empowerment in the etymological perspective; and then it sought to look at the underlying notions and ideas conveyed by the term empowerment and its implementation. Empowerment was

divided into two basically different aspects which were regarded as the cause and effect of empowerment. The first aspect was based on the management approach in relation to behaviour of a superior to empower subordinates and the central underlying theme was the delegation of decision-making power and authority to the lower levels of organisational hierarchy. The other aspect was based on the psychological approach in relation to psychological state of a subordinate from being empowered and it focused upon how the individual perceived empowerment. From the psychological perspective, it emphasised that both management levels and their subordinates had to be closely involved in empowerment process as the main argument was that without the individual experiencing and feeling being empowered, empowerment did not exist even when managers authorised and shared resource with their subordinates. Following an extensive literature review of empowerment this study found that empowerment in all contexts studied is corresponding with both aggregative and integrative definition of empowerment (as discussed in section 2.2.4). From an aggregative perspective empowerment was defined as '...*ceding to individual or groups a degree of autonomy*', whereas from an integrative perspective empowerment was defined as '...*enhancing individual or group development to its full potential*' (Klidas, 2001: 28).

It is notable that from the management perspective to delegate decision-making power and authority to customer-contact employees is done in order to control and enhance of product and service quality. The notion of empowerment in the service industry was found to relate predominantly to product and service quality and this notion has received great attention from both academia and industry. The best understanding of the concept of employee empowerment implementation was Kinlaw (1995: 7) who provided a definition of this as '...*the process of achieving continuous improvement in an organisation's performance by developing and extending the competent influence of individuals and teams over the areas and functions which affect their performance and that of the total organisation*'. An important conclusion to be emphasised here is that empowerment is regarded as continuous improvement to enhance of product and service quality. This focus on product and service quality is not based on the etymological properties of the term empowerment. Empowerment as earlier defined from management approach suggests that by delegating decision-making power, authority and responsibility to lower level employees for control of product and service quality, these will probably improve. Therefore, in order to capture the better description of the term in the service industry, empowerment might describe as empowerment for quality

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control and improvement of the end product. Thus, empowerment not only incorporates with the notion of delegation of decision-making power and authority but also incorporates the notion of quality.

Furthermore, in the hospitality industry empowerment is often regarded as a means to improve service quality and customer satisfaction by involving frontlines employees with a focus on the employee-guest encounter. The better description of the term empowerment in the hospitality industry could be described as empowerment for service quality control and improvement. It is indeed both the literature and the hospitality industry demonstrate the attraction of empowerment implementation, as the idea suggests that by delegating decision-making power, authority and responsibility for service quality and customer satisfaction to frontline employees at the lower levels of organisational hierarchy, these will improve. Thus empowerment in the context of hospitality was defined as '*The notion of devolving decision-making authority and responsibility to frontline employees for control and enhancement of service quality and customer satisfaction during service delivery*' (Klidas, 2001: 28). This definition of empowerment was supported by the interviews conducted in this study as in most cases the managers considered empowerment as delegating authority and decision-making power to frontline employees, thus enabling employees to make decision and take responsibility during service encounters in order to improve service quality and customer satisfaction.

From the psychological perspective empowerment was defined as a motivational construct manifested in four cognitions; meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (as discussed in section 2.2.3) which is the psychological state of a subordinate perceives being empowered by his/her superior (Lee and Koh, 2001). It is notable that from the employee perspective to take the initiative in decision-making power during service delivery would only occur when the employees perceived they had enough knowledge and competence and in addition full support from their superiors. Thus in most cases the employees considered to learn and develop their full potential are necessary in an empowered organisation in order to exercise empowered behaviour. Probably psychological empowerment can be seen as more fitting under the integrative definition of empowerment. However it is argued that effectiveness of empowerment interventions does not only depend on the content of the interventions but most importantly on how individuals perceived and experienced these interventions.

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10.3 Taiwanese culture combines with Hofstede's cultural dimensions

One of the most important issues in the empowerment debate and the most relevant to the hotel industry is that either management can implement the empowerment concept into practice or national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice. The intention now is to evaluate Taiwanese national cultures concerning empowerment implementation. This relates to the second research objective and was addressed in chapter 3, here the study firstly examined whether organisational and corporate culture dominate individual employee's behaviour or national culture has a stronger impact on organisational micro levels, including motivation, perception, communication, group dynamic, and leadership. The study then focused on an extensive literature review on cultures and followed the work on national cultures of Hofstede who is one of the most prominent supporters of societal divergence and the culture-bound thesis. Taiwanese culture based on Hofstede's dimensions of national culture is regarded as large power distance, low individualism, fairly feminine, and have a long-term orientation. The study found that Hofstede's cultural dimensions provided the usefully general guidelines for the initiation of cross-culture study cross national boundaries; however each nation and region has their own diversely specified cultural characteristics which are unable to be covered in details under Hosfstede's cultural dimensions. The present study focused on cultural perspective towards empowerment theory thus it was necessary to study Taiwanese culture in-depth in order to have a better understanding of the practices and meanings of research participants from their perspective. Thus Taiwan's historical setting and the major Chinese philosophies were reviewed in order to understand and generate a number of key characteristics that are clearly Taiwanese/Chinese come to mind and could be representative as Taiwanese national culture. These characteristic are harmony, collectivism, hierarchy, loyalty, and strategic thinking. The following sections present a wider discussion of Taiwanese culture related to contingency models with Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Taiwan is regarded as one of the Chinese culture heritage. The following key issues can be identified as the fundamental, relational values of Taiwanese cultures even though this involves contradictions.

10.3.1 Harmony

The qualitative data revealed a discrepancy between the international chain hotel and the two domestic chain hotels that operate in Taiwan in relation to communication. Only the international chain hotel has an informal "speak up" meeting once a month held by

the hotel. However the results of the qualitative analysis from the interviews with both managers and employees in the three participant hotels showed a general preference for informal communication with the line superiors in private and this form of communication has received no difference between employees in the three participant hotels. Taiwan is in a collectivist culture thus Taiwanese people will emphasise group harmony. In order to maintain harmony the Taiwanese employees would rather be silent during formal group meetings as speaking out in public can be seen as an aggressive act that might be interpreted as a direct challenge to other people. Whereas an informal chat with managers in private shows the desire to preserve their personal relationship, as it gives the manager an opportunity to show their benevolence and concern toward their subordinates and further to build their relationships based on mutual support on honesty and trust. In Chinese culture building *Guan Xi* is of major importance in determining leadership effectiveness. Taiwanese employees' motivation derives from their sense of belonging thus when the *Guan Xi* relationship is strong between a manager and employee, it often creates the in-group emotion and friendship and further increases employees' loyalty and effectiveness at work. Thus in a collectivist culture in Taiwan managers should strive to build *Guan Xi* relationship with the subordinates by ensuring employment security, compensation and reward, training and development to gain the trust from their subordinates, and then when Taiwanese employees perceive this in-group emotion, they will in return with offer high commitment, self-discipline, and individual sacrifice for the common goals. The eventual goal of such efforts is to maintain group harmony and to achieve a peaceful and orderly workplace.

10.3.2 Collectivism, Hierarchy, and Loyalty

The results of the qualitative analysis from interviews with employees from one international chain hotel and two domestic chain hotels that operate in Taiwan showed that there is no significant difference on employees' perception in relation to the delegation of authority and decision-making power to the lower level of employees in an organisation. This finding is further reinforced by the information provided by the managers regarding delegation of authority to frontline employees. It was frequently stated by both mangers and employees that delegation of authority and decision-making power should have different limits according to the different job positions. When employees take the initiative and make decisions during service delivery they should have latitude within the boundaries and pre-defined limits. Managers generally reported that employees do not engage in behaviours outside the boundaries of their role and

would normally seek management involvement when dealing with a non-routine situation especially with regard to financial issues such as concessions. Taiwanese culture is regarded as a large power distance of Hofstede's dimensions of national culture, thus the Taiwanese generally believe there is a need to drive people by hierarchy and people seek status and power as their motivation in an organisation.

The delegation of authority and decision-making power should have different limitations according to the different job positions are influenced by the teaching of Confucian. In the Confucian doctrine human beings have different duties and roles in a society. Thus employees having different limited authority powers according to their job position can be regarded as a means to distinguish people in order to maintain the hierarchical order in an organisation. The Confucian doctrine also indicates seniors have duties of benevolence and concern towards juniors and juniors should have strong duties of reverence and service to their seniors. Thus Taiwanese superiors and organisations have a duty to look after the interests of fellow employees while employees have a high commitment to the management and organisation. It is notable that quite a few employees and managers used the term "family" when referring to their operational unit during the interviews, this indeed responded to many Chinese people regarding their workplace as like a family. In addition, bringing honour to the family is an essential value for Chinese people and thus employees in a Chinese Taiwan organisation would do their best to prevent bringing shame on their operational unit. It again emphasises the importance of *Guan Xi* relationship in Chinese/Taiwanese society. As far as the sharing of information is concerned managers in the two domestic chain hotels reported that there is little information shared with employees in their hotels. Only managers in the international chain hotel reported that information is shared with employees. The results indicate that in a large power distance culture an organisation has more of a centralised power structure with information kept at the top of the corporation. It is notable Blanchard *et al.* (1996) asserts that the sharing of information with all staff working in an organisation is the first key to implementing empowerment as it implies that managers and employees trust each other. However the results of the qualitative analysis from interviews with employees from the three participant hotels showed that information sharing has no impact on how staff does their job. As discussed in section 3.4.2.6, in Chinese societies family members are highly trusting of each other but place low trust in larger collectivities (Fukuyama, 1995). Thus, *Guan Xi* relationship is emphasised in Chinese/Taiwanese societies as interpersonal trust is essential in

building a quality *Guan Xi*.

The results of the qualitative analysis also found that individual employee tenure and working experience have a great effect on how much mangers trust their employees which has been ignored by empowerment literature. The results suggest that an individual employee with a longer tenure and working experience in the hotel would exercise a higher degree of empowered behaviour as they have a better understanding to enable them to determine which patterns of behaviours are acceptable and encouraged by the hotel. This enables them to delight the customers during service delivery in comparison to their more junior colleagues. Both management and employees expressed working experience is very important for individual career development in the hotel industry. Managers often reported that they trusted more the employees who have been working in the hotel for a long period of time to make good decision during service encounters than employees who have only been working in the hotel for a short period of time. The finding indicates that empowered behaviour increases through accumulated experience, thus it underlines the importance of employee retention and working experience with the hotel.

10.3.3 Strategic thinking

The evidence from the results of the qualitative analysis showed that employees in those two domestic chain hotels perceive they have received less training to independently manage routine and non-routine service situations compared to employees in the international chain hotel. The international chain hotel has a very formalised, extensive and on-going training process for the employees to attend, whilst the employees in those two domestic chain hotels mainly trained on the job. As only the international chain hotel implements empowerment and those two domestic chain hotels are more autocratic-orientated employees in the international chain hotel required more knowledge and skills in order to respond immediately to customer requests, problems and needs during service delivery. Thus it emphasises task accomplishment which fits into the organisations with a cultural dimension high in masculinity. Taiwanese culture is more feminine and thus the need to ensure an employees well-being and their quality of life seem to be more important than task accomplishment. Lee (1995: 93) indicates company-sponsored training was not popular by most local companies and foreign-owned companies offered more one-the job training programmes in Taiwan during the export expansion period. However, the change in the labour market and the

challenge of global economic competition have been forced the enterprises in Taiwan to adopt different approaches and pay attention to both pre-training and continuous training in order to cope with market changes and link the skills of employees with the needs of production (Warner and Zhu, 2003). It is notable that employees in all three participant hotels often reported they would like to take the initiative when they consider that they are ready. It was their view that good training can improve their capability to perform their task activities skilfully. Thus, it is important for the hotel and management to implement extensive and on-going training programmes in order to develop an individuals full potential.

10.4 The cultural relativity of empowerment

The intention now is to evaluate the study's conceptual framework concerning Taiwanese cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice and their effect on organisation, management, and employee behaviours. This relates to the third research objective. Attention is directed to the relationships between the framework and the research findings.

10.4.1 Organisational culture and orientation

Customer-orientated culture is towards service quality and customer satisfaction. According to the results of the qualitative analysis it was found that only the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei has an extensive application of empowerment when compared to The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung. The managers in the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei reported that the hotel has a range of formal and informal processes, such as training, communication and employee involvement, which demonstrate and support the customer orientation of the organisation. As the study discussed in section 6.2.3, the training programme, Shangri-La Care Modules (Table 6.3) is a means to ensure employees perceive that the organisational culture is orientated towards service quality and customer satisfaction. Module 3, recover to gain loyalty can be interpreted that the organisation indeed encourages employees to exercise empowered behaviour when dealing with the service encounters. The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung have less formal and informal processes to promote customer-orientated culture, thus the employees did not have clearly vision of the hotel goals. They often mentioned the hotels mission is to be a 5 star hotel and provide high quality service to the customers and be the best hotel of its region. Because both hotels

are autocratic orientated thus it is difficult for employees to exercise empowered behaviours to ensure customer satisfaction.

This empirical research indeed indicates that the more employees perceive organisational culture is orientated towards service quality and customer satisfaction, the more they exercise empowered behaviour. It is notable employees in all three participant hotels expressed that they would like to take initiative and responsibility in decision- making power and authority during service encounters with predefined limits if they perceive that their workplace values and is supportive of such behaviours. This finding corresponds with the empowerment theory that only when employees perceive their working environment values and is supportive empowered behaviours they will more likely to undertake extra-role during the employee-guest encounters. Taiwanese culture is collectivism thus individual contributions are not valued if they work against group goals or interests. Therefore, the hotels in Taiwan not only required the rhetoric of the company commitment to the goal of service quality and customer satisfaction, but they should also have clear policies and practices, systems and procedures, that involve both management and employees to pursue this organisational goal toward customer-orientated culture. Thus management should consistently strive to reinforce these perceptions to ensure both management and employees work together with a shared commitment to pursue together an overall organisational alignment towards this goal and vision.

Training involves with service quality and complaint handling. The results of the qualitative analysis also found that only the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei has extensive and substantial ongoing training programmes when compared to The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung. Employees in all participant hotels regarded training as an essential tool to enable them to gain knowledge and build their experience. They were of the view that only when they had the relevant capability to perform task activities skilfully they would then demonstrate empowerment behaviours. Indeed managers in the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei expressed the view that for those subordinates who had undergone the Shangri-La Care Modules training programme they were trusted and encouraged to take the initiative and to be empowered. Mangers in The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung often reported they were afraid to empower their subordinates because staff did not receive enough training in relation to service quality

and complaint handling. These findings support the theoretical aspect on training in the empowerment literature as it is the most frequently quoted factor and the major intervention necessary in the empowerment process (e.g. Brymer, 1991; Sternberg, 1992). The role of training is to improve the quality of decisions and initiatives and further to build up employees' experience and competence. Moreover, when employees perceive the hotel actually values the importance of training this will enhance their perception of the quality and customer orientation of the organisational culture.

10.4.2 Management intention and leadership

Delegating authority and decision-making power with clear boundaries and should be restricted within different limits according to the job positions of employees. According to the results of the qualitative analysis it was found that managers in all three participant hotels claimed at some levels that they delegate authority and decision-making power to their employees. The finding of this empirical research suggests employees are more likely to take the initiative or make decisions in their job if they perceive themselves as having the commensurate degree of authority to do so. However management often stressed that in order to operate their business in a hierarchical structure, to delegate authority and decision-making power it is necessary to restrict duties within limits to different job positions. This is done as a means of distinguishing people positions and in order to maintain a hierarchical order in the organisation. This is strongly influenced by the teaching of Confucianism. Employees also expressed their view that different limitations of decision-making power and authority are appropriate because they believe the person in a higher job position should have better knowledge and capability to enable them to determine which patterns of behaviour are acceptable and encouraged by the hotel and at the same time to delight the customers during service encounters. It is not a surprise as the virtues and quality of leadership emphasised by Confucianism is that managerial leadership requires the qualities of wisdom, trust, sincerity, benevolence, courage, and strictness to carry out policies (Chu, 1995). In addition, both managers and employees reported that when employees do not have a clear understanding of what decisions or initiatives it is reasonable for them to undertake within the organisation or supported by the management, they would check first with their superiors. The study shows that Taiwanese employees are more likely to take the initiative within pre-defined limits and boundaries defined by the organisation and supported by management to decide what is good for the customer during service encounters. This finding is in line with the

extensive research carried out by Quinn and Spreitzer (1997). Thus the study suggests that it maybe important for the Taiwanese hotel and management to set clear lines of authority for employees to follow and managers should ensure that employees have a clear understanding of where these boundaries are.

Management trusts and supports employees' initiative and decision during service delivery. The results of the qualitative analysis also found that managers trust and support their employees have a decisive influence on empowered behaviour. The emphasis of the empowerment theory on the importance of the role of managers and supervisors in the empowerment process corresponds and is supported in this empirical research. For instance, employees at the F&B in the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei expressed the view that because they are trusted and have the full support of their superiors they take the initiatives and make decisions at work in order to build up their experience. However, their colleagues in the Front Office reported they were allowed to make decisions using their judgement even if these involved monetary transactions when dealing with non-routine service situations that threatened customer satisfaction but because of they lacked support from their line superiors they would rather not exercise these empowered behaviours. Indeed, employees in all participant hotels expressed trust and support from their line superiors has an effect on how they do their job, Taiwanese culture emphasises group harmony, social order, loyalty, and personal relationship. For managers to trust and support their employees can build up quality *Guan Xi* relationship with employees. Thus the study suggests that to empower employees managers not only need to encourage employees to take the initiative and make decisions on their own but they are also required to trust and give full support to their employees on the decisions that have been made. It is important to praise staff when they succeed and to forgive, support and coach them when a mistake or poor decision has been made. The Chinese shame culture involves with penalties scheme to make employees fear shame and want to avoid losing face can be regarded as a cultural barrier that challenge empowerment implementation because empowerment should include risk taking and the possibility of making mistakes.

10.4.3 Employee behaviour and motivation
Meaningfulness is employees perceive that organisational culture is customer-orientated and have strong in group emotion at workplace. The results of the qualitative analysis from the interviews with employees indicate that when individual employees regard the

organisational culture is customer-orientated and their task goal is to achieve service quality and customer satisfaction they are more likely to exercise empowered behaviour. In addition the relationship between employees and their superiors and peers play an important role that motivates them at work and supports them in taking the initiative. When Taiwanese employees perceive that their workplace involves friendship, loyalty, and trustworthiness, this in-group emotion will lead to employees with high commitment, self-discipline, and staff willing to make individual sacrifice for the common goals of the organisation. It is notable that if an individual's own ideas or standards are in opposition to the groups goals or interests then his/her contributions may not be valued in Taiwanese society, as Taiwanese culture is a collectivism and most people believe that self-interest behaviour is traditionally regarded as a kind of betrayal of those to whom one has obligations. Thus for management to consistently strive to reinforce these perceptions and to ensure that all employees have a clear vision of the organisational culture and that they understand the value of their task goal and purpose and work together to achieve this organisational culture maybe important in the Taiwanese hotel industry.

Competence is when employees believe they have the capability to perform task activities skilfully through training with full support and trust from their superiors. According to the results of the qualitative analysis from the interviews with employees it was found that training is regarded as the most important factor for employees to absorb new knowledge and skills that can improve their capability to perform task activities skilfully. A continuously updated training course in relation to service quality and complaint handing is important for employees to build up their experience when dealing with service encounters. However the findings of this empirical research indicate that even though employees may have the competence to perform task activities skilfully they are unlikely to take the initiatives or make decisions without management support and trust. Thus the way that managers themselves manage their subordinates is regarded as a critical factor in the empowerment process. If management wants to delegate and encourage employees' initiative and decision-making they will need to show their full support and trust to their subordinates. Thus it can be interpreted that only when there is an environment of full mutual support and trust between mangers and employees can this then influence the development of empowered behaviour. To gain interpersonal trust in Taiwanese organisations is to build *Guan Xi* relationship. Because of the influences of the teaching of Confucian Taiwan would be

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human-centeredness and emphasises human relationships. It is very different from the empowerment doctrine which emphasised task accomplishment.

Self-determination means employees have autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes within pre-defined limit of authority power. The results of this empirical research from the interviews with employees also found that power is a desire for most individuals. Employees in all interviews expressed that view that they enjoy having power. However it was recognised that power should be restricted according to the different positions of individual in an organisation or society. There was a view that some people would easily abuse power if their power is greater than they should have according to their position. Thus the delegation of decision-making power and authority should have limitations in order to maintain hierarchical order and distinguish people in an organisation. It can be interpreted that Taiwanese employees would consider having a certain degree of autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes is appropriate because they also regard to seek status and power is one of their key motivations at work. Therefore employees who have a sense of responsibility, those willing to learn with a good working attitude should have a higher degree of authority power compared to their peers. It is notable that the research finding also indicated people have different reasons to work and for people who just wanted a stable job or just needed to earn money for their living; they might not seek power to take extra responsibility on at work. However, for people who regard their job as career development they would have high growth needs within the organisation. Thus, empowerment can be seen as an appropriate choice for the individuals who have needs for self-actualisation and achievement which are the top motivators in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. However, the role of management in supporting their subordinates was regarded as an important factor in the development of empowered behaviour. The finding indicates that even though employees who perceive they have decision-making power and authority during service delivery if they lack support from their line superiors they would rather not exercise empowered behaviours.

Impact is shown when employees perceive they can influence strategic, administrative or operating outcomes at work with great caution in order to maintain group harmony. According to the results of the qualitative analysis from interviews with employees it was found that Taiwanese employees in general like to voice their opinions and give suggestions to their line superiors but only when they perceive that the response will be

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valued and potentially result in change. When they are convinced of this they welcome the chance to continuously communicate with their line superiors as they believe they will have an impact on operating outcomes at work. However, it is viewed that employees should respect their immediate superiors and that any issues of concern to them should only report and communicate to their direct line superior. Indeed whilst communication is seem as key this should be with in a hierarchical setting and it is regarded as an unacceptable if anyone reports concerns to a higher level.

10.5 Contexts of the hotel industry and its influence on empowerment

The hotel ownership international hotel chains favour employee empowerment. According to the results of the qualitative analysis it was found that Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel had better formal processes to implement empowerment compared to the other two domestic chain hotels, The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung. Managers in all interviews expressed the importance of implementation of employee empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan, as managers perceived empowerment is a means to improve service quality and customer satisfaction by delegating limited authority and decision-making power to the frontlines employees with a focus on the employee-guest encounter. However the findings of the empirical research indicate that independent and domestic chain hotels maybe lack experience and complete programmes to implement empowerment. It is notable Far Eastern Plaza Hotel is managed by Shangri-La international hotel chain and to implement empowerment policy and practice is part of Shangri-La operational and service standard. Thus, management would have to follow the hotel's operational instruction to implement empowerment policy. The research findings also shed light on the question of who is an appropriate candidate to operate the hotel business. According to the findings of this empirical research the implication is that the hotel industry has its unique characteristics compared to other industries, thus to hire a professional hospitality expert to operate the hotel business is crucial for the business to survive in this competitive environment.

The research findings may also shed light on the question of what external factors favour empowerment. According to the findings of qualitative analysis there seems to be a different influence on employee empowerment between the three case studies in three different cities in Taiwan. Taipei is the capital city in Taiwan and is regarded as an international city that has experienced rapid economical development, modernisation, and westernisation and governance demonstrates democracy, thus these external factors

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favour empowerment compared to Taichung and Kaohsiung. Taichung and Kaohsiung are both cities which have experienced less economical development, modernisation, and westernisation. They reserve the most traditional values of Chinese organisation, is a more autocratic-orientated culture with blame and feelings of shame commonly used and thus much less favourable for enabling empowerment. The evidence is that the two case studies hotels in Taichung and Kaohsiung not only have reward scheme both hotels also applied penalty scheme. Most Taiwanese organisations are autocratic-orientated and the owners of the organisations expect to receive immediate profit after investing in the business. The less revenue the organisations have the more the operating business owner will interfere in the day to day running of the business. It is difficult to implement empowerment in such a condition as the argument shows in section 2.3 that in order to implement empowerment successfully an organisation or owner must be prepared and understand that employee empowerment implementation is a long-term investment and ensure it fits into the organisational culture.

Employees in Front Office require the need of empowerment more intensely than staff working in Food and Beverage. According to the findings of qualitative analysis indicate that the type of employment is different between the departments of Front Office and Food and Beverage in all three participant hotels in Taiwan. All the bottom-line employees in the Food and Beverage department are university and high school students who are doing their placements for six months or one year and the positions of supervisor and above are full-time permanent contract employees. However their colleagues in Front Office are all full-time permanent contract employees. The findings of qualitative analysis also indicate there is a discrepancy in delegating limited authority and decision-making power between the departments of Front Office and Food and Beverage in the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei. The interviews with both managers and employees pointed to a lower degree of delegated authority and decision-making power in the Food and Beverage compared to the Front Office. Managers in the interviews often mentioned that service encounters in Food and Beverage are more predictable and in the most cases only minor so the need for empowerment is less intense compared to the Front Office. In addition the more standardised product offered in Food and Beverage makes it easier for employees to follow and thus the hotel assigned all the students who are doing their placements to the Food and Beverage department as it required less experience compared with the jobs in Front office. Students who were doing their placements received on-the-job training in

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order to provide consistency of service quality to meet the hotel's service standard. The research finding underlines the departments of Food and Beverage requires the need for empowerment of employees is less intense than Front Office, because of the natural characteristics between these two departments. To assign students for their placements to work in Food and Beverage is also influenced by the more standardised products and more predictable employee-guest encounters in Food and Beverage as students can be trained to meet the service standard in a short period of time.

10.6 Contribution to the empowerment theory

The contribution of this research to the empowerment theory is that it offers an opportunity to study the subject of empowerment from a holistic perspective. The present study took an etymological perspective and a management perspective into consideration in order to understand the notion of empowerment. The term empowerment from the etymological properties is considered as the action of empowering someone; and the state of being empowered. And from the management idea ascribed is regarded as ceding to individual or groups a degree of autonomy; and enhancing individual or group development to its full potential. This integrated approach for the understanding of the notion of empowerment offers the principle perspectives from the management discipline. The identification of an aggregative and an integrative approach in the present study indicates that both approaches are distinct but not mutually exclusive. Empowerment from an aggregative perspective closely examines the role of managers and leaders to delegate decision-making power and authority to their subordinates is considered as a means for the fulfilment of the ultimate goal of empowerment enhancing individual or group development to its full potential, seen from an integrative perspective. Based on evaluating the study findings, Taiwanese employees considered to learn and develop their full potential are necessary in order to exercise empowered behaviour. The study findings indicate that Taiwanese employees are more likely to take the initiative in decision-making power and authority during service delivery when they perceived strong psychological state of empowerment and full support from their superiors. Thus, psychological empowerment is more fitting under the integrative definition of empowerment. Empowerment in one aspect is behaviour of a superior to empower subordinates; and the other is psychological state of a subordinate from being empowered. However, it is necessary for both management and employees closely involved in empowering process, as empowerment only exists when the managers have intention to empower their subordinates.

The identification through empirical research of the implications of applying empowerment in the Taiwanese cultural context constitutes a contribution of the present study to the theory and also to the debate about the universality or relativity of management theories and concepts. The findings of the present study show that the propositions of the empowerment doctrine have been developed from an American cultural context and that Taiwanese cultural context may not readily embrace these propositions. The findings of this research study examined both management and employees' perception of implementing employee empowerment generated from one international chain hotel and two domestic chain hotels that operate in Taiwan show there is no difference for employees of foreign firms and local Taiwanese firms perceive empowerment differently. One of the differences was found is the degree and the amount of allowance that employees can exercise empowered behaviour (Table 10.1). All managers and employees expressed the delegation of authority and decision-making power is necessary to be restricted within limits according to the different job positions.

Table 10.1 Empowered behaviours for bottom-line employees in the participant hotels

	Front Office	Food and Beverage Department
Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei	Involve monetary transactions Give rebates Make small adjustment to customers' bills Offer upgrade and discount in room rates	Offer a complimentary glass of juice, a side dish (certain range) for valued regular customers/during service encounters Change new dish if customer complained the dish
The Splendor Taichung	Make decisions on late check out Upgrade fruit baskets	Offer customers more bottles of water, tea and coffee in rooms Offer a complimentary glass of juice, a side dish during service encounters Change new dish if customer complained the dish
Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung	Offer upgrades Give beverage voucher to the customers	Change new dish if customer complained the dish

In addition, the empirical evidence provided by this study shows the diversity of human resource management. Primarily, all the bottom-line employees in Food and Beverage Department in the international tourist hotels are high school and university levels students who are doing their placements for six months or one year. Thus, the hotels experienced labour turnover in Food and Beverage every six months and one year. This empirical study indicates that individual employee tenure and working experience have strong impact on how the management trusts their employees and the degree of employees exercise empowered behaviour. Thus, high labour turnover in Food and Beverage Department in international tourist hotels in Taiwan is regarded as a barrier

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that challenges empowerment implementation. The work by Klidas studying employee empowerment in the European hotel industry also demonstrates different human resource management exists in different countries. For instance, his study shows low labour turnover in countries like Italy, Portugal and Greece compared to the countries in the northern Europe, therefore in such conditions it is less necessary to make high investment in training, especially at the beginning of employment. This empirical study and the Klidas's work proved various empowerment themes highlighted in the literature were not supported in the countries perspective. The findings of the both studies indicate that delegation is culturally conditioned which have been ignored in the hospitality management literature as it unanimously supports the delegation of authority to customer-contact employees in order to improve service quality and customer satisfaction. In addition, Klidas's work also provided some evidences that delegation is constrained due to the legislative framework of some countries. Thus, this empirical study suggests the implications of applying empowerment is best to study in the national level as different countries have various cultural characters and policies that will influence empowerment implementation.

The other differences were found in this study is that only the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei has extensive and substantial ongoing training programmes and an extensive application of empowerment when compared to The Splendor Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung. The training programmes in Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei are regarded as a means to ensure employees perceive that the organisational culture is orientated towards service quality and customer satisfaction. It is indeed when employees perceive the hotel actually values the importance of training this will enhance their perception of the quality and customer orientation of the organisational culture. In addition, Taiwanese employees often stressed the importance of training can increase their knowledge and competence in order to get their job done well. The research findings also indicate that training and development a hotel can provide for employees is regarded as a means for employee retention, therefore employees training and development are extremely important for Taiwanese hotels as most hotels are facing high labour turnover.

The fact that the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei has a clear empowerment policy thus the organisational culture favour empowerment implementation. It is indeed in comparison between the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei to The Splendor
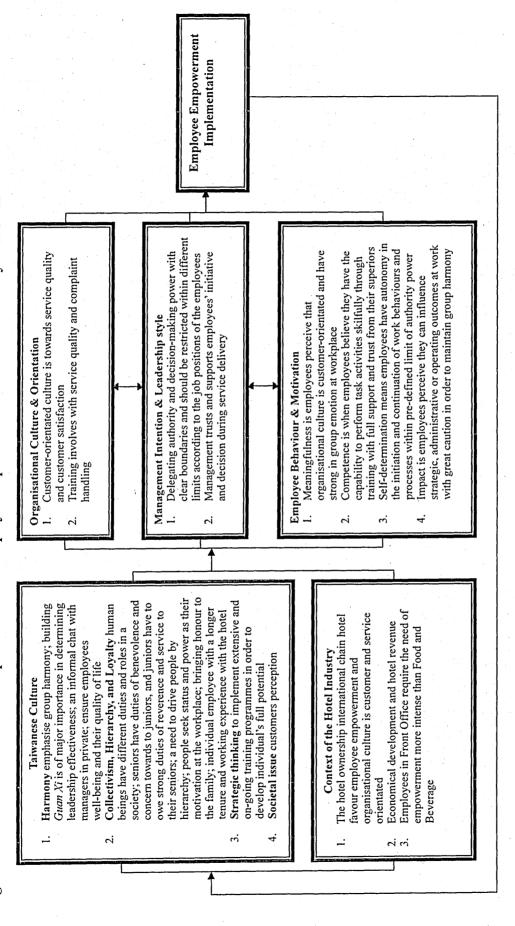
Taichung and Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung it demonstrates greater degree of delegation of decision-making authority and responsibility to frontline employees for the delivery of service quality from aggregative perspective and also offer higher climate in which individual members are encouraged to learn and to develop their full potential from integrative perspective. It is notable an organisational vision are creation based on consultation with customers and employees to achieve organisational basic purpose, then senior management views on these are required to produce a coherent vision (Reyes and Kleiner, 1990). According to Tourism Bureau Taiwan (2009), administration information on monthly report on international tourist hotel operations on number of guests by country/region shows that the major guests stay at the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei are from North American and Europe; the major guests stay in the Splendor Taichung are Domestic travellers; and the major guests stay in Han-Hsien International Hotel Kaohsiung are Domestic travellers and Japanese. The findings from this research study indicate from Taiwanese customers' perspective, mangers and employees in three participant hotels often expressed that most Taiwanese customers would expect management levels in the hotel to deal with their cases during service encounters. It makes different to the guests and it affects customers' emotions to feel that the hotel really has sincerity dealt with their case. It is notable empowerment is regarded as a means to control and enhance of product and service quality and the end goal is improve service quality and customer satisfaction, then it is necessary to take customers' perception into consideration. Taiwanese customers often feel that only management levels to deal with their cases, they are respected and satisfying. Thus, Taiwanese customers' expectation may limit empowerment in the Taiwanese cultural context. However, there has been limited in the present study regarding the implementation of empowerment by examining empirically the influence of customers.

In addition, the empowerment process not only demands empowering organisational and management process, but also empowerable individual employees. It begins with the process of selection-recruitment, thus there is a possible that the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei recruits local people who fit the corporate culture. In addition, the Director of Human Resources and the Human Resource Manager at the Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei indicated that empowerment only applies to people who would like to be empowered and as a hotel requires many different kinds of people to run the business so they assign people to do different jobs that fit them the

best. It is implied that they select empowerable individual to train and educate these potential successors and job deputies for their career development and promotion with the hotel. The empirical research findings also shed light on the question of who may be empowerable individuals that among others, those with longer working experience in similar position and a higher level of education. Thus, these two traits should be considered during the selection process for empowering organisation. Furthermore, management in Taiwanese hotels facing high labour turnover should considered excepting building strong Guan Xi relationship with employees, they should also evaluating employees in terms of their intention of career development with the hotel. The career development and promotion is a means for employee retention and therefore is important for hotels facing high labour turnover.

The research framework shown as Figure 10.1 is intended to highlight even Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei has an extensive application of empowerment but its implementation in the hotel still has huge gap between theoretical and practical empowerment that offered by other researchers. This empirical research shows managers and employees of foreign firm and local Taiwanese firms (one international chain hotel and two domestic chain hotels) have no different perception towards empowerment implementation in the hotel industry in Taiwan. The research findings prove that even Shangri-La's Far Eastern Plaza Hotel Taipei recruits from local people who fit the corporate culture and creates a two-way influence over a period of time but there are limits to what can be diffused into a given culture. Management in this study also indicated there are many similar management strategies between the notion of empowerment and the Chinese philosophy "War Strategies", thus the empowerment themes that violate pivotal national cultural assumption would face resistance, but others can be implemented. Thus, it is argued that the application of empowerment should take into account and eventually adjust to the specific cultural context of each country. Empowerment is regarded as the process of achieving continuous improvement in an organisation's performance by developing employees' full potential and the end goal is to control and enhance service quality and customer satisfaction during service delivery. The contribution of this study to the empowerment theory is that national cultural value orientations influence individual behaviours for empowerment policy and practice. Thus, empowerment can be regarded as the product of a specific cultural context of American and has an Anglo-Saxon cultural background.

Figure 10.1 Influences lead to the implementation of employee empowerment in the hotel industry in Taiwan

Organisational Culture & Orientation
1. Customer-orientated culture is towards service quality and customer satisfaction
2. Training involves with service quality and complaint handling

Management Intention & Leadership style
1. Delegating authority and decision-making power with clear boundaries and should be restricted within different limits according to the job positions of the employees
2. Management trusts and supports employees' initiative and decision during service delivery

Employee Behaviour & Motivation
1. Meaningfulness is employees perceive that organisational culture is customer-orientated and have strong in group emotion at workplace
2. Competence is when employees believe they have the capability to perform task activities skilfully through training with full support and trust from their superiors
3. Self-determination means employees have autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes within pre-defined limit of authority power
4. Impact is employees perceive they can influence strategic, administrative or operating outcomes at work with great caution in order to maintain group harmony

Taiwanese Culture
1. **Harmony** emphasise group harmony; building leadership effectiveness; an informal chat with managers in private; ensure employees well-being and their quality of life
2. **Collectivism, Hierarchy, and Loyalty** human beings have different duties and roles in a society; seniors have duties of benevolence and concern towards to juniors, and juniors have to owe strong duties of reverence and service to their seniors; a need to drive people by hierarchy; people seek status and power as their motivation at the workplace; bringing honour to the family; individual employee with a longer tenure and working experience with the hotel
3. **Strategic thinking** to implement extensive and on-going training programmes in order to develop individual's full potential
4. **Societal issue** customers perception

Context of the Hotel Industry
1. The hotel ownership international chain hotel favour employee empowerment and organisational culture is customer and service orientated
2. Economical development and hotel revenue
3. Employees in Front Office require the need of empowerment more intense than Food and Beverage

Employee Empowerment Implementation

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10.7 Limitations of this study and future research

This empirical study shows that as the hotel industry in Taiwan struggles to continue their endeavour to empower employees and especially those at the front line there will be a need for more insight into the concept of empowerment.

10.7.1 Limitations

The various employee behaviours that were considered as empowered could be specific to the nature of the service encounter in upscale and luxury hotels and are probably not relevant for other hotel companies in the lower sector of the industry. Another issue was that the researcher is not seen as an insider in the case studies hotels and does not have strong *Guan Xi* relationship with the participant hotels and this led to difficulties in gaining access to select respondents, as all respondents were assigned by the hotel. Although the study can claim that the conclusions are based on in-depth analyses of the views of respondents of the studied hotels the limited sample of participants should be regarded as the other limitation. A greater amount of the sample of participants may generate a broad range view of the cultural relativity of empowerment in Taiwanese cultural context.

10.7.2 Recommendations for future research

Obviously the issue of the cultural relativity of empowerment and the implications of applying it in different cultural contexts deserves and demands further research. The comparisons have made between this empirical study and the work by Klidas which finds discrepancies exists in terms of training and management style as these empowerment themes did not emerge as important factors when studying employee empowerment in the European hotel industry. However they are regarded as crucial factors in this study. Some other empowerment themes including sharing of information, rewards, and openness of communication were not supported in both studies. Therefore, different nations may have a diverse response to the cultural relativity of empowerment and for any firms intending to implement empowerment they will need to take into consideration the diversity of the national culture. In addition the findings of the present study were discussed almost exclusively within the specific hotels which are probably quite different from other sectors of the industry. Therefore intriguing opportunities for research on employee empowerment in organisations in other sectors of the industry will need to consider the specific context in which these organisations operate.

The present study also found that there are many similar management strategies between the notion of empowerment and the Chinese philosophy "War Strategies" and there were few respondents in the interviews who highlighted that empowerment should not be seen as a western management practice as it has already existed for a long time and western scholar brought up and conceptualised the concept. Therefore further research on empowerment in the Chinese/Taiwanese culture setting may be useful to compare empowerment to "War Strategies" in order to gain a better understanding of the empowerment process in practice and the implications of applying it in the Chinese/Taiwanese cultural contexts.

10.8 Conclusion

This study examined the meaning and the implementation of employee empowerment in the hotel industry in the Taiwanese cultural context and it has developed a theoretical framework on this issue which was then used to meet the specific research objectives. The study found that to implement employee empowerment drastic changes are required in an organisation with the alignment of all organisational processes, practices and people towards the empowerment goal which has to be regarded as a long-term investment. The study also found employees in the Taiwanese organisations always look for a good management to be their work model and then imitate and follow this work model. In order to embrace new ideas for work organisation and new work roles for all members of staff in an organisation, leaders and managers should act foremost. Therefore, it is important for leaders and managers to be the first to embrace the empowerment philosophy and truly commit themselves to its goals before they seek the commitment of their followers. Furthermore regarding whether empowerment can be implemented universally in all organisations across national borders is questioned, as the theoretical and empirical exploration has shown that the empowerment doctrine has an evident American flavour, therefore the countries outside Anglo-Saxon culture may not embrace empowerment. The Taiwanese orientation of the present study indeed shows the role of cultural divergence in shaping culture specific attitudes and behaviours, the cultural relativity of empowerment raises the issue again the "universal validity" of management and organisational theories. In fact, different theories and concepts can be regarded as different ways of thinking and if empowerment is a means to the product end to improve service quality and customer stratification, as the present study found empowerment from an aggregative perspective seems to relate predominantly to product and service quality in the management field. Thus, different

nations may just need to search and conceptualise their own management concept which will fit into their organisation the best.

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Appendix A

Sheffield Hallam University
School of Sports and Leisure Management
Owen Building, City Campus, Howard St.
Sheffield S1 1WB, United Kingdom

Date Month, 2004

_____Hotel

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Jackson Ming-Chih Lai, I am a PhD student in International Hospitality Management at Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom. I am a Taiwanese student in England and I am interested in the hospitality sector in my own country. Particularly international hotel chains and the impact of management systems and working practices on Taiwanese employees and organizational performance.

I am writing to request your assistance with my work and the possibility of interviews through your organisation in connection with my PhD research at Sheffield Hallam University. My academic supervisors at Sheffield Hallam University are Dr. Emma Martin, Mr. Stephen Ball, and Mr. Kevin Nield.

The aim of the research project is to investigate the implementation of employee empowerment in Taiwanese hotels, and how management takes into consideration the influences of national culture. The research will also examine whether employee empowerment is an effective business strategy or workplace practice in Taiwan, and if employee empowerment delivers employee commitment to organisational objectives. It is important for this project that I speak to a wide range of hotel management and employees, hence I am writing to you to seek your interest in participating in this work. I would be interesting in speaking to The General Manager, HR Manager, front office Manager, supervisors, and part-time and full-time front line employees.

If you agree, I would like to arrange interviews with yourself and members of your staff. The interviews will take approximately one hour and I am free at any time to suit you from the middle of March to July 2004.

Thank you for your attention. I will contact you by email or telephone to discuss progress and, if appropriate, to arrange the interviews. I look forward to speaking to you soon.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. Jackson Ming-Chih Lai
PhD candidate
School of Sports and Leisure Management
Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

Appendix B

Preamble

Purpose of Study and Statement of Confidentiality

I am undertaking research for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK. The research is entitled "Employee Empowerment in International Tourist Hotels in Taiwan: A Cultural Perspective". It examines the impact of national culture on the implementation of employee empowerment and the ways that management takes into consideration the intervening influence of national culture. The research is purely for academic research purpose. The names and opinions of all participants in the research will always be kept confidential. Each interview should take no longer than one hour and you can be assured that your name and your personal views will not be revealed at any time to any third parties. With your permission, I will use an audio recorder; again the interview recordings are for the purpose only of academic analysis. All interview recordings and participant's names will be destroyed after the transcribing process. The production of this study will be in English.

There are two different interview questions for two levels of employees. The interview questions are designed as a semi-structure interview, therefore the actual course of the interview will depend upon answers given and the interviewer may decide to question further in areas particularly relevant to the research.   The ideal interviewees on management level will be Front Office manager, F&B manager and other managers who are dealing with training course in the Hotel. Ideally 4 to 5 management staff would participate in my research interviews, if this is possible it would be very appreciated. The bottom line employees also take a very important role in my research, therefore, I would like, if possible, to interview 8 to 10 bottom line employees, half from Front Office and the other half from F& B. If you can participate in this research please inform me when will be convenient for interviews to take place. If it is possible, I would like to start from now till the end of July. Thank you for your time, help and assistance. Please let me know if you need any further information about my research.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Mr. Jackson Ming-Chih Lai
PhD candidate
School of Sports and Leisure Management
Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom
E-mail: Ming-Chih.Lai@student.shu.ac.uk; mingchih_lai@yahoo.com
Mobile No. 0913 601 710

序言

本人賴明志目前於英國 Sheffield Hallam University 攻讀博士學位，研究題目為「文化的觀點洞悉台灣國際觀光旅館的授權管理」，主要探討國家文化對於員工授權管理的衝擊和管理者應如何考慮到國家文化介於其中的影響。 此研究純粹為學術性研究，對於所有受訪者的名稱和意見將被視為機密，每一個訪談約一小時，受訪者的個人看法絕對受到保證在任何時候都不會被揭示於第三者，在你的同意下，訪談過程會全程錄音，而目的只是為了學術分析，所有訪談的紀錄在翻譯過後一律會被摧毀，研究成品將會是英文版。

此次訪談目的主要是收集資料以供日後博士論文的研究分析，研究對象以國際連鎖飯店為主，或以管理顧問公司管理的飯店。每家飯店均有兩份訪談問題，一份是針對管理階層，另一份是針對基層員工，敘述如下：

1. 管理階層： 客房部和餐飲部的經理；副理或協理

　　　　　　人事部門經理或協理；以及人事訓練專員

　　　　　　共計： 4~6 人

2. 基層員工： 客房部 (含客務和房務部)

　　　　　　餐飲部 (中西餐或宴會均可)

　　　　　　共計: 8~10 人 (著重客房部；或均半)

訪談時間每人約為 1 小時，地點和時間由飯店決定，本人會盡力配合.

預計停留至 7 月 31 日，如未能如期完成，時間則必須在商榷，因為必須要得到指導教授的同意，以及更改機票。如果有進一不需要了解我的研究主題，請與我聯繫。

聯絡方式: 手機 0913 601 710

Interview Questions to Management:
My name is Jackson Ming-Chih Lai. Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview. The interview we have now is part of my PhD research study at Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom. I am interested in your experiences at work and management practices in an international chain hotel. The findings and conclusions of this research will only be used for my PhD thesis. I am going to start with a few general questions about yourself if that is ok and then proceed to ask some questions in related to your working experience at (name of) hotel. The interview will be tape recorded, I hope that is OK for you. Thank you again for your cooperation.

你好，我叫賴明志 Jackson。非常感謝你同意參與這次的訪談。這個訪談是我在英國 Sheffield Hallam 大學博士班學術研究的一部份。我對於你在國際連鎖飯店的工作經驗和經營管理感到非常有興趣。這個研究的結果和推論將只會運用在我的博士班畢業論文中。如果都沒有問題，那麼我將從問你一些一般問題開始，然後是關於你服務於　飯店的工作經驗。訪談過程將會全程錄音，希望你不會介意。再次感謝你的合作和參與。

I. Personal information 個人資料

Q1. Gender (tick one block) 性別 在方框內打勾
 ❑ Male 男 ❑ Female 女

Q2. What is your year of birth? 請問你是民國幾年出生的？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Q3. What is your highest educational qualification? 你的最高學歷是什麼？
 ❑ High school graduate 普通高中 ❑ Vocational school graduate 高職
 ❑ 5 years college graduate 五專 ❑ 2 years technical college graduate 二技
 ❑ Graduate degree 大學 ❑ Postgraduate degree 碩士
 ❑ Others (please identify)＿＿＿＿＿ 其它 請說明
 3.1 What is your major at the school? 你在學校的主修是什麼？

Q4. How long have you been working in this Hotel? 你在這個飯店服務多久了？
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Q5. What was your position when you started your career in this hotel?
 你進這家飯店工作的是從什麼職務開始的？
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

Q6. How many hours do you work per week? 你一星期工作幾個小時？
＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

II. I want to talk a little bit now about your perceptions of the management role at this Hotel.
現在我想要了解你對於經理人的角色在＿＿＿＿＿飯店工作的看法。

Q7. What are your key duties and responsibilities of your job?
 你工作的主要任務和責任是什麼？

Q8. What do you like about your job?
 些方面使你對於你的工作產生興趣？

Q9. On the other hand, what do you dislike about your job?

另一方面，這個工作或公司制度有那方面讓你感到不喜歡或無所是從？

Q10. What are the formal and informal ways of communication in this hotel?
飯店有　些正式和非正式的溝通管道？

- How often do you have meetings with other managers?
  你和其他部門經理多久集會一次？

- Is there any employee participation in the meeting? Why or Why not?
  集會中是否有任何員工參與？為什麼有或沒有？

Q11. How free are employees to contact you or other managers in the hotel for a work-related or other issue?

當員工在工作上或遇有其他問題時，他們如何對你或其他經理表達意見和看法？

- Which issues have you heard of the most from employees?
  你最常聽到員工反應　些問題？

Q12. What are the business goals and development of this hotel?
貴飯店的目標和發展是什麼？

- What do you think how employees understand those?
  你如何確定員工對此有所體認和了解？

- What other information is made available to the employees in your department?
  在你的部門裡，還有　些其它訊息是員工可以取得和知道的？

Q13. What are employees expected to do when dealing with customer complaints or special requirements?
當處理客人抱怨和特殊要求時，你期望你的員工如何應對處理？

- To what extent do you trust your employees to make work-related decisions on their own?
  你對部屬在工作上需自行做決定時，你對他們的信任程度在　裡？

- What happens if employees make a mistake on their job in related to resolve a customer complaint?
  當部屬在解決客人抱怨時做為了錯誤的判斷，你會如何處理？

Q14. What kind of training do employees have while working at (name of) hotel?
在員工服務於＿＿＿＿＿飯店這期間，他們需接受　些職業訓練課程？

- How often do employees receive training courses?
  員工訓練多久實行一次？

- What do you think of the outcome of those training courses?
  這些訓練課程的結果如何？

Q15. What rewards do employees receive when they reach high levels of performance?
當部屬有高水準的表現時，他會得到怎麼樣的獎賞？

- Do you think they are satisfied with their rewards in general?
  整理而言他們對於這樣的獎賞感到滿意　？

- What rewards do you think are the most valued to your employees?
  什麼樣的獎賞你認為對你的部屬意義最大？

Q16. How do you encourage employee performance at work?
你是如何去鼓勵和激發員工在工作上的表現？

I want to talk a little bit now about your opinions of managers and employees.
我現在想談談你對於經理和員工的看法。

Q17. Can you describe to me your best employee?
可否請你描述怎樣才算是一個好的部屬？
- What is it that makes a good employee?
什麼要素造就一個好的部屬？
- What do you expect from your employees?
你對於你的部門員工有什麼樣的期望？
Q18. Can you describe to me the characteristics and behaviour of an ideal manager?
可否請你描述一個理想的經理應該具備 些行為特質和管理方式？

I notice that the hotel has an empowerment policy. I want to talk a little bit now about the concept of empowerment. 我注意到貴飯店有授權的政策，我想談談關於授權的概念。

Q19. What does this mean to you? And how important is it in your opinion?
你對於授權的看法是什麼？就你的觀點它的重要性又在 裡？
Q20. What do you mean when you say you want to empower people?
當你說授權給部屬時這意味著什麼？
- Do you really need empowered people?
你真的有必要授權給部屬 ？
- Do you really want empowered people?
你真的想要授權給部屬 ？
Q21. What organizational characteristics facilitate employee empowerment?
怎樣的企業特性比較容易造就一個授權的文化？
Q22. How do you mobilise and motivate newly empowered staff?
對於一個新進員工你如何去教育和激勵，讓他對於工作上的表現能 符合公司的期待。
Q23. How do people develop a sense of empowerment?
一般人如何明瞭授權的定義？貴工司又如何建立授權制度。
Q24. What is your opinion about the differences between a hierarchy and an empowered organisation?
你對於等級制度和授權組織的不同有何看法？

I want to ask few more questions and make a conclusion of this interview.
我再問你一些問題，然後對於今天的訪談做個結論。

Q25. In general, do you enjoy your job? Why?
整體而言，你喜愛你的工作 ？為什麼？
Q26. What situations or reasons will make you leave the hotel where you work now?
什麼樣的情況或理由會促使你離開你現在服務的飯店？
Q27. Can you tell me your overall opinions of implementation of empowerment at your workplace and it depends on your own experience?
整體而言，就你的經驗來看，貴飯店在執行授權上是如何運作？

Please feel free if there is anything you would like to tell or ask me about anything which is not covered by interview questions.
最後…就以上訪談之外有沒有什麼不在我的問題中，而你想提出來與我分享討論的，請不要客氣。

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Appendix E

Interview Questions to Bottom Line Employee:
My name is Jackson Ming-Chih Lai. Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this interview. The interview we have now is part of my PhD research study at Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom. I am interested in your experiences at work in an international chain hotel. The findings and conclusions of this research will only be used for my PhD thesis. I am going to start with a few general questions about yourself if that is ok and then proceed to ask some questions in related to your working experience at _(name of)_ hotel. The interview will be tape recorded, I hope that is OK for you. Thank you again for your cooperation.

你好，我叫賴明志 Jackson。非常感謝你同意參與這次的訪談。這個訪談是我在英國 Sheffield Hallam 大學博士班學術研究的一部份。我對於你在國際連鎖飯店的工作經驗感到非常有興趣。這個研究的結果和推論將只會運用在我的博士班畢業論文中。如果都沒有問題，那麼我將從問你一些一般問題開始，然後是關於你服務於　飯店的工作經驗。訪談過程將會全程錄音，希望你不會介意。再次感謝你的合作和參與。

I. Personal information 個人資料

Q1. Gender (tick one block) 性別 在方框內打勾
　　❑ Male 男　❑ Female 女

Q2. What is your year of birth? 請問你是民國幾年出生的？
_____

Q3. What is your highest educational qualification? 你的最高學歷是什麼？
　　❑ High school graduate 普通高中　❑ Vocational school graduate 高職
　　❑ 5 years college graduate 五專　❑ 2 years technical college graduate 二技
　　❑ Graduate degree 大學　　　　❑ Postgraduate degree 碩士
　　❑ Others (please identify)_____ 其它 請說明
　　3.1 What is your major at the school? 你在學校的主修是什麼？_____
Q4. How long have you been working in this Hotel? 你在這個飯店服務多久了？
_____

Q5. What is your position in the hotel? 你在飯店的職稱是什麼？
_____

Q6. What is your job status? 你和飯店的員工契約是…
　　❑ Permanent, Part time 固定半職　❑ Permanent, Full time 固定全職
　　❑ Temporary, Part time 臨時半職　❑ Temporary, Full time 臨時全職
　　6.1 How many hours do you work per week? 你一星期工作幾個小時？
_____

II. Interview questions 訪談問題
I want to talk a little bit now about your perception of working at _(name of)_ hotel.
現在我想要了解你對於在_____飯店工作的看法。

Q7. What are your key duties and responsibilities of your job?
　　你工作的主要任務和責任是什麼？
Q8. What do you like about your job?

些方面使你對於你的工作產生興趣？

Q9. On the other hand, what do you dislike about your job?
另一方面，這個工作有什麼讓你不喜歡的？

Q10. How do managers approach you when they need your work to be done?
當經理需要你把你的工作完成或做好，他是如何讓你知道的？
- How often do you and your team have meeting with your line manager?
  你的工作小組和你多久和你們的部門經理集會？
- What are the contexts of the meeting?
  集會的內容在講些什麼？

Q11. What do you do when you are not satisfied your tasks?
你對於你的工作任務不滿意時，你會怎麼做？
- Is that the best solution for you? Why or Why not?
  對你而言，那是最好的處理方式　？　為什麼是或不是？

Q12. Depends on your best knowledge, what are the goals and development of this hotel?
根據你最好的了解，你們飯店的目標和發展是什麼？
- Why do you think so?
  你為什麼這樣想？
- Where do the thoughts come from?
  你這樣的想法是怎麼來的？

Q13. Can you tell me about a time when customer has special requirement, how do you deal with the customer?
請你告訴我當客人有特殊要求時，你會如何處理？
- If customer complains related to finance, what do you cope with the customer?
  如果客人的抱怨會牽　到錢方面的問題，你會如何處理這樣的狀況？
- What do managers do when they don't agree with your own judgment and decision that are relevant to resolve a customer complaint?
  經理對於你解決客人抱怨的判斷力和決定結果感到不滿意時，他會怎麼做？

Q14. What kind of training courses do you receive when you work at (name of) hotel?
在你服務於_____飯店這期間，你接受過　些職業訓練課程？
- What is your personal opinion of the training courses that hotel provides?
  你對於飯店所提供的訓練課程的看法是什麼？
- What do you learn and understand from those training courses?
  你在訓練課程中了解和學習到什麼？

Q15. What rewards do you receive when you reach high levels of performance?
當你有高水準的表現時，你會得到怎麼樣的獎賞？
- Are you satisfied with the reward?
  對於這樣的獎賞你感到滿意　？
- What rewards to you value the most?
  什麼樣的獎賞對你意義最大？

Q16. What is it that motivates you at work?
什麼東西最能激發你的工作表現？

I want to talk a little bit now about your opinions of manager and employee.
我現在想談談你對於經理和員工的看法。

Q17. Can you describe to me your best manager?
可否請你描述怎樣的經理是最好的？

- What is it makes a good manager?
  什麼要素造就一個好的經理？
- What do you expect from your line manager?
  你對於你的部門經理有什麼樣的指望？

Q18. Can you describe to me the characteristics and behaviour of an ideal employee?
可否請你描述一個理想的員工應該具備　些行為特質？

I want to ask few more questions and make a conclusion of this interview.
我再問你一些問題，然後對於今天的訪談做個結論。

Q19. In general, do you enjoy your job? Why?
整體而言，你喜愛你的工作　？為什麼？
- What do you think working environment in between you and your colleagues?
  對於你的工作環境以及同事間的相處你的想法是什麼？

Q20. What situations or reasons will make you leave the hotel where you work now?
什麼樣的情況或理由會促使你離開你現在服務的飯店？

Please feel free if there is anything you would like to tell or ask me that something are not covered by interview questions.
有沒有什麼不在我訪談的問題中，而你想提出來與我分享討論的，請不要客氣。

金典酒店房務部副理　訪談錄音的文字記錄謄本 編號 4 之 13

你好，我叫賴明志 Jackson。非常感謝你同意參與這次的訪談。這個訪談是我在英國 Sheffield Hallam 大學博士班學術研究的一部份。我對於你在國際連鎖飯店的工作經驗和經營管理感到非常有興趣。這個研究的結果和推論將只會運用在我的博士班畢業論文中。如果都沒有問題，那麼我將從問你一些一般問題開始，然後是關於你服務於遠企飯店的工作經驗。訪談過程將會全程錄音，希望你不會介意。再次感謝你的合作和參與。

J: 那我首先先請問一下,你民國幾年出生?

60 年

J: 那最高學歷是?

高中

J: 普通高中還是高職?

高職?

J: 那你那時候在高職的主修是?

化學工程

J: 那在金典服務多久了?

五個月

J: 那你之前是在?

一般商務飯店,待兩年多,然後在旅行社做了四年多的時間

J: 那怎麼會想到金典?

那是需要一份工作嘛!然後會想說待在一個飯店是一個比較有相關性的工作因為那個我那之前經營過旅行社..

J: 那你一開始進入到金典是從什麼樣的職務開始做?

領班

J: 領班就是房務部領班? 房務部算是 house keeping ?

大概是往這一個方面去,包括有清房間吸地板天花板和公共工程

J: 那你一開始從領班開始做,那多久的時間升到副理?

四個月

J: 四個月後就升副理,那你平均一個星期要工作多少小時?

超過八十個小時

J: 那你覺得你們在人力上,在 house keeping

嚴重不足

J: 嚴重不足,為什麼會產生這樣子的一個狀況?

因為..因為滿難講的,房務員的薪水不高,但是飯店的要求其實滿高的,那相對要求基層員工要去做到一個品質,然後又給的 pay 不是那麼高的話,當然願意進來的人就不多

J: 那就目前有多少員工在這個部門?

單指 house keeping 還是 room service....

J: 你們公司是外包還是自己做?

飯店自己做

J: 那如果兩個部門分開來看的話　?

.....分開來....public area 分開來.....連領班大概 23 個

J: 那你覺得多少的人力才算是符合需求?

大概要 28 個到 30 個

J: 那你工作主要的任務跟責任什麼?

Training 還有就是 check 那還包括部門之間的協調

J: 那你覺得說對你目前這份工作,你有覺得有興趣　?還是你覺得..

當然現在經濟不景氣,可能要找一份比較好的一份工作可能比較不好找,怎麼說..我是對飯店業比較有興趣才會進來

J: 那就整個公司制度你有沒有覺得不喜歡或是覺得無所適從?

我覺得是,當然我們的上級主管他的要求,當然我們也知道說站在他的立場他是..他的想法是對,但是如果以..我們是剛好夾在一個中間的　色的話,那對房務員的要求也是這樣的要求,那如果對上級主管之間會有一些出入,當然也不會達到也沒有辦法達到上級主管所要求的這樣的一個品質

J: 那你覺得說最大的問題癥結點在　裡,為什麼沒有辦法達到..?

因為高級主管他們沒有實地的來做過這樣的一個工作,他沒有做過最基層的工作,他不曉得說你沒有辦法把做基層的房務員所遇到,如果說不是這麼　的房間他大概要花多少時間去達到他要求的標準,那客人的損壞的房間的程度有多大,這樣子,那

因為會隨著接的客人的層次不一樣而會影響他們工作的時間

J: 所以基本上你覺得說如果在人力重組的狀態下你覺得說這個問題是可以解決的?

當然每個人的工作量如果說能 減少當然說他的品質當然相對能 提高,那當然要去..量能 達到那一個地方的話,那相對的品質真的能 達到某一個地方,那譬如說後續的整個在房間的擺設比較細微的地方的話,那就需要領班他們在去 check 一次,然後我們在去 check 一次,這樣品質才能提高

J: 那你覺得有什麼方法可以改善?

房務員的教育可能我認為的方法可能可以提高員工的薪資然後讓他們達到一個標準,有一個獎懲的制度,譬如說你這個做不好我就是要懲罰你,說最現實的是錢,錢在做事情,那相對他們做的好那相對的我也是可以給他們一個獎金, 那這也是我讓房務員可以接受的,那你現在只給逞罰不給獎金的話....(太小聲...)

J: 所以就說目前公司制度他只有逞罰可是沒有..?

當然它是有獎勵是必須要客人寫的意見是..那..客人有提到這個房務員的名字,那公司會給它獎勵,那當然我們當然也可以寫每個獎勵獎逞的單子出去,那問題是.因為現在的房務員現在他領的這樣的薪水的話,而且如果說要照我們的要求的話他幾乎是達不到,那我也寫不下那個獎勵的單子

J: 那你覺得說你能做最好的 house keeping 這個部份他再怎麼樣的情況下才有可能達到客人的所對的 commend 所謂的獎勵,因為基本上它很少會去有跟客人實際上有很直接的接觸?

其實不一定 ,也些人認為 house keeping 是一個後勤的部門,但是其實實際上它是跟客人接觸上也是算滿頻繁的,除了櫃 之外,櫃 是直接 check in 客人 check out 的時候跟客人面對面,那當有時候客人在可能他的隱私他的各種習慣是這些 room man 反而比較瞭解的,所以他們反而是第一線的跟客人接觸的,在我的認為 !一般的飯店都會認為說他是櫃 是直接跟客人,那是第一面,那接下來的後續的跟客人的感覺就是在 house keeping 這邊,所以說當 遇到客人的時候就需要去做一個比如說一個比較有利的比較好的回應的話,我想這些都是對客人有影響的

J: 那就整個飯店來講的話,因為你剛剛講譬如說今天向及主管對你們的要求,基本上你們沒有辦法達到,那你們說用什麼樣的方式去溝通?

當然說如果對於我是一個上級主管的話,我當然適用最精簡的人力去完成最多的工作,那但是這是一個平衡點,他可能沒有辦法去計算到這一個平衡點到底在 裡.當然是逞下來算是一種節省的開銷.那開銷整個一個以客房的利潤來說當然是能 增

加的

J: 那你們通常的部門職員多久集會一次?

一個月有一次部門的會議,就是針對說部門之間的我們 house keeping 包括天花版包括洗衣房之間的配合這樣會有一次的會議,那如果說另外有一些問題產生的話比如說可能會私底下就可能說其他不屬於 house keeping 所轄屬的部門去做一個集會,那也就是說司底下找時間再另外開會

J: 那你覺得說做這樣的集會你覺得幫助大嘛?你覺得成果會一個成長?

每個人會有一個立場,因為他們在這樣一個情況下是這樣,他們會覺得說立場是這樣子,那我們有我們的立場,那相對主管有主管的立場,那我們有我們的立場,那所以說要達到一個 balance 是比較困難的

J: 所以那你覺得有什麼其他辦法可以改善　?

有辦法可以改善阿!我是覺得這是不是短時間看的到成效的,如果說今天在在..阿..房務員或是員工的薪資方面去做一個調整,然後工作量做一個調整那品質相對提高,那長時間下來的話這個客人回流會的機率會更高,因為　的房間的品質如果說沒有到那麼好的話,以五星級的飯店來講的話,下次就不會花這個前來住這一家酒店,那是以長遠的看,那如果說是以比較短的來看,就是說我花的錢越少然後客人房價賣的越高,那我的客人來就是賺的越多,那如果說以長遠的經營來看的話,包括你的房間的一個整齊,我是覺得都是需要,有必要說甚至說把整個樓層封起來整個樓層去做一個整修這樣子,那房間稍微達到一個整個的水準

J: 那你覺得說今天你們的 house keeping 的這一個部份　的員工 turnover 高不高?

Turnover 不是那麼高

J: 為什麼?

我想是這個有關於這個..等於說是薪水的問題

J: 等於說他大部分他們很少換工作?

對,因為他們,怎麼講,可能現在真的找工作是不容易　!那一般會進來他們就是能說真的這個工作是滿辛苦的的,那既然它能　待下來留下來的話,他就不太會去走,那當然很多人會想要走那當然它會還是會因為收入的問題,如果說他找到一份工作是收入比較高的,當然就會..

J: 所以說基本上是因為目前整個經濟環境讓他們說可能就繼續做

騎驢找馬,那奇驢找馬那乾脆習慣的這個工作也就將就這樣子

J: 那一般你們跟部門經理即會的話是全部的員工一起嘛?

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,,你說　一方面的?

就是每個月一次的跟部門經理跟全部員工?

對對對..

J: Ok...那在這個集會裡面通常都講些什麼集會內容是什麼?

通常就是看你們這邊要傳達給他們的比如說這個月應該加強的項目有　一些那接下來就是說看你他們有什麼要對上面反應的,對..他們有什麼意見可以提出來,不見得說是,,因為房務員友直接面對客人甚至有時候是客人直接提出來的意見,那平常他們也不會講,勝制有時候客人覺得說飯店這邊怎麼樣那怎麼沒有什麼東西,那我們是不是能　提供去告訴主管說是不是去做調整

J: 所以說這是屬於正式的? 那非正式的　?譬如你今天講說那今天可能一些員工它需要反映什麼東西,他只能在每個月的這個集會提出來?

沒有..平常他也是會講,但是平常他講的話就是可能是某一些客人有什麼一些指教,還是說客人一直在抱怨我們的客房裡面需要些什麼東西

J: 那你覺得說你最常聽到員工的抱怨有　些,大部分在反應　些問題?

員工的抱怨的話一般是工作量,對!工作量的問題,就是還是說例假日接到團體的話那這個團體的房間通常是假日進來,那房間當然會比較不好整理那相對工作時間也會比較長,對!會有遇到這種就是說房間比較難整理

J: 那你知道 Splendor 他目前他整個飯店他的目標和發展是什麼嘛?

說真的,我不曉得那個是高層他們的...

J: 那就是說他們完全沒有一個譬如說一個公開的資訊去讓員工得知說目前..

有　!!新進員工是有員工的訓練,那他的想法應該是說他想讓阿這個這家酒店成為這個台中就是最具規模的然後是所有品質是最好的,在我個人覺得是品質不是在外表的裝修,還包括客房裡面的比較部份的那些小瑕疵,你拷能說一點小瑕疵你都要去馬上去做處裡掉,那當然但是你覺得外觀固然是滿重要的但是其實內在也是重要的

J: 所以內在這個部份還包括包括所謂的服務　?

當然有包括服務,除了硬體的部分還包括服務

J: 那你覺得就目前 Splendor 他的服務你覺得?

我是覺得它的服務是已經超越別的飯店所應該能給的,因為甚至有些客人提出來的是比較無理的要求,可能某些飯店不會答應的,　..比如說像兩瓶水是規定是贈送的,

你另外要再要這個礦泉水的話,你到國外去 一家飯店他會是跟你要charge的,那我們的部份是說我們去滿足他們,只是加酒店是唯一跟人家不一樣的地方,那就是說我們在客人walk out東西的話我們也不會去把東西去追回來,因為相對的你打一通電話過去,跟客人說你把我們的飯店的東西拿走,那如果說,當然客人會帶走這一個東西他一定部會去正面承認說 我把這一個東西帶走,所以打話去是沒有用的,所以我們認為說不要去要這個東西回來,那當然這是我們部門是這樣,

J: 那通常在處理客人抱怨或是客人有客訴要求的時候你希望你的員工怎麼處理?

客人有抱怨的話通常會交由主管處理,他們不會直接去處理.

J: 為什麼?

因為在客訴方面的話有時候他們沒有受過這種客人抱怨的處理的教育,那可能他會去跟客人有爭執產生,那像我們處理的話我們會先去請聽客人講,會先去站在客人的立場,讓客人覺得說情緒緩和,那房務員他的工作是單單是很簡單的整理房間,但是當客人有客訴抱怨的時候會交由主管來處理

J: 那你覺得這樣子是好還是不好?

我覺得這樣子比較好,因為如果讓房務員直接來處的話那你的上級也不知道狀況是怎麼樣,那如果錯了....處理不當反而是造成客人的一個抱怨.

J: 那你覺得說在客人的一個特殊要求的時候 ?

一般來講客人的特殊要求可能不是過分的,比如說多要水多要茶的話這些我們是不會說會去在意的,

J: 房務員可以直接給?

可以直接給,這樣子..

J: 那房務員他們怎麼去界定什麼可以直接給?

那當然比如像水果來講的話我們就比較有一些normal guest和VIP的setting的標準,那他的要求如果超過了這個,那我們就會看狀況行事

J: 所以基本上你覺得當客人再做特殊要求的時候他們的權限很有限?

當然是很有限的!

J: 那你覺得這樣子會不會造成說讓客人等更久的時間?

通常客人的特殊要求他會直接call到辦公室,然後再由主管決定給還是不給

J: 那如果當時主管不在 ?

不可能有主管不在時候阿!

J: 所以一定會有主管!

J: 那你覺得說今天你對於你的部屬如果說他有必要自行做決定在任何情況下,那你覺得你有辦法去信任他嘛?

沒有

J: 為什麼?

因為我講這個水平不是很..如果水平好一點的話我可能可以去放心去讓他做

J: 你怎麼去看水平...?

因為責任感的觀察,所以可能他都趕快把他的工作作完他就要下班了,他不會用心的去做這些事情,那一切在於有沒有用心去做用心去學,用心去做的話是可以把每一件事情都做的好

J: 那你覺得怎麼去培養他們的責任感 ?

培養他們的責任感,就是責任感是一種成就感,要讓他們在成功中得到成就感

J: 那成就感是怎麼產生的 ?

有些房務員可能會覺得很感動是客人寫一張紙條,那就是謝謝他們這幾天來幫他們整理房間,那像這些房務員他們就會覺得說 我的辛苦有得到回報,我要的就是精神上的,那當然在獎勵方面當然公司有一個獎金的制度,那當然如果公司業績有的話,其實獎金是大家的,那這個是每個人都有的,那客人就是小小的寫一張小紙條等於說謝謝這樣,等於說讓房務員更能 ...

J: 那你覺得說精神和金錢方面 一個幫助比較大?

金錢!

J: 你覺得金錢比較大?為什麼?

如果他覺得精神能 讓他就能 得到這份工作的滿足的話,那他們就能 再往上升一級做一個比較..往上升一級做一個主管了,那為什麼今天會有一些主管會有一些職等,就是因為他們對於一個責任感的問題,如果今天你能 掌握說 他的責任是到 裡,因為他的那個..那今天如果說他能 說去超越他的工作的話,那當然我們會去考慮這個人甚至應該要把他升上來往上升職

J: 那你有沒有遇過就是你的部屬下屬在處理客人特殊要求的時候做錯了就去頂,有沒有遇過這樣的經驗?

一般如果比較重大的他們應該不太趕,我有遇到私底下這個客人因為小費的問題,因為這個客人的要求是不合乎公司的規定,比如說這是一個 normal guest,那他送進去的水果可能不是有一個,那是有 VIP 等級以上的這樣子,那甚至超越了這樣子的東西進去,那這個客人當然是會給小費,那金錢是會去改變房務員的態度跟習慣

J: 所以你覺得基本上是因為今天他們薪資不 高,所以金錢會成為一個誘惑?

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J: 那一般的話員工在進入 Splendor 的話目前你們公司有的話他們是需要透過是需要經過 一些職業訓練的課程?

那包括公司的經營理念,公司的一個架構,公司的一些....(聽不懂 !!)

J: 那你覺得像你剛剛講的那些訓練課程你覺得這樣充足嘛? ?

還有包括一些緊急應變..對..

J: 那這樣的員工訓練是多久一次?

他新進員工就一次,比如說這種安全演練,都是有固定的安全科在負責的

J: 那便成說只有他新進來的那一次..?

沒有我們的 training 每個星期都有

J: 那你覺得這樣的訓練過程的結果?

剛開始會很有效,因為可能他的主管在檢 的時候會這些是重點,那相對的其他的就會比較鬆一點,因為他知道說這個星期再做這個部份的一個訓練,那他就強化這個部分那其他他就沒有辦法去都顧到,那從我進來到現在為止,其實房間的狀況已經改善相當的多,那像整個房務員的水準他是慢慢的再提升.那可能是我們目前在做的這個訓練也是有效果,那客人的要求的話也是一小部份..

J: 所以你覺得是就長期來講..

他不一下有效果,他是慢慢慢慢的進步,不是那麼快一下子就能 看到成功.

J: 那就於你的觀點你們對於今天公司的獎勵制度感到滿意 ?

公司的獎勵...

J: 因為你剛才說過他的一個月的那個賣房率那個 bonus 你覺得目前公司有其它的 bonus....?

其實目前他的 bonus 是滿 ok 的 !他們有把這個當作是一個正正正..每個月都有送..就是..部分,那譬如說今天住房率很高,其實是慢慢累積下來的就是說整個一個房間的品質,服務的品質,可能會去牽涉到這個...所以我們只能說盡力去做,那做到一個品質提升

J: 那你覺得這樣的獎賞對於 部署的意義很大 ?

當然多了這些獎金的話他們會覺得說 他那個月的辛苦是多多少少得到一點回報,那說他那個月那麼辛苦,那住房率高的話..

J: 那說除了公司的部份,那你覺得你怎麼去激勵他們在工作上的表現?

我想有時候會用柔性的會比較好一點,私底下跟他..其實每一個人在工作會有一些,每個人都會有優缺點,就是他的缺點的部份,就是私底下跟他講,那他的優點的部份,你可以在每天早上的晨會的時候跟大家講說 某個人他某方面表現的很不錯這樣,那就是優點的部份就是去在公共場合表達,那缺點的部份就是私底下在跟他講,希望跟他重感情的...比較好

J: ! 那你覺得怎麼樣才算是一個好的部屬?

我覺得責任心,他如果有責任心的話他是會去完成他做的,他會去把工作做到最好

J: 那你覺得整體台灣人的責任感重嘛?

台灣人的責任感我覺得不是那麼重,可能是他自己對自己定位的問題,那因為比如說像是在我的工作範圍內,不是在我的工作範圍內,他可能分..界定的比較清楚,當然以在往上一級的主管的話,他可能會覺得說他的工作就不僅於,比如說像..甚至走到像,不是屬於自己的區域 的東西也會去撿掉,因為那是整個飯店的一個一個大家都看的到,不見得說這個是我的區域我才要做,那在其他的部門可能是基層員工他會想說這不是我的,可能會劃分這條線以內是我的這條線以外是別的部門的,會去分的比較清楚

J: 那你覺得什麼問題或是什麼背景會產生這樣的基層員工他們可能比較會去分這樣的一個..?

還是責任感的問題

J: 所以說還是普遍責任感偏低,那你覺得你對於你整個部門的員工你有什麼樣的期望?他們自動自發更有責任感之外

我希望他們能 更成長自己不見得要完全一直停留在基層員工的角色,你可以不段的充實自己往上爬,因為以學歷來講的話,房務員可能都是學力比較差,你也知道我不是有高學歷,那也不是說沒有學歷就不能當一個主管的職務,那就是看你的企圖心,那看你願不願意去學習這樣子,我覺得我對他們的期望就是說你要多去學習不是說你要接受挑戰,不是只有單單去怎麼做,人家怎麼交代你就去把它做完..

J: 那就一個理想的部門經理你覺得他應該去具備那一些特質?應該怎麼去做他的管理?

其實很難去做,有時候你要去扮演一個黑臉的角色,但是有時候你又要去扮演一個比較軟的角色,要不然就是一個我非常非常中立非常嚴厲的針對每一個人,要不然

就是很親切的去針對每一個人,那不然就是我兩樣的話都會得到一個反效果,所以通常的話部門的主管會有一個去扮演一個比較強的角色,那另外一個主管就會去扮演另一個角色

J: 那你覺得這兩個嚴厲跟比較親切... 一個利潤比較高?

其實親切的利潤是比較好的,在這邊我是慢慢才發現到,那在以前工作的場合的話我就發現你的那種親切有時候好像他犯的錯他會覺得很對不起我的上司,我去害到我的上司,畢竟台灣人來講的話會比較善良一點,那他會覺得說這樣去影響我的上司害我的上司被.....他們會覺得心裡不是很...

J: 那你本身你了解 empowerment 這個東西嘛?

授權,我了解

J: 那你覺得說今天你覺得你對於授權的看法是什麼?

你指的是你..

J: 就整體來講,譬如說你的上級授權給你,或是你授權給你的部屬,就整個公司來看,你覺得授權這一個東西..

J: 那就你的觀點來講你覺得他重要 ?

重要

J: 怎麼說?

因為你能 充份的去表現你的權利,是你能 授權...

J: 那你說充分的去表現你的權利,那怎麼去界定你的權力到 裡?

那當然它給你的權限到 裡,就是只能到 裡,那就是說房客剛剛講的就是說一般normal 的你就是只能給一般的東西,那比如說好了,你要開某些房間是不能 去開的,那你要開,那就是某些主管才能開...那就是權限的問題..

J: 所以你覺得如果以要授權的話就要把整個權力界定的非常清楚?

對...然後在他權力的所及內發揮到最大的等級

J: 那你會希望授權給你的員工?

當我很信任這個員工的話當然會,我當然希望說每一個人都能 盡量發展到一個極限,當然希望,但是我還是不敢

J: 為什麼?

因為我怕還是會出問題,他還沒有到達所要求的,當然還是可以,譬如說好了這個房間你去檢 就可以了,你認為 ok 就可以馬上可以放出來讓櫃 去賣

J: 那你覺得去信任一個員工會不會很難?

信任一個員工我覺得是滿困難的要花滿長的一段時間

J: 那所以你覺得授權是有必要的但是是要在你完全信任一個員工的狀況下?

對

J: 那你覺得你希望你的上級授權給你 ?

當然會阿!!

J: 為什麼?你有沒有覺得怕說他也許不信任你?

我會去表現說我能 做到怎麼樣,那比如說在一些客層方面的話或是一些突發狀況的處理或抱怨的話,一般他是...的去授權我們去客訴處理,可是如果說 出更大的婁子的話.....(聽不懂..)應該要把自己的層次往上提,如果說你今天是一個領班的話你要怎麼去..那你是一個副理的話你要怎麼去提升到...

J: 所以你覺得教育很重要?

對!

J: 那你覺得今天對於一個新進的員工你們如何去教育鼓勵 ?去符合 ok 有一天他能 繼續的往上去 promote?

其實一個剛進來的員工我們會去觀察剛開始的時候,會去給一個...(聽不懂...)剛開始我們會去觀察他對這個行業的一個,比如說他喜不喜歡這個行業,那他來這邊工作的目的,最主要的他想要得到什麼,那如果說他有那個慾望,就是說他要往上爬,他的背景他的整個狀況可能合乎我們要提拔的一個人的標準的時候我們才會開始培養這個人

J: 所以等於說每一個人來工作他的工作動機是很重要的?

對!

來決定他的未來你們怎麼去..

對!怎麼去改變他..他將來的路線往 邊走

J: 那你覺得目前基本上 Splendor 有授權制度在整個企業裡 ?

沒有

J: 所以基本上你認為你的上級給你的權限並不 你的需求?

有的時候有些事情其實是我們就可以來做處理的但是這件事情傳到上面去,不管有發生什麼事情我們還是要向上級報告,不管有客人客訴我們還是要向上級報告,那甚至要等到上級...要這一件事情怎麼去處理

J: 那你們再回報上級的時候,是同步回報還是處裡完才回報?

當然是再遇到客訴的時候要馬上去處理,所以處理完再做報告.

J: 那你覺得就一個傳統等級制度的公司,分的很清楚,跟你的授權制度來講,你有什

麼看法?

因為其實每個職等他有不同他的工作內容,那當然如果我能授權給我的下屬或是我的上級授權給我,那其實有時候是會增加他們工作的量,就等於說本來不是他的結果等於說他的工作量也相對的提高,那相對的你提高了他的一個工作量,他的職位也需要做一個調整

J: 所以就你本身來講你覺得你比較喜歡　一個工作環境?

你指的工作環境是?

J: 有等級制度很明卻還是一個授權的文化組織?

等級制度很明確的,因為你至少一個越權的,超越等級的一個,比如說某些客人,不是說你一般的基層員工就可以來接待他的,那客人會要求說,你就派一個,恩領班來跟我講,他會要求說我要找你們　一個等級的以上的主管來跟我談,當然會　到這種情況......(說什麼阿??聽不到　!!)更上層的人來跟我談,因為台灣人不管是外國人都好都會遇到這種情況,這是一個,就像你授權去給房務員好了去處理客訴的事情,那他有時候會覺得你的誠意你這一家公司的誠意不是那麼　,就是讓一個房務員來跟我談這個,他已經有抱怨了

J: 那你覺得授權這種東西在台灣的飯店可行　?

授權當然是在某一些方式你是可以授權給他們的,就像我講的像水果這一類的不影響到公司的營運的狀況的

J: 的成本,大成本的部份..

對對對對對...不會影響到公司營運狀況的那一方面的東西,其實都是可行但是或許會影響到公司的營運狀況會是會影響到客人會不會再回來這種情況的話我們還是希望由主管來處理

J: 那我在問你一些問題就結束今天的訪談,就整體而言你喜歡你的工作　?

你指的喜歡是包括整個...

J: 就是你會不會很 enjoy 他還是..

當然我每個人的想法不一樣那今天我來我是今天我來這個工作就是我佔了這個職位的話我還是盡力把工作做好,就像我的工作時間有時候是相當長的,早班八點來上班,那其實平常下午三點辦就可以下班,那我們還是要到晚上十點十一點才下班,因為覺得還是很多事情還沒做完所以如果我尚早班的話還是一樣,經理不在,我就整天都在公司裡,

J: 公司有額外的 pay　?

沒有沒有

J: 那這只會發生在管理階層還是基層員工也會有這樣的問題?

基層員工不會有這樣的情況

J: 所以基層的房務員來了下班了就可以走了?

他們是這樣子,12個房間是算七個小時,但是你在七個小時內沒完成的話你還是要在呆,去把這些事情做好,那他們還是一種責任制,那當然我們責任制是包括了一些額外的可能一些臨時的狀況這一種

J: 那什麼情況和理由會讓你離開金典　?

當我覺得我們用心在做這一個工作,但還不被認同的時候,我就會離開這個公司

J: 那...ok..其他你有沒有什麼你想談的不在我的問題裡面的?

我覺得飯店是環環相扣的,沒有什麼誰那一個部門是比較重要的,　一個部門是比較不重要的,那一般人對飯店的印象都是覺得說 room man 那 house keeping 是比較一個低層,一個比較不是那麼高級的工作,那其實每一個人在每一個飯店都是在扮演一個很重要的角色,如果今天沒有 house keeping 只有前台,你們也是沒也辦法做事,所以其實環環相扣,那一般人對房務部的一個看法他會向比較像我剛剛講的我覺得別人對於房務員的一個眼光的話就是希望不要用他們就是一個清潔員在看,對於房務員就是一個在掃廁所在整理房間的一個清潔員,其實他是讓客人來感受這一家飯店最基本最基本的一個員工

J: 所以你覺得基本上公司應該更專注...

在房務身上,因為櫃　只是一個 section 的工作,那客人是仰賴他們來..他們來接待,那房間裡面其實是最重要的,對!我是覺得是這樣子

J: 好!非常好!那最後我想問你,你覺得基本上就整體台灣的就就文化上的觀念好了,你覺得台灣他的屬性和個性,在整個客人和飯店兩個方面來講的話..?

我覺得台灣的客人的話,可能真的水準還沒有到那麼高,所以今天他們會認為說你們是五星級的飯店,那為什麼什麼東西都沒有,那飯店不是全能的,不是提供你要什麼東西我就能給你什麼東西,比如說你今天要跟我要麻將要麻將　,我們會認為說因為你個人的關係要麻將　但是會影響到更多的客人當然我們會去拒絕他們,所以說台灣人他們不會去考慮說別人的感覺是怎麼樣,那比如說向外國人和台灣人的房間,台灣人的房間會比較不好整理.他會覺得說我來花了這個錢我就會盡量去把你給使用,那員工方面的話我是覺得台灣人　性比較強,如果說比大陸,因為我們這邊是有大陸的人拿到工作證的員工在工作,那相對的做比較的話,那他們會去比較會去　一些小細節,有時候那邊　一點這邊　一點,台灣人會比較誠實,就是說,,　!!我

沒有做完,那當然比較任勞任怨

J: 就是我們比較吃苦耐勞....

對!台灣人比較任勞任怨,就是有這個好處

J: 那你覺得年紀上有有有差別 ?

現在年輕人你可能要叫他來做房務員的話,十個..恩不要講十個..一百個裡面可能有
九十九個他們都....因為這是一個相當辛苦的工作

J: 所以就整體你們房務部就是平均年齡還是比較高的?

　　...

J: 　..ok!好!就謝謝你,我如果之後有其他問題要再問你的話你有沒有其他的方式
譬如說 email 還是說..?

我就寫給你...

金典酒店宴會廳服務員/實習生　訪談錄音的文字記錄謄本 編號 12 之 13

你好，我叫賴明志 Jackson。非常感謝你同意參與這次的訪談。這個訪談是我在英國 Sheffield Hallam 大學博士班學術研究的一部份。我對於你在國際連鎖飯店的工作經驗和經營管理感到非常有興趣。這個研究的結果和推論將只會運用在我的博士班畢業論文中。如果都沒有問題，那麼我將從問你一些一般問題開始，然後是關於你服務於遠企飯店的工作經驗。訪談過程將會全程錄音，希望你不會介意。再次感謝你的合作和參與。

J: 首先我們先從個人基本資料的部份,那我想請問你是　一年出生的?

1983 年 72 年

J: 你的最高學歷是?

現在是四技

J: 四技算是大學　?

對!

J: 那主修是?

餐飲管理

J: 所以基本上你們主修就是餐飲管理,跟飯店沒有相關性?

實習是在飯店實習,可是老師...有　到一點點　!對阿!

J: 那你們的科系就是餐飲管理?

對!

J: 那你在實習之前有在其他飯店工作的經驗　?

有,那個煙波跟中信都在新竹

J: 那你在煙波跟中信都做多久的時間?

沒有很久,都短短的

J: 是存脆打工?

對!

J: 那大約是,你記不記得兩個飯店都各多少時間?

都一個月內只做兩三天這樣子,然後不持久,大概只做一兩個月而已.

J: 所以說再一個月內都只做兩三天,然後不到兩個月,所以大概只做一個星期

J: 那你目前在金典飯店服務多久時間?

...快七個月了七月份..

J: 從..快七個月?

對!從一月一號到現在

J: 那你目前在飯店的職稱是?

外場服務生,可是飯店他會讓我們學一些就是正　人員做的工作,不是單單就是外

場服務,就是有提昇你管理方面的...就是那種工作,讓你可以管理到人這樣子.

J: 所以你現在是屬於　一個廳的部份?

宴會廳.

J: 那你們現在算是實習,那等於你們跟飯店的員工契約就是類似固定正　囉?

對!我們是一年都還算是正職的實習生

J: 那你大概平均一個星期工作幾個小時?

七小時

J: 一天?

對!一天七小時

J: 準時上下班?

沒有,宴會廳沒有,　忙的時候可以讓你長達 12 個小時,然後閒的時候它讓你四個小

時五個小時就下班了.

J: 所以宴會廳說你如果有,工作超時,其他不忙的時候你可以把他補回來?

對對對!

J: 那我想了解說你目前在這個工作,你的主要的任務和責任是包含　些部份?

任務跟責任　...

J: 就是你平常你都需要做些什麼?

現在阿我們有點類似說在做領班級的工作,因為我們要那個看宴會這樣,對阿!然後

就是學習一些跟客人應對阿!包括還要對跟工讀生的那種...就是我們要把工讀生

啊...運用的很好,對!讓在你這個宴會中能　順利進行阿!包括下一個宴會的翻場,你

都要很能運用你的工讀生,把你的場地能很快的都用好.

J: 所以你目前的的工作是包括去安排工讀生的工作區域去分配?

對!可是我們只是小部分的,因為我們只是看宴會,然後主管他會給我們一些工讀生,

不是說全部的工讀生都是由我們來分配這樣子

J: 針對你們宴會的工讀生?

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對!

J: 那除了你剛講的對工讀生的安排,你要知道其他宴會他翻場之後你要怎麼去準備之外,你還要做些什麼　?

還有業務,公司還有廳阿,他會給我們做一些業務,像我的業務就是譬如說我會負責操班表,對!因為我是負責工讀生那邊的,我們就是有一個系統,就是有好幾個team,然後每個 team 我們也會發班表說你這個 team 這禮拜要出幾個人,我們會預定一個時間內,你要在這個時間內寄來,你回報的人是誰,那我是負責操他們回報的人的班表.

J: 那你剛又提說還有一部分是針對客人的部份,那大約是什麼樣的狀況?

什麼樣的狀況,就是他來的時候有分會議和吃飯,那會議就是時間點要抓好,譬如說他什麼時候要開始,他上茶點的時間,休息時間然後結束時間,對!然後吃飯的話就是跟他 CHECK 好說上菜的時間.

J: 那你覺得你有喜歡這個工作的　些部分　?

我...只喜歡就是跟大家一起工作的時候,可是我不會喜歡這個工作,我只喜歡跟大家一起工作的感覺.

J: 所以等於你喜歡跟同事間那種工作那一種默契那一種感覺,但是實際上　不會喜歡這一個工作,為什麼?

因為太累了,時間很不固定,其實是很長,忙的時候真的很長,因為宴會廳淡季就只有幾個月而已.

J: 那所以你覺得說這個工作讓你不喜歡的就是因為時間比較長?

沒有!太有壓力了.

J: 怎麼說?

就是像...看宴會啊　真的很有壓力,像我們有時候還要看喜宴,阿喜宴他要準備的東西很多,而且都不能出差錯,出差錯的話...已經不是你一個人的事情了,對!包括後面你整個宴會到結束,你必須跟客人接洽到結帳,那你那個東西也要很謹慎.

J: 那我想針對譬如說,因為你們現在做宴會,你們做 banquet 這個部份通常客人比較容易有特殊的要求,譬如說可能他說突然會議的話我要跟你們租借什麼,可能這些都要錢,那我來租了,我又是常客可能我這些不要錢之類的,那所以說如果說我想請問你,通常目前當你遇到客人會有比較特殊要求的時候,你通常會怎麼去處理他?

… 像有一些比較常的就是比較常來的客人,他都一定會跟我們公司簽契約所以契約上面都會很明顯的註明說你租這個機器會比較便宜,或者是你只能在一年內使

用 12 次都可以免費,如果是比較常的常客就會這樣子,那如果不是常客的話我們都
會跟他講說我們飯店要收費,那我們就是報價給他,看他接不接受,那如果他不接受
的話,那就是他自己會...我還沒遇到這種客人,可是我遇到的,他會說他會回去再拿
單槍,借單槍的話,如果是其他機器,他會自己回去拿機器,可是如果他覺得價錢合理
的話他就會跟我們租用

J: 所以基本上,如果客人有提出比較特殊要求的時候,你都是按照公司規定

對

J: 沒有彈性?

    ... 對!基本上我遇到的情形都是這樣子,那我都這樣處理,那客人都可以接受.

J: 所以你還沒有遇過客人在處理上可能不滿意,那你需要去做進一步的?

對對對!

J: 那你有沒有遇過客人抱怨啊是跟金錢有關的部份,就是你剛剛講到這個東西是要
錢的,這是跟錢..?

會啊!就是會議很常阿!就是他們會說我來這裡你這個也要收錢那個也要收錢,對啊!
可是我們也只能跟他講說我們都是照公司規定這樣子啊

J: 所以完全沒有任何一點點的彈性空間就是了?

有,像停車卷阿!會議的話都是消費滿 500 塊,阿有時候我自己 !我是覺得那個還滿
彈性的...不需要說太去...你跟我要, 我曾經給客人 10 張阿!都是全成免費,可是我
覺得那種還好,因為今天我跟...我是看客人,今天我覺得那個客人還滿滿好相處的我
就會給他

J: 所以這就不是公司規定,這是憑感覺?

對!憑感覺,這有時候是...對阿!我們基本上是都要收費,一小時 30 塊,平日的話,那假
日 40 塊

J: 那你為什麼會有這個權限去給 10 張的免費停車卷?

    ...就自己可以拿阿!那副理也有跟我們講過說這是很彈性的,有時候給幾張沒有
關係,可是不要給太多,因為那也是包括飯店的那個...,我們包括宴會的那個支出的
部份,所以也不可以給的太離譜,也不會給太多.

J: 所以基本上你還是會取決於客人,如果你覺得客人不好..?

很少很少,像我們是吃飯是全程免費,只有會議的部份而已,對!

J: 那如果說今天你在處理客人的報怨,你有沒有處理過客人抱怨?

有...像他說菜太鹹了,我會馬上跟他講說我會跟師傅反應的,對!那有說像湯太鹹了,
我就馬上去給師父喝,然後就真的太鹹了,然後...可是他們是那種類似扶輪社,他們

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一到時間就開會了,所以就沒有再幫他換新的,有再去詢問他　說不用了,對!不用再幫他換新的,有一次啊,就遇到便當裡面有小　螂,然後客人就有打開給我們看,那我們馬上換新的給他,幸好那個客人沒有很抱怨,只說下次不要在這樣子了.

J: 所以基本上就是說你們再處理一些比較特殊的狀況或是客訴的時候都是以公司的大原則為原則?

對!就是先立刻處理客人的報怨.

J: 但是你們有很大的權限去做處理,或是要去請高階層的主管出來?

要看情形,如果是我們比較沒有辦法,就是因為我們現在...資歷沒那麼深,　...領班也會教我們說你要怎麼處理這一件事,那真正遇到比較不能處理的事情,還是會請主管出來.

J: 你自己在界定比較不能處理的,你是怎麼去界定,你怎麼去界定這個我能處理,這個我不能處理?

就是有一次...有一個會議,就是客人跟業務講的時候都 OK,可是在現場時候發現一些問題的時候,我們的業務跟他講的譬如說今天場地,我們會有優單,他寫到五點,可是客人說　傳真的時候傳六點,可是他打電話給業務的時候業務跟他講說這場地只能用到五點,所以客人　很生氣,對!就是他當初跟他洽談的時候都很好,有黑紙白字都寫在上面,對!然後他的主管也很不開心,開會開到一半就跟人家說該結束了,他很不開心,對!還叫我們主管要出來,因為我有看過他們的合約書,所以我就了解,然後我就去跟我副理講說那個情況,那我副理就有出來跟這個小姐溝通這樣子,因為看的出來他很不開心,對!因為那一次就是便當,業務也只跟他講說只有一種價錢,那他知道說有很多種價錢他聽了很不開心.

J: 當時你處理狀況是你先處理　?

我有先聽他的訴求,然後我有跟他講說因為時間的話我不能決定,因為超過時間是要收錢的,而且如果下一場有宴會,下一場是沒有宴會　!可是場地的使用的話我不能決定,那我要去詢問我的副理,那副理知道這個情形以後,他去跟客人講,就是他也知道說這是業務的問題,所以他有跟客人講說我願意讓他使用到他結束都沒有關係.

J: 那就是說你在取決說你決定跟不能決定你的衡量標準在　裡?

　... 基本上都可以決定阿!向結帳那種有問題的話,那種我就不能決定了.

J: 所以通常是跟..你覺得通常跟錢?

對!跟錢的話.

J: 只要是牽　到錢的部份你就不處理?

結帳出問題的話...不是我不處理,是我沒辦法處理.

J: 不能處理,那你能處理大約是 幾個方向,那你又如何知道說你 些是可以處理, 些不能處理?

像處理向他那種小小的報怨阿!對阿!我就可以阿,像那種客人極度生氣那一種我沒辦法處理,即使他生氣,像他抱怨什麼我都可以接受,因為我們做這種東西傲客都會遇到 !可是有問題的話我們就是真正沒辦法處理的話,然後這個問題也是有關業務的話,我們就一定要跟主管講,因為這已經跨過別的部門,他的這種作法,讓我們部門沒辦法..

J: 所以決定是在於這個事情他涵蓋性的範圍較大,你就會請主管出面?

對!不是..要讓主管知道,要讓主管知道然後開會的時候才可以反映給部門.

J: 那就 工作的七個月,今天就你的主管,經理也好或是說領班阿!主任都好,通常他們是用什麼樣的方式讓你去瞭解今天你在這裡做,你有多少的權限,你的權限在裡客訴的部份,或是客訴要求的部份?

他沒有特別去跟我們講阿!可是他我覺得有一點讓我們自己去摸索吧!因為我們...

J: 所以是憑感覺的囉?

對阿!跟客人我是沒有遇到說就是要主管出來,就是那種客人反應然後有點生氣然後也是不是我,完全不是我們部門的問題.

J: 所以你覺得通常的時候?

我都可以處理 !可是很少是要主管出來的,就是結帳,因為我有一次結帳出問題,少跟客人收 800 元,那才會就是主管出來,我自己打電話去找催那一筆錢,可是當我出去要等客人的時候,是我的主管要陪我出去,就是要跟我一起處理這一件事情,不是說我一個人去處理.

J: 那如果通常你的主管它需要就是說今天有一些工作它需要你們去完成的時候,他們是透過什麼樣的管道?

直接用講的,當面跟你講.

J: 那你們通常你們這個 team 這個工作小組,多久需要跟你們的主管作會議集會?

你說我們經理跟大..就是我們飯店的主管 ?還是就是只有我們宴會廳正職人員?

J: ..全部兩個都講.

我們正職人員的話包括經理副理開會的話一個月是一次,然後經理跟大頭開會的話,至少每個禮拜都會有.

J: 那就是說你們需要參與的會議 ?

就是一個月一次那一次.

J: 那你們自己宴會廳的部份　？

就是一個月一次

J: 只有一個月一次?

那是屬於宴會廳的部分一個月一次.

J: 那通常那個即會內容都在講些什麼?

講一些大家,就是通常大家在上班發生的一些情況,然後工讀生常犯的情況,還有包括業務方面有什麼問題都要提報主管.

J: 那只是上傳下達嘛?

沒有..就是我們討論出來有什麼的話就會麻煩經理去跟別的部門講.

J: 所以基本上那個會議是雙向性的,你們會提問題?

問題的話,其實基本上那一個會議室副理在指導,他會詢問我們,我們就是有點他在主導.

J: 但是你們有空間去發表你們?

有,我們有發言的權利.

J: 那通常這個會議,如果說再工作上遇到一些問題,在這個會議中提出來你覺得得到的解決效果好不好?

可以可以,如果是那一種就是那一種譬如說工作上面有一點問題的話阿!阿副理就是會依照你的問題替你做解決,如果那個問題是你本身的問題的話,就是你應該做　確就是說你應該做卻是你的問題的話他就不會理　,因為這一件事是你應該做好的,那他也覺得你有能力去做好的話,他會不接受你這一種問題.

J: 那如果說今天你對於你的一些工作任務不滿意的話你會怎麼處理?

我會怎麼處理,就是當客人...　...沒有,就是結束的時會很沮喪阿!

J: 那你會部會反應?

會　!會反應,一定會,就是給主管,就是今天這一個客人怎麼　!讓我覺得這整個宴會下來阿!很不順的話,就一定會跟主管講,我是幾乎每天,很好的時候我是看的出來很開心,就是這一場宴會很好,當遇到一點小挫折的話其實我自己心裡也會會有點難過因為會覺得說就覺得不順利就對　!為什麼會這樣.

J: 那你有沒有遇過說跟客人沒有關係,純粹就是主管交代的或是環境你覺得不..有點不是很滿意的狀況,通常會怎麼去做?

怎麼去做　..還是會做阿!只不過沒有做的很專精吧!

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J: 就是一樣去做,可是你不會反映給主管,只有客人的部份你會反映給主管.那如果是私人的部份你部會去反應?

就是工作量太大的話會反應,其他的話都沒什麼.

J: 那你覺得反應給主管這樣的處理方式你覺得 OK ?

OK! 可是得到的回應會比較久而已,就是他會當下反應,可是處理的話沒有辦法那麼快就處理.

J: 為什麼?

因為你那種工作量大是必須要再找一個人來的,那找人沒有那麼簡單,對!而且你找了人以後還要先教他, 所以這前前後後的時間很多。

J: O K, 那你覺得說就 再這裡七個月的時間,你清楚了解金典飯店他本身自己飯店的定位發展目標在 裡 ?

發展目標 ...

J: 就是你來了之後你很清楚這一間公司的 POLICY 在 裡?他的定位在 裡?他的走向在 裡?他的發展目標在 裡?

我指..餐飲業的話他..我飯店 !他都還滿愛推出那一種譬如說今天上海季阿!美食阿!他會定期出一種方案來吸引顧客,都會向他會還會說再舉辦,向不管在台中高雄都有金典,那他都會不定期的去那種,向舉行一些向前陣子他有一個慈善晚會,我覺得他都會舉辦這種活動吸引顧客,然後吸引那個群 還有媒體這樣子.

J: 那你覺得這樣效果好 ?

有一點點 !因為至少大家都知道 !還有譬如說有關住房 !他會推出譬如說兩天一夜然後去 裡玩阿多少錢這樣子.

J: 就像從以你們現在實習生來講的話你們這個飯店,你們有需要做,飯店有提供任何的 training course ?一些職業訓練的部份?

沒有 ..

J: 完全沒有?

只有一開始是那種新生訓練,可是他新生訓練他只是交你說服儀你要穿怎麼樣,那介紹環境,其實沒有什麼.

J: 所以就一天?

兩天

J: 就是告訴你要怎麼穿在 裡工作,飯店大概長什麼樣子?

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基本上是這樣,因為我沒有參加新生訓練.

J: 那之後就完全沒有任何的 training?

沒有,因為我們是實習生嘛!那個有一次人事的經理他有跟我們訪談,就是說在這環境...

J: 一對一 ?

沒有,全部,只是在說你在這工作環境有遇到什麼問題而已,基本上那也沒什麼訓練.

J: 所以變成說那你今天假設說你今天是做宴會,那你沒有做過宴會你怎麼上手?

我們是從基礎做起,從服務生開始做..對

J: 那這是過程中有人教你 ?

會!他一開始都會有人帶你,然後你上班的話就是要學這樣子

J: 那便成說他的訓練模式它不要 training 就對了?

對!就是一開始的話他看情形 !像我們中式做菜服務的話你要實習兩次才可以自己服務這樣子,只有那一個要人家帶而已,那其他都是

J: 看著學?

對!還有就是不會就要人家教你學

J: 就是說實際上你遇到問題的時候你才找人家教你就對了?

就是說你要自己去那個去找人家教不要說等人家叫你用的時候你不會用.

J: 可是你又不知道到底什麼東西不會,你又還不知道做什麼,這是我不會的,我要去學?

就是當他,他會問你說你會不會做這個,那我說不會,他就會開始教,對!可能是我們的身分比較特殊,就是你要再這兩三個月要把全部基層的東西都學完,就還滿桿的,可以就必須要學完

J: 可是你覺得對於這樣的 on job training,就是說遇到狀況他才叫你學,所以你覺得你對於這樣的學習這樣的訓練你的看法?

如果那麼快學起來,其實一學就忘記了.

J: 所以這個部份是針對服務技巧的部份?

對!

J: 那如果是針對跟客人接觸接洽的部份?

跟客人一開始也是會,看那個看宴會的話都會有人帶你,而且是要實習好多次才會讓你去看這一個這一場宴會.然後依開始都是,我覺得看宴會都是經驗累積,你看到後面你會知道客人在這個時候它需要什麼,就是我的主管很常跟我講一句話就是你要去預設問題,要先去預設會有什麼問題發生,那當下先自己做一些小處理,你會覺

得,他帶了　酒來你會覺得它可能需要冰塊,你看到　酒你可能先叫別人先叫工讀生先去準備冰塊,這一種之類的,預設問題

J: 那你覺得說基本上你覺得飯店它需要提供其他的訓練課程　?

需要我覺得需要

J: 怎麼樣的訓練課程?

語文能力阿!然後提升專業度阿!對阿!

J: 就是說你希望飯店他還是有開設,統籌開設一些專業課程讓你們去上課?去做訓練?

對!

J: 那你覺得說現在你這種 on job training,你覺得你的學習跟吸收的效果好　?

沒有那麼快吸收,可是還是會忘記吧!可以大概知道怎麼做,可以是要在做幾遍才會上手.

J: 所以你覺得學習之後　還要再做練習就對了?

對!可是你大概練個 3.4 次就 ok 了.

J: 那通常你們在工作表現還不錯的時候,公司會給你們怎麼樣的獎勵阿?

表現　!就記嘉獎什麼的阿!我有看過記嘉獎.

J: 那記嘉獎有什麼好處?

沒有!沒有什麼好處,就是記嘉獎壹次,沒有什麼好處,也沒有加薪阿!都沒有...

J: 那如果犯錯了　?

記過阿!

J: 那有什麼壞處?

沒有

J: 那為什麼要記嘉獎記過?

這個也讓我滿疑問的.

J: 那你沒有提出來去問你們主管　?

沒有,因為被記過的被記嘉獎的都是那些大頭阿!不是我們部門,所以我就沒有問,只有一次譬如說我們的櫃子都要打開,沒有打開就是扣薪水,對!

J: 那所以你對於公司這樣的獎懲,你有什麼樣的看法?

沒有意義阿!沒有意義.

J: 對你來講也沒有什麼影響?

對!

J: 那如果說今天公司有一個獎賞,或是說依個獎懲,你覺得什麼樣的獎懲對你來說比較有意義,因為你剛講現再這個公司的嘉獎記過一點意義都沒有?

加薪

J: 加薪,你覺得加薪的意義最大,為什麼?

那最實際了!

J: 那什麼樣的狀況才可以加薪?

什麼狀況..表現很好阿!對..

J: 那你覺得除了加薪這個狀況之外,他可能是一個誘因,除了這個誘因之外,你覺得什麼東西可以去激發工作上的表現?加薪也可以,如果你覺得只有加薪可以去激發你工作上的表現那也無所謂.

只有加薪

J: 只有加薪,你覺得只要有錢我就會賣命工作?

不一定,看情形阿!有時候是被激出來的

J: 被激出來什麼意思?

有時候有人會說　呀你不行,你沒辦法做這些事情　!可是心裡就會覺得說　..就想做給你看.

J: 所以你是那種比較屬於人家給你負面的評價你會想要把它做好?

對!

J: 那如果是人家鼓勵你　?

鼓勵我我也會想要把它做好

J: 那你比較喜歡　一種?

鼓勵我..

J: 可是你剛剛不是阿!因為你剛說要人家激你,然後你把它做好?

那看情形吧!要看什麼人鼓勵我阿!

J: 那你可不可以在詳細解釋一下?

第一個就是金錢　!可以讓我激發,然後重點是恩就是譬如說現在我的我沒有辦法做這一件事,然後我會跟我的好朋友講,那他會跟我說　呀怎麼樣怎麼樣怎麼樣這樣子,可是還是聽不進去阿!負面的比較大　!

J: 那你覺得負面的?那負面是誰給你的負面?你的朋友給你的負面?

不是!是主管方面阿!然後跟我平階層的人,平階層跟主管的話.

J: 就是跟你同一個階層,或是你的主管　不起你的狀況下你就會做的更好,ok..那

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是..

J: 好..現在我想談一下你覺得說怎麼樣才算是一個在你心目中怎麼樣算是一個好的經理?

經理 !

J: 或是說一個管理者,你覺得怎麼樣的管理者是一個好的管理者?

我覺得我自己覺得 !經理他自己要知道,向我現在的經理他什麼都不會講,可是他會用眼睛去看,他會用去用眼睛去看他所看到的東西,然後就算他要罵人的時候他不會先去罵你,他會先去 清楚事情, 清楚這一件事情到底有沒有做錯,他才會去罵人,他是..我覺得經理的話就是會讓我覺得說 要你做事, 要你不要說不要 懶,就是他要你 做的不好沒有關係,但是你不是那一種很 懶的,然後你有盡你自己的本分去做事.

J: 所以你目前的經理是一個好的經理囉?

還算 ok!還覺得不錯阿!而且它我們遇到問題的話他會自己,他會..他不會罵你,他不會先罵你,他會聽聽你的問題然後才會告訴 你 裡做錯了,不是讓你一昧的去說客人好不好,而且我覺得重點是他會讓我們覺得說 都沒有在做事情,其實他都有,他都會用眼睛去看,只是我們都不知道.

J: 那你覺得什麼要訴,才可以造就這樣一個好的經理?

要素,我覺得都是經驗累積吧!我覺得經理都是我在想 !有兩個就是說譬如說 是因為學歷,他才有辦法有經理這個職位,那還有就是從基礎做起做到經理,我覺得那一種經理比較扎實.

J: 為什麼?

學歷的話,就是他的經驗不多阿!就是他語文能力還有他今天這個學位贏人家而以阿!可是他有他沒有別人有的經驗,我覺得差異在這裡吧!

J: 所以你覺得經驗比學歷重要?在整個飯店業來講?

也沒有阿!太多學歷因為學歷而得到這個工作的也有阿!向飯店一定會有這樣子的阿!

J: 你說 John ?

他還好吧!可是我覺得他..我覺得後來還不錯阿!他也做滿久的阿!至少有..至少你有這個學歷,你有這個職位,但是你卻可以做好這個工作的話,那也是很少數的阿!像有些人是他有這個學歷那他有這個職位,但是他都不做事,我們飯店太多這種主管了,只會出一張嘴,然後都不能了解下面人做事的心情.

J: 那你們經理　？

可以阿!他..

J: 可是他也不做事　?

　是受害者..他是屬於受害的,因為他都被大頭釘阿!可是大頭只會講而已,都不知道我們宴會廳做事的一個方面照樣子

J: 那你覺得會不會是因為你們整個販店的溝通管道出了問題?

對!沒錯!飯店體系還滿亂的!我覺得

J: 怎麼說?

太黑暗了

J: 阿...?

就譬如說就那種旁邊的人都是自己的人這樣子阿!就是主管的旁邊都是自己熟西的人

J: 你的意思是總經理,因為...?

對!類似..

J: 那你說他旗下副理阿!協理之類的都是...

都是有點關係阿!

J: 就是比較像家族企業就對了?

對!有一點點.

J: 那你覺得,剛我們講的是經理的部分　!那你覺得怎樣才算是一個理想的員工?一個理想的員工應該具備　一些行為特質?

我自己　?

J: 不用你自己,你自己覺得今天怎樣算是一個理想員工?

我自己覺得今天你有你交代我這些工作我做好就好了,我覺得理想員工就是這樣

J: 只要交代的做好就好了?

對!

J: 那不在交代內的就?

會!我會!我想到的話我才會做,我如果沒想到的話我就不會做!我覺得..

J: 那就整體來說你覺得你喜歡這個工作　?

不喜歡阿!

J: 不喜歡!為什麼?

壓力大阿!很累,就很常會有那種倦怠..

J: 那有解決的方案　？

沒有阿!對..

J: 全完沒有?

只能在這個環境中尋找別的快樂,就是譬如說在同事間相處而以阿!工作上的話壓

力太大了就不太想,是工作方面　!加上一開始主管又給你壓力阿!阿覺得自己會覺

得說幹麻要過的這樣子,如果有壓力的話,你自己睡都會睡不好,脾氣也會很不好.

J: 那你覺得就你整個工作環境,工作環境是 ok,?同事相處也很好,這是你實際做下

去的原因,反正你還在實習,也不能離職?

對! 這才是重點

J: 可以換廳　？

不行阿!我們也是想換廳,對!其實我們半年可以換一次廳,可是我們沒有換阿!

J: 那你覺得 ok 你們還要實習一年,所以還有半年就對了?那所以半年後你一定會離

開就對了?

對!

J: 那你覺得在你以後你會繼續走飯店餐飲這一方面的工作　？

就是飯店這一種的吧!我不會　..

J: 那你以後畢業你要做什麼?

我會去想說可不可以做那一種飯店業務納一種,步要再做項宴會廳那一種,就是屬

於比較那一種算是比較文書方面的吧!

J: 你說後勤工作?

對!

J: 有沒有什麼不在我訪談的問題中, 而你想提出來與我分享討論的, 請不要客氣。

沒有

金典酒店房務部副理　訪談文字記錄謄本分析 編號 4 之 13

壹. 公司

一. 目標和發展

說真的,我不曉得那個是高層他們的...

新進員工是有員工的訓練,那他的想法應該是說他想讓阿這個這家酒店成為這個台中就是最具規模的然後是所有品質是最好的

二. 員工參與和服務品質

集會內容通常就是看你們這邊要傳達給他們的比如說這個月應該加強的項目有一些那接下來就是說看你他們有什麼要對上面反應的,對..他們有什麼意見可以提出來,不見得說是,,因為房務員有直接面對客人甚至有時候是客人直接提出來的意見,那平常他們也不會講,甚至有時候客人覺得說飯店這邊怎麼樣那怎麼沒有什麼東西,那我們是不是能　提供去告訴主管說是不是去做調整

三. 訓練

包括公司的經營理念,公司的一個架構　還有包括一些緊急應變

我們的 training 每個星期都有,　剛開始會很有效,因為可能他的主管在檢　的時候會這些是重點,那相對的其他的就會比較鬆一點,因為他知道說這個星期再做這個部份的一個訓練,那他就強化這個部分那其他他就沒有辦法去都顧到

四. 獎賞制度

有一個獎懲的制度,譬如說你這個做不好我就是要懲罰你,說最現實的是錢,錢在做事情,那相對他們做的好那相對的我也是可以給他們一個獎金,那這也是我讓房務員可以接受的,那你現在只給逞罰不給獎金的話....

當然它是有獎勵是必須要客人寫的意見是..那..客人有提到這個房務員的名字,那公司會給它獎勵,那當然我們當然也可以寫每個獎勵獎逞的單子出去,那問題是.因為現在的房務員現在他領的這樣的薪水的話,而且如果說要照我們的要求的話他幾乎是達不到,那我也寫不下那個獎勵的單子

當然在獎勵方面當然公司有一個獎金的制度,那當然如果公司業績有的話,其實獎

金是大家的,那這個是每個人都有的

貳. 管理階層

一. Empowerment

在他權力的所及內發揮到最大的等級

二. empowerment 的重要性

重要, 因為你能　充份的去表現你的權利, 當我很信任這個員工的話當然會授權
給他,我當然希望說每一個人都能　盡量發展到一個極限,當然希望,但是我還是不
敢, 因為我怕還是會出問題,他還沒有到達所要求的, 信任一個員工我覺得是滿困
難的要花滿長的一段時間

三. 授予權力

比如說某些客人,不是說你一般的基層員工就可以來接待他的,那客人會要求說,你
就派一個,恩領班來跟我講,他會要求說我要找你們　一個等級的以上的主管來跟
我談,當然會　到這種情況, 你授權去給房務員好了去處理客訴的事情,那他有時候
會覺得你的誠意你這一家公司的誠意不是那麼　,就是讓一個房務員來跟我談這個,
他已經有抱怨了

因為在客訴方面的話有時候他們沒有受過這種客人抱怨的處理的教育,那可能他會
去跟客人有爭執產生,當客人有客訴抱怨的時候會交由主管來處理

我覺得這樣子比較好,因為如果讓房務員直接來處的話那你的上級也不知道狀況是
怎麼樣,那如果錯了....處理不當反而是造成客人的一個抱怨.

那當然比如像水果來講的話我們就比較有一些 normal guest 和 VIP 的 setting 的標
準,那他的要求如果超過了這個,那我們就會看狀況行事,所以基本上當客人做特殊
要求的時候他們的權限當然是很有限的! 通常客人的特殊要求他會直接 call 到辦
公室,然後再由主管決定給還是不給,不可能有主管不在時候阿!

因為其實每個職等他有不同他的工作內容,那當然如果我能授權給我的下屬或是我
的上級授權給我,那其實有時候是會增加他們工作的量,就等於說本來不是他的結
果等於說他的工作量也相對的提高,那相對的你提高了他的一個工作量,他的職位
也需要做一個調整

1. 授權行為

一般來講客人的特殊要求可能不是過分的,比如說多要水多要茶的話這些我們是不會說會去在意的, 房務員可以直接給

四. 管理方式

剛開始我們會去觀察他對這個行業的一個,比如說他喜不喜歡這個行業,那他來這邊工作的目的,最主要的他想要得到什麼,那如果說他有那個慾望,就是說他要往上爬,他的背景他的整個狀況可能合乎我們要提拔的一個人的標準的時候我們才會開始培養這個人

1. 信任

今天你對於你的部屬如果說他有必要自行做決定在任何情況下,那你覺得你有辦法去信任他嘛? 沒有, 因為我講這個水平不是很..如果水平好一點的話我可能可以去放心去讓他做, 因為責任感的觀察,所以可能他都趕快把他的工作作完他就要下班了,他不會用心的去做這些事情,那一切在於有沒有用心去做用心去學,用心去做的話是可以把每一件事情都做的好. 培養他們的責任感,就是責任感是一種成就感,要讓他們在成功中得到成就感

2. 溝通

一個月有一次部門的會議,就是針對說部門之間的我們 house keeping 包括天花版包括洗衣房之間的配合這樣會有一次的會議,那如果說另外有一些問題產生的話比如說可能會私底下就可能說其他不屬於 house keeping 所轄屬的部門去做一個集會,那也就是說司底下找時間再另外開會

每個人會有一個立場,因為他們在這樣一個情況下是這樣,他們會覺得說立場是這樣子,那我們有我們的立場,那相對主管有主管的立場,那我們有我們的立場,那所以說要達到一個 balance 是比較困難的

我想有時候會用柔性的會比較好一點,私底下跟他..其實每一個人在工作會有一些,每個人都會有優缺點,就是他的缺點的部份,就是私底下跟他講,那他的優點的部份,你可以在每天早上的晨會的時候跟大家講說 某個人他某方面表現的很不錯這樣,那就是優點的部份就是去在公共場合表達,那缺點的部份就是私底下在跟他講,希望跟他重感情的...比較好

參. 文化對工作環境的衝擊
一. 企業體系和結構

有的時候有些事情其實是我們就可以來做處理的但是這件事情傳到上面去,不管有發生什麼事情我們還是要向上級報告,不管有客人客訴我們還是要向上級報告,那甚至要等到上級…要這一件事情怎麼去處理

當客人再做特殊要求的時候他們的權限是很有限的!

二. 管理階層與員工關係

親切的利潤是比較好的,在這邊我是慢慢才發現到,那在以前工作的場合的話我就發現你的那種親切有時候好像他犯的錯他會覺得很對不起我的上司,我去害到我的上司,畢竟台灣人來講的話會比較善良一點,那他會覺得說這樣去影響我的上司害我的上司被……他們會覺得心裡不是很…

1. 經理

其實很難去做,有時候你要去扮演一個黑臉的角色,但是有時候你又要去扮演一個比較軟的角色,要不然就是一個我非常非常中立非常嚴厲的針對每一個人,要不然就是很親切的去針對每一個人,那不然就是我兩樣的話都會得到一個反效果,所以通常的話部門的主管會有一個去扮演一個比較強的角色,那另外一個主管就會去扮演另一個角色

我希望他們能　更成長自己不見得要完全一直停留在基層員工的角色,你可以不段的充實自己往上爬,因為以學歷來講的話,房務員可能都是學力比較差,你也知道我不是有高學歷,那也不是說沒有學歷就不能當一個主管的職務,那就是看你的企圖心,那看你願不願意去學習這樣子,我覺得我對他們的期望就是說你要多去學習不是說你要接受挑戰,不是只有單單去怎麼做,人家怎麼交代你就去把它做完..

2. 員工

我覺得責任心,他如果有責任心的話他是會去完成他做的,他會去把工作做到最好

有責任感的員工比較肯學而且會去幫忙其他的員工

員工方面的話我是覺得台灣人　性比較強,台灣人會比較誠實,就是說,,　!!我沒有做完,那當然比較任勞任怨

Appendix I

壹. 員工

一. 意圖跟動機

發展目標　...我指..餐飲業的話他..我飯店　!..... 我覺得他都會舉辦這種活動吸引顧客,然後吸引那個群　還有媒體這樣子.

1. 資訊分享

2. 獎勵

記嘉獎沒有意義阿　加薪那最實際了

記嘉獎壹次,沒有什麼好處,也沒有加薪阿! 如果犯錯了記過阿! 那也沒有什麼壞處這個也讓我滿疑問的.

3. 動機

我...只喜歡就是跟大家一起工作的時候,可是我不會喜歡這個工作,我只喜歡跟大家一起工作的感覺.

有時候有人會說　呀你不行,你沒辦法做這些事情　!可是心裡就會覺得說　..就想做給你看. 跟你同一個階層,或是你的主管　不起你的狀況下你就會做的更好

二. 能力自信心

先立刻處理客人的報怨., 如果是我們比較沒有辦法,就是因為我們現在...資歷沒那麼深,　...領班也會教我們說你要怎麼處理這一件事,那真正遇到比較不能處理的事情,還是會請主管出來.

1. 知識和訓練

只有一開始是那種新生訓練,可是他新生訓練他只是教你說服儀你要穿怎麼樣,那介紹環境,其實沒有什麼.

我們是從基礎做起,從服務生開始做..對, 他一開始都會有人帶你,然後你上班的話就是要學這樣子

我覺得飯店它需要提供其他的訓練課程, 語文能力阿!然後提升專業度阿

三. 自主權

1. 權力

客人有提出比較特殊要求的時候,都是按照公司規定

基本上都可以決定阿!向結帳那種有問題的話,那種我就不能決定了

然後這個問題也是有關業務的話,我們就一定要跟主管講,因為這已經跨過別的部門,他的這種作法,讓我們部門沒辦法..

有多少的權限他沒有特別去跟我們講阿!可是他我覺得有一點讓我們自己去摸索

2. 信任

我們有點類似說在做領班級的工作,因為我們要那個看宴會這樣,對阿!然後就是學習一些跟客人應對阿!包括還要對跟工讀生的那種...就是我們要把工讀生啊...運用的很好,對!讓在你這個宴會中能 順利進行阿!包括下一個宴會的翻場,你都要很能運用你的工讀生,把你的場地能很快的都用好.

像我的業務就是譬如說我會負責操班表

3. 授權行為

...就自己可以拿阿!那副理也有跟我們講過說這是很彈性的,有時候給幾張沒有關係,可是不要給太多,我是看客人,今天我覺得那個客人還滿好相處的我就會給他

像他說菜太鹹了,我會馬上跟他講說我會跟師傅反應的,對!那有說像湯太鹹了,我就馬上去給師父喝,然後就真的太鹹了,然後...可是他們是那種類似扶輪社,他們一到時間就開會了,所以就沒有再幫他換新的,有再去詢問他 說不用了,對!不用再幫他換新的

四. 影響力

就是我們討論出來有什麼的話就會麻煩經理去跟別的部門講.

譬如說工作上面有一點問題的話阿!阿副理就是會依照你的問題替你做解決,如果那個問題是你本身的問題的話,就是你應該做 確就是說你應該做卻是你的問題的話他就不會理 ,因為這一件事是你應該做好的,那他也覺得你有能力去做好的話,他會不接受你這一種問題.

1. 溝通

我們正職人員的話包括經理副理開會的話一個月是一次, 講一些大家,就是通常大家在上班發生的一些情況,然後工讀生常犯的情況,還有包括業務方面有什麼問題都要提報主管. 其實基本上那一個會議室副理在指導,他會詢問我們,我們就是有點他在主導.

直接用講的,當面跟你講.

參. 文化對工作環境的衝擊

一. 企業體系和結構

立刻處理客人的報怨. 先聽他的訴求, 讓主管知道,要讓主管知道然後開會的時候才可以反應給部門.

二. 管理階層與員工關係

1. 經理

經理他自己要知道,向我現在的經理他什麼都不會講,可是他會用眼睛去看,他會用去用眼睛去看他所看到的東西,然後就算他要罵人的時候他不會先去罵你,他會先去 清楚事情, 清楚這一件事情到底有沒有做錯,他才會去罵人

2. 員工

我自己覺得今天你有你交代我這些工作我做好就好了,我覺得理想員工就是這樣

The Splendor Taichung Back of House Assist. Manager translation of 4/13

壹. 公司

一. 目標和發展

to be honest, I am not very certain as it belongs to top management...

during the job orientation, the company gave the impression that the business goal of this hotel is to create the image that the hotel is the most high class hotel and provides the best quality to its customers in the Taichung region.

二. 員工參與和服務品質

...during once a month departmental meeting, we deliver the important decisions and policy changes that were made by the Executive President to the employees, and remind them of the areas that need to be improved. The staff can report work related problems, provide their ideas, and present any issues of concern to them or our guests. Because most of time our guests would suggest something for the hotel to the room attendants directly but the room attendants do not normally tell management right away. Thus, this meeting provides them a channel to tell management and we can consider adjusting to meet the guest's needs in the future

三. 訓練

every employee has to attend consists of orientation, fire training, and on job training

each week has one key point for employee training, and it is the key point to be examined by the superior during this week. Thus, the employees will pay more attention on achieving high standards in this key point and relatively other areas would be less care.

四. 獎賞制度

There is a reward and penalty scheme according to your job performance, but the penalty is more than reward at the hotel.

Employees receive a customer commend card or I write a commend letter to the employer, he/she will receive reward, however it is very difficult for them to receive the reward as their salaries are not that great and the standard is set so high thus it is not easy for them to achieve this high standard.

The hotel also has reward scheme for every employee based on business volume each month, but not individual performance.

貳. 管理階層

一. Empowerment

Empowerment is delegating limited power to subordinates, and the subordinates bring their skills and talents into full play within this limit of power.

Sheffield Hallam University

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Title/Thesis Number: EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT IN ...   26550

Degree: PHD PHILOSOPHY

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I only can empower my subordinates when I believe and trust their ability because I am afraid of any problem might occur, thus I would rather not empower my subordinates. It would be difficult and take a very long time to trust my subordinates.

三. 授予權力

For instance, some guests experienced service encounters and they would prefer having higher management level to deal with their case. Thus the managers should appear to customers to deal with the situation when service encounters occurred. Because it affects customers' emotions, in addition, empowerment may be inappropriate, as to let employees deal with customers' problems and special requirements, the customers would consider the hotel does not have enough sincerity to deal with their cases

Many employees have not received any training courses in relation to service encounters thus only superiors can deal with service encounters because the bottom line employees did not receive any training course on situational and complaint handling.

If customers have any problems or special requirements, it would be better for the superiors to deal with the case, so the superiors would know the situation and make sure the problem was solved and the customers had no further complaints

The hotel has different settings of fruit basket for normal guest and VIP guest and the bottom line employees can upgrade the guest fruit basket during service encounters, however they do not have much authority or power in order to deal with service encounters so anything over their limited authority and power they should pass onto their line supervisor or above. There is always a manager in the office, thus employees should make a phone call to the office when dealing with customers' special requirements and the manager will make the decision

In fact, I consider each position has different working contents and duties. Thus, if the superiors empower their subordinates, this would increase the subordinates' workload. If their workload was increased, then their position should be raised

1. 授權行為

General speaking if guest's request is not extravagant, the room attendants are allowed to offer customers more bottles of water, tea and coffee without any additional charge.

四. 管理方式

In fact, I will observe my employees to find out their working purpose and intentions in the hotel. If they are interested in working in the hotel industry and have ambition and a good attitude to meet the standards of promoting, then I will pay attention and train the person.

1. 信任

I lack trust in my employees when it comes to making good decisions because the employees' level was not good enough, however, I would trust and feel relaxed with an individual who is at a good level, having a sense of responsibility, willing to learn, working attentively, and enjoying the achievements at work. They have a good sense of responsibility and they would be ready for the next promotion.

2. 溝通

We have once a month meeting with all house keeping under the back of house division. If there is any additional issue happened, we normally have an informal meeting in private and to sort of the problem with any department that involved in the case.

Each person have diversity of opinions according to their position, thus each position in the hotel have their stance and it is hard for lower level to challenge the upper level so it is very difficult to find the balance.

I believe everyone has his/her merit and defect in regarding to their working performance, I will praise this/her merit in the brief meeting and talk to him/her in private about their defect. It is very important to build up friendships and an emotional connection with the subordinates.

參. 文化對工作環境的衝擊

一. 企業體系和結構

Many service encounters and customers' request we actually have ability to deal with the cases but no matter what we have to report to our top management for approval and sometimes even have to wait for their instruction how to deal with the case.

When dealing with customer's special request different levels have different authority but it is very limited

二. 管理階層與員工關係

I slowly realised the importance of benevolent that a manager should have, as it can build up very strong in group emotion with your team and the employees will do their best to achieve their work tasks and get the job done well because they do not want any mistakes happened to harm their direct management, as he/she might get blamed by top management.

1. 經理

It is very difficult for a manager to be strict sometimes and to be affable sometimes as the results would be bad, therefore, the superiors in one operational unit are required to have different roles, as one should be strict, and the other should be affable to balance management style.

I always encourage my staff to grow in their job and it is not necessary to stay as a room attendant. They can learn constantly and have their ambition and willingness for facing challenge. To become a management level you would have to learn how to control your emotions, and a good manager should assist employees to understand and finish their work tasks, understanding the employees' thoughts and ideas.

2. 員工

My personal opinion is that the employees have a sense of responsibility is very important, because the person who has the sense of responsibility will accomplish his/her work tasks and achieve the best result and performance

The person who has the sense of responsibility also is more willing to learn and share others jobs.

Taiwanese employees their tenacity is strong and they are also very honest so when they have any extra tasks they often fulfil their duties faithfully and uncomplainingly.

Appendix K

The Splendor Taichung F&B Intern in Banquet translation of 12/13

壹. 員工

一. 意圖跟動機

no clear idea of the hotel goal is but in regarding to the F&B department the hotel will hold many different activities to attract more customers and other media as well.

1. 資訊分享

2. 獎勵

receiving a commendation point is meaningless. I think monetary reward or salary rises is better.

I do not know what effect that I will have if I receive a commendation point or demerit point. I really do not know

3. 動機

I do not enjoy this work that much but the good relationship between working peers is the main factor that motivates me at work

sometimes my superior considers that I do not have ability to achieve some work tasks, then that makes me feel I want to prove to my superior how capable I am and to get the job done with better results.

二. 能力自信心

I will deal with customer complaint immediately and I only pass the case to my superior when I do not have enough authority power to resolve the service encounter. My superior also teaches me how to deal with service encounters.

1. 知識和訓練

The training holds by the hotel is orientation at the beginning of the employment. It contains what is the appropriate appearance at work and introduce workplace nothing really important.

We begin from very basic and the more experience employees will show we how to do the job and we learn from them at work.

I consider the hotel should provide other training courses for us to learn, for instance

language so we can improve our professional skills.

三. 自主權

1. 權力

When customers have any special request, I always deal the case according to the company's regulation.

Basically anything within my limited power I can make decision but if it involves monetary issues then I cannot make decision on that.

In addition, if the service encounter involves with sales department, we would have to report to our line superior as it is over our limited authority.

They did not tell us in details that how much decision making power we have, so we have to fumble about the boundaries by ourselves.

2. 信任

The job I am doing is like a supervisor's job because I am in charge of function to ensure everything goes smoothly. I need to learn the better way of communication with customers and also manage part-time waiting staff in order to use the best of them.

I am also responsible for part-time waiting staff working rota.

3. 授權行為

I can take parking redeem tickets by myself and my superior told me I can offer few more parking redeem tickets to customers, as it is quite flexible. I only offer extra tickets to the customers who I considered easy to get along with.

For instance, if customers complaint about dishes, I will ask the chef to taste the food and change the new one to the customers. There was once the customer told me the soup was a bit too salty, I asked her if she wanted a new one I could change for her but she said no because she did not have enough time.

四. 影響力

We discussed in the meeting and if there was anything involved with other departments we would ask our manager to pass on our conclusion to them.

If we had any issues in relation to our work task, our assistant manager would resolve the issues for us accordingly. However, if top management regarded the issues were personal and we should get it done without any problem, then we would have to do it without any further question, as they would ignore our problem and did not accept this kind of problem.

1. 溝通

We have a departmental meeting once a month with permanent staff, manager and assistant manager. The topics were in relation to what work-related problem have occurred at workplace and what sort of mistakes that part-time waiting staffs often make. We also needed to report to our line superior if any issues happened involved with sales

department. In fact, basically the assistant manager was leading these meetings and asking if we have any issues of concern to us.

The manager would approach me directly and tell me in person

參. 文化對工作環境的衝擊

一. 企業體系和結構

I always deal with customer's complaint immediately and listen to his/her request attentively and report to my line superior. It is important to inform the line superior so we can inform other department after our departmental meeting.

二. 管理階層與員工關係

1. 經理

A good manager should know many things and observe his/her subordinates. He/she would have to have a clear idea of the subordinates working abilities and attitudes. He/she would not blame you until he/she is clear about the incident.

2. 員工

My personal opinion is that an ideal employee should have a sense of responsibility to accomplish his/her work tasks that were assigned by the superior.

金典酒店房務部副理　訪談文字記錄謄本英翻中對照 編號 4 之 13

壹. 公司

一. 目標和發展

to be honest, I am not very certain as it belongs to top management...

說真的,我不是很清楚那屬於高階的管理階層

during the job orientation, the company gave the impression that the business goal of this hotel is to create the image that the hotel is the most high class hotel and provides the best quality to its customers in the Taichung region.

在新進員工的訓練,公司給人的印象是飯店的目標是要成為台中區最具規模的然後

提供最好的服務品質給顧客

二. 員工參與和服務品質

...during once a month departmental meeting, we deliver the important decisions and policy changes that were made by the Executive President to the employees, and remind them of the areas that need to be improved. The staff can report work related problems, provide their ideas, and present any issues of concern to them or our guests. Because most of time our guests would suggest something for the hotel to the room attendants directly but the room attendants do not normally tell management right away. Thus, this meeting provides them a channel to tell management and we can consider adjusting to meet the guest's needs in the future

每個月的會議內容通常是我們傳達總監下達的指示和政策的改變,還有提醒員工這

個月應該加強的項目有　一些.員工有工作上的問題或有什麼意見也可以提出來關

於本身或顧客的.因為常常客人直接提出來的意見平常他們不會馬上跟主管講,所

以這個會議提供一個管道去上呈問題那我們可以考慮是不是去做調整

三. 訓練

every employee has to attend consists of orientation, fire training, and on job training

每個員工要參加新進員工訓練,防火訓練和職業訓練

each week has one key point for employee training, and it is the key point to be examined by the superior during this week. Thus, the employees will pay more attention on achieving high standards in this key point and relatively other areas would be less care.

我們每星期都有一個重點訓練,訓練主題是主管這星期要檢測的重點,所以員工在

這一點上會特別的強化加強,那相對的其他的就會比較鬆一點

四. 獎賞制度

There is a reward and penalty scheme according to your job performance, but the

penalty is more than reward at the hotel.
依據你的工作表現有獎勵和懲罰,不過在這個飯店懲罰是比較多的

Employees receive a customer commend card or I write a commend letter to the employer, he/she will receive reward, however it is very difficult for them to receive the reward as their salaries are not that great and the standard is set so high thus it is not easy for them to achieve this high standard.
員工收到客人的獎勵卡或是我寫個獎勵的單子出去公司會給他獎勵,可是對員工來說是很難達到的因為他們領的薪水不高又要照公司的要求標準是很難到公司要求的高標準

The hotel also has reward scheme for every employee based on business volume each month, but not individual performance.
公司也有獎勵是每個員工都可以有的獎金制度取決於公司當月的業績而不是個人的表現

貳. 管理階層

一. Empowerment

Empowerment is delegating limited power to subordinates, and the subordinates bring their skills and talents into full play within this limit of power.
Empowerment 是給下屬有限的權力,在他權力的所及內發揮到最大的等級

二. empowerment 的重要性

I only can empower my subordinates when I believe and trust their ability because I am afraid of any problem might occur, thus I would rather not empower my subordinates. It would be difficult and take a very long time to trust my subordinates.
我只能授權給我很信任他能力的員工,因為我怕會出問題,所以我寧可不授權給下屬.我覺得去信任我的下屬是滿困難的要花滿長的一段時間

三. 授予權力

For instance, some guests experienced service encounters and they would prefer having higher management level to deal with their case. Thus the managers should appear to customers to deal with the situation when service encounters occurred. Because it affects customers' emotions, in addition, empowerment may be inappropriate, as to let employees deal with customers' problems and special requirements, the customers would consider the hotel does not have enough sincerity to deal with their cases
比如說某些客人有抱怨他們會要求說要找高等級的主管來跟他們談,所以主管最好能親自去處理客人的問題.因為這個動作對客人的心情是有影響的.另外授權可能不是很適當,授權給房務員去處理客訴,那客人會覺得你這一家公司的誠意不是那麼 去處理他的問題

Many employees have not received any training courses in relation to service

encounters thus only superiors can deal with service encounters because the bottom line employees did not receive any training course on situational and complaint handling.

很多員工沒有接受過處理客人抱怨的訓練課程,所以由組長以上去處理比較好因為

下層員工沒有接受足　的客訴訓練

If customers have any problems or special requirements, it would be better for the superiors to deal with the case, so the superiors would know the situation and make sure the problem was solved and the customers had no further complaints

假如客人有問題或有特殊的要求最好由組長以上來處理他們的問題,這樣一來上級

可以知道狀況並確定問題已解決客人沒有進一步的抱怨

The hotel has different settings of fruit basket for normal guest and VIP guest and the bottom line employees can upgrade the guest fruit basket during service encounters, however they do not have much authority or power in order to deal with service encounters so anything over their limited authority and power they should pass onto their line supervisor or above. There is always a manager in the office, thus employees should make a phone call to the office when dealing with customers' special requirements and the manager will make the decision

飯店在水果籃上有分一般和 VIP 客人,基礎員工可以在水果籃上給客人升等在服務

上遇到困難時,然而他們在處理客訴上的權限是很有限的,當客人做特殊要求的時

候超過他們的權限當然他們得交由主管,通常客人有特殊要求員工會直接打電話到

辦公室請示主管的決定,辦公是永遠會有一個主管在

In fact, I consider each position has different working contents and duties. Thus, if the superiors empower their subordinates, this would increase the subordinates' workload. If their workload was increased, then their position should be raised

事實上,每個職等他有不同他的工作內容和責任,所以上級授權給他們,其實會增加

他們工作的量,相對的你提高了他的一個工作量,他的職位也需要做一個調整

1. 授權行為

General speaking if guest's request is not extravagant, the room attendants are allowed to offer customers more bottles of water, tea and coffee without any additional charge.

一般來講客人的特殊要求不是過分的話,房務員可以給客人額外的礦泉水,茶和咖

　不用加錢

四. 管理方式

In fact, I will observe my employees to find out their working purpose and intentions in the hotel. If they are interested in working in the hotel industry and have ambition and a good attitude to meet the standards of promoting, then I will pay attention and train the person.

事實上,我會去觀察員工喜不喜歡這個行業,和他來這邊工作的目的,如果說他有那

慾望要往上爬,而且合乎我們提拔人的標準,我才會開始培養訓練這個人

1. 信任

I lack trust in my employees when it comes to making good decisions because the employees' level was not good enough, however, I would trust and feel relaxed with an individual who is at a good level, having a sense of responsibility, willing to learn, working attentively, and enjoying the achievements at work. They have a good sense of responsibility and they would be ready for the next promotion.

我缺乏對我的部屬的信任如果說他有必要自行做決定因為員工的水平不是很好,

如果水平好一點的話又有責任感我可以放心去讓他做,他會用心的去做這些事情,

用心去學,把每一件事情都做的好.培養他們的責任感,他們會是下一個勁升者

2. 溝通

We have once a month meeting with all house keeping under the back of house division. If there is any additional issue happened, we normally have an informal meeting in private and to sort of the problem with any department that involved in the case.

我們一個月有一次部門的會議,那如果說另外有一些問題產生的話我們可能會私底

下和其他部門把問題解決掉

Each person have diversity of opinions according to their position, thus each position in the hotel have their stance and it is hard for lower level to challenge the upper level so it is very difficult to find the balance.

每個人會有不一樣的觀點取決於他的立場,不同階層的人有不同的立場和堅持所以

下屬很難去挑戰他的上級,所以他很難去達到一個平衡

I believe everyone has his/her merit and defect in regarding to their working performance, I will praise this/her merit in the brief meeting and talk to him/her in private about their defect. It is very important to build up friendships and an emotional connection with the subordinates.

我相信每個人都會有優缺點,那他的優點的部份會在每天早上的晨會的時候跟大家

講,那缺點的部份就是私底下在跟他講,建立好跟屬下的友誼和情感的相契合是非

常重要的

參. 文化對工作環境的衝擊

一. 企業體系和結構

Many service encounters and customers' request we actually have ability to deal with the cases but no matter what we have to report to our top management for approval and sometimes even have to wait for their instruction how to deal with the case.

有很多客訴的事情其實是我們有能力可以來做處理的可是不管有發生什麼事情我

們還是要向上級報告並等待上級的回應要怎麼去處理這一件事情

When dealing with customer's special request different levels have different authority

but it is very limited

當處理客人的特殊要求的時候不同等級有不同的權限但是都是很有限的!

二. 管理階層與員工關係

I slowly realised the importance of benevolent that a manager should have, as it can build up very strong in group emotion with your team and the employees will do their best to achieve their work tasks and get the job done well because they do not want any mistakes happened to harm their direct management, as he/she might get blamed by top management.

我慢慢才發現到那種對員工的親切是很重要的,因為你和部屬建立和聯絡很好的感情,有時候好像他犯的錯他會覺得很對不起我的上司,去影響我的上司被他的上司責罵

1. 經理

It is very difficult for a manager to be strict sometimes and to be affable sometimes as the results would be bad, therefore, the superiors in one operational unit are required to have different roles, as one should be strict, and the other should be affable to balance management style.

你很難有時候要扮演一個黑臉的角色,但是有時候又要去扮演一個比較軟的角色,所以通常的話部門的主管會有一個去扮演一個比較強的角色,那另外一個主管就會去扮演另一個角色

I always encourage my staff to grow in their job and it is not necessary to stay as a room attendant. They can learn constantly and have their ambition and willingness for facing challenge. To become a management level you would have to learn how to control your emotions, and a good manager should assist employees to understand and finish their work tasks, understanding the employees' thoughts and ideas.

我總是鼓勵我的員工跟著工作成長,不見得要完全一直停留在基層員工的角色,他們可以不段的充實自己往上爬,當一個主管的職務,那就是看你的企圖心控制你的情感,了解並協助你的部屬去完成他們的工作任務,並且清楚知道員工的意見和想法

2. 員工

My personal opinion is that the employees have a sense of responsibility is very important, because the person who has the sense of responsibility will accomplish his/her work tasks and achieve the best result and performance

我覺得責任心對一個員工來說是常重要的,因為他如果有責任心的話他會去完成他的工作並把工作做到最好

The person who has the sense of responsibility also is more willing to learn and share others jobs.

有責任感的員工比較肯學而且會去幫忙其他的員工

330

Taiwanese employees their tenacity is strong and they are also very honest so when they have any extra tasks they often fulfil their duties faithfully and uncomplainingly.

台灣的員工　性比較強,也比較誠實,所以他們比較任勞任怨去完成額外的工作

金典酒店宴會廳服務員/實習生　訪談文字記錄謄本英翻中對照　編號 12 之 13

壹. 員工

一. 意圖跟動機

no clear idea of the hotel goal is but in regarding to the F&B department the hotel will hold many different activities to attract more customers and other media as well.

不清楚飯店的發展目標但是針對餐飲業的話,飯店都會舉辦各種活動來吸引顧客還有媒體這樣子.

1. 資訊分享

2. 獎勵

receiving a commendation point is meaningless. I think monetary reward or salary rises is better.

記嘉獎沒有意義 我覺得金錢上的獎勵或者加薪那最實際了

I do not know what effect that I will have if I receive a commendation point or demerit point. I really do not know

我不清楚記嘉獎和記過會有甚麼影響這個讓我滿疑問的.

3. 動機

I do not enjoy this work that much but the good relationship between working peers is the main factor that motivates me at work

我不喜歡這個工作但是我跟大家一起工作的感覺是推動我來上班的動力.

sometimes my superior considers that I do not have ability to achieve some work tasks, then that makes me feel I want to prove to my superior how capable I am and to get the job done with better results.

有時候我的上級會說我沒辦法做這些事情!我心裡就會覺得說我就想做給你看而且會做的更好

二. 能力自信心

I will deal with customer complaint immediately and I only pass the case to my superior when I do not have enough authority power to resolve the service encounter. My superior also teaches me how to deal with service encounters.

我會立刻處理客人的報怨當我真的沒辦法處理時我才會交給主管處理,我的領班也會教我們說要怎麼處理客人的問題

1. 知識和訓練

The training holds by the hotel is orientation at the beginning of the employment. It contains what is the appropriate appearance at work and introduce workplace nothing really important.

公司一開始有新生訓練就是教你一般的服儀和介紹工作環境沒甚麼特別重要的

We begin from very basic and the more experience employees will show we how to do the job and we learn from them at work.

我們是從基礎做起並且由資深的同事帶領我們,我們就是一邊做一邊學習

I consider the hotel should provide other training courses for us to learn, for instance language so we can improve our professional skills.

我覺得飯店它需要提供其他的訓練課程讓我們學習,例如語文能力去提升我們的專業度和能力

三. 自主權

1. 權力

When customers have any special request, I always deal the case according to the company's regulation.

當遇到客人有提出特殊要求的時候,我都是按照公司規定來處理

Basically anything within my limited power I can make decision but if it involves monetary issues then I cannot make decision on that.

基本上在我權限內的我都可以決定!但是如果牽　到財務上的問題那種我就不能決定了

In addition, if the service encounter involves with sales department, we would have to report to our line superior as it is over our limited authority.

另外如果這個問題已經涉及到業務部門,我們就一定要提報給主管因為這已經超越我的權限所能處理

They did not tell us in details that how much decision making power we have, so we have to fumble about the boundaries by ourselves.

他們沒有特別去跟我們講有多少的權限!所以我覺得有一點讓我們自己去摸索

2. 信任

The job I am doing is like a supervisor's job because I am in charge of function to ensure everything goes smoothly. I need to learn the better way of communication with customers and also manage part-time waiting staff in order to use the best of them.

我的工作很類似在做領班的工作,因為我要負責看理宴會讓這個宴會能　順利進行!

我還需要學習一些跟客人的應對並且還包括管理運用工讀生,都要很能運用到最大極限.

I am also responsible for part-time waiting staff working rota.
我還負責操作工讀生的排班表

3. 授權行為

I can take parking redeem tickets by myself and my superior told me I can offer few more parking redeem tickets to customers, as it is quite flexible. I only offer extra tickets to the customers who I considered easy to get along with.
我自己可以拿停車抵用卷!我的副理也有跟我說這是很彈性的,我有時候可以多給幾張是沒有關係的,我通常是覺得那個客人還滿好相處的我就會給他額外的抵用卷

For instance, if customers complaint about dishes, I will ask the chef to taste the food and change the new one to the customers. There was once the customer told me the soup was a bit too salty, I asked her if she wanted a new one I could change for her but she said no because she did not have enough time.
假如說顧客抱怨菜　的話我會馬上跟師傅反應並且幫他換新的.有一次客人說湯太鹹了,我就馬上詢問是否要換新的但是　說不用了因為　沒有很多時間

四. 影響力

We discussed in the meeting and if there was anything involved with other departments we would ask our manager to pass on our conclusion to them.
我們在會議中討論出來有什麼的話並牽　到其他部門我們就會麻煩經理去跟別的部門講我們的結論

If we had any issues in relation to our work task, our assistant manager would resolve the issues for us accordingly. However, if top management regarded the issues were personal and we should get it done without any problem, then we would have to do it without any further question, as they would ignore our problem and did not accept this kind of problem.
譬如說我們在工作上遇到一點問題,我們的副理就是會依照我們的問題來做解決.
但是如果高層認為這個問題是你本身的問題這一件事是你應該做好的,那我們就是必須去做好沒有其他的疑問,上層是不會理會也不會去接受你這一種問題.

1. 溝通

We have a departmental meeting once a month with permanent staff, manager and assistant manager. The topics were in relation to what work-related problem have occurred at workplace and what sort of mistakes that part-time waiting staffs often make. We also needed to report to our line superior if any issues happened involved with sales department. In fact, basically the assistant manager was leading these meetings and asking if we have any issues of concern to us.
我們一個月有一次正職人員包括經理和副理開的部門會議,內容是講一些大家在上班發生的一些情況,還有工讀生常犯的情況,還有包括業務方面有什麼問題都要提報主管.事實上,這一個會議是副理在主導,他會詢問我們有甚麼任何問題.

The manager would approach me directly and tell me in person
經理會直接當面跟我講.

參. 文化對工作環境的衝擊

一. 企業體系和結構

I always deal with customer's complaint immediately and listen to his/her request attentively and report to my line superior. It is important to inform the line superior so we can inform other department after our departmental meeting.

我總是立刻處理客人的報怨並且專心地先聽他的訴求,然後提報給主管知道,要讓

主管知道是很重要的這樣我們在開會的時候才可以反應給其他部門.

二. 管理階層與員工關係

1. 經理

A good manager should know many things and observe his/her subordinates. He/she would have to have a clear idea of the subordinates working abilities and attitudes. He/she would not blame you until he/she is clear about the incident.

一個好的經理要知道很多事情並且去觀察他的部屬,他必須要了解部屬的工作能力

和態度.他不會先去罵你,他會先去　清楚事情

2. 員工

My personal opinion is that an ideal employee should have a sense of responsibility to accomplish his/her work tasks that were assigned by the superior.

我個人的看法是一個理想的員工就是有責任感把上級交代我的工作我都會把他做

好做完