

**Cultural Value for Young Generation Employees  
and Implications in Management Style in the Chinese  
Information Technology Industry**

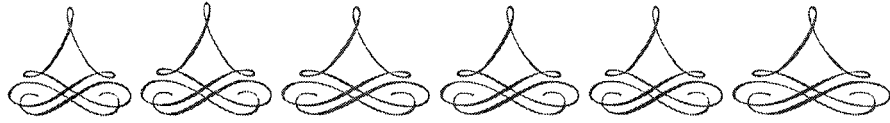
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirement of the  
University of Northumbria at Newcastle  
for the Degree of  
Professional Doctorate

Research undertaken in Newcastle Business School

September 2008

## *Ithaca*



When you leave for Ithaca,  
may your journey be long  
and full of adventures and knowledge.

Do not be afraid of Laestrigones, Cyclopes  
or furious Poseidon;  
you won't come across them on your way  
if you don't carry them in your soul,  
if your soul does not put them in front of your steps.

Don't lose sight of Ithaca,  
for that's your destination.  
But take your time;  
better that the journey lasts many a year  
and that your boat only drops anchor on the island  
when you have grown rich  
with what you learned on the way.

Don't expect Ithaca to give you many riches.  
Ithaca has already given you a fine voyage;  
without Ithaca you would never have parted.  
Ithaca gave you everything and can give you no more.

If in the end you think that Ithaca is poor,  
don't think that she has cheated you.  
Because you have grown wise and lived an intense life,  
and that's the meaning of Ithaca.

*Constantinos Kavafis, 1863---1933*

## Abstract

Confucian value, as the China traditional value, has been extensively researched in Chinese management, since the culture value is the essence for studying management. These existing studies ignore a critical issue that is the generational value change. As the direct result of China fast developed economy and 'opening' policy, much international companies entry into China, which bring the Western production and ideology to Chinese. The value and lifestyle of Chinese people have dramatically changed, especially for those young generations. This generation is in the value verge stage, which they are more individualistic and less Confucianism. The existing Chinese management theory is inappropriate since it considers all Chinese hold a same value, the study focused on Chinese young generation employee and identifying a young generation employees suited management style is little and undeveloped, which is forms the distinctiveness of this research.

The aim is to explore, illuminate and gain the deep understanding of Chinese young generation employees' perceptions of value and impact of their behaviour, further to propose effective management style including the effective management approaches, to potentially contribute Chinese local managers and Western managers in their global employee management. The concepts in the Confucianism, Individualism serve as the theoretical framework for this research. Also, the knowledge of management effectiveness, management style and management approaches ground the further analysis in this research. With its characteristic, this research selects China Information Technology industry to deeply study Chinese young generation employees' value and managers' first hand experiences, It employs social constructionism followed by qualitative methodology to understand participants' perceptions. Semi-structured interview is a method to gain the participants' thoughts and stories which later to be analysed by narrative analysis followed by thematic approach.

An analysis of data revealed that Chinese young generation employees different to elder employee. Four distinctive perceived values have been discovered: practicality; self centered; performance orientated and anti-traditions. To respond young generation employees' value change, the analysis revealed a management style, entitled 'Elder-brother'. Heading this management, seven effective management approaches are explored: benevolence; equal and learning supervision style; open decision making style; direct communication style; performance based evaluation; flexible staff management and encouragement for young employees' creations. At the same time, the analysis also provides an image for the qualified manager, who is self discipline; skilled and knowledge; competence in managing and having nice personal traits. Above all, they have not been discovered by past studies. They have offered new insights and raised awareness of the Chinese young employees' value, and corresponded managerial thought and behaviour.

The contributions of this research are: 1) it extends the current literature of Chinese management theory, which was never concerned in past research, with the specific interest on the Chinese young generation employees; 2) it develops a new and practice based framework for managing Chinese young generation employees in a contemporary environment, by addressing the management style, detailed management approaches

and the image of the manager; 3) it provides timely information for other academics and practitioners understand the current value presence in Chinese young generation employees, as well as guides both China and expatriate managers adopt their management behaviour in the future.

**Key Words:** China; Confucianism; Individualism; management style; young generation employees



## Acknowledgement

This is a long journey, it lasts four years; this is a hard journey, full of challenges, full of difficulties; this is a rich journey, happy for the improving, perplexed for the wander; this is a fortunate journey, receiving love, knowledge and assistances from so many.

The indescribable thanks go to Buddha. His spiritual food feeds me to endure all the suffering, His enlightenment gives me the persistence, and His love lights the whole journey.

The special gratitude go to my principal supervisor, Dr. Richard-Lihua. His encouragement warms me in the dark time, his knowledge directs me toward to the ending. The sincere thank go to Dr. Diane Sloan. Her belief in my ability and the interest in my research brings me the sunshine, her coaching and suggestion propels me overcome all frustrations. The truthful appreciation go to Dr. Jon Pemberton, the Director of DBA program. His assistance moves all the barriers and blocks on the way, his benevolence accompanies me all the process.

The heartfelt obligation go to my parents, Professor Zepu, Li and Ms. Yuying, Zhao. Their endless love drive me in the long process, their financial support enable me to reach the ending of the tunnel. The deepest thank go to my brother, Jincheng, Li and sister-in-law, Jianhui, Sun. Their practical contributions to the family ensure me to concentrate the research.

The sincere appreciation go to Ingo. His patience accompanies me in each up and down, his critical discussion opens my mind. The special thanks go to L. Zhong and Shirley Yu. Their recommendations help me access the organizations. The indescribable thanks go to all participants, their cooperation help me to accomplish the data collection.

This is a not a lonely journey. Thanks for Buddha sending all of you into my journey. I was there, you were there, and we were together.

## Declaration

I certify that the substance of this DBA (Doctor of Business Administration) thesis is to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text and that the work has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for any other award.

I also acknowledge that I have completed the required research training and milestones required for the degree. This thesis is my own work.

Name: Jiawei Li

Signature: 

Date: September 2008

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## **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter draws up an overall picture of this research. It first highlights the need to establish the relevant management style of Chinese young employees in today's society. It then addresses the research question and presents the research aims followed by the objectives. The research methodology and particular method will be mentioned briefly in this chapter. It also provides the overview of the Chinese IT (Information Technology) industry as the research context. The significance of this research will be illuminated, and finally the structure of this thesis is outlined.

### **1.2 Rationale of Topic**

According to Huczynski (1996), a successful management topic should meet the following four prerequisites:

- It must be timely and address a problem that is seen as important at the moment
- It has to be promoted effectively via academics, consultants and the business media
- It must relate to the needs and concerns of the managers to whom it is addressed
- It must be presented in an engaging way

The author would like to apply the above four criteria to justify the rationale for the topic. At present, the issue of the young generation is a very timely and a hot topic in Chinese society. From an academic perspective, this generation is defined as the people

who were born after 1980's, while the Chinese society simply refers to this generation as post 80's'. The feature of this generation is that they are the first generation of China's 'one child' policy, and they also grew up after China's 'opening door' policy as well. The Chinese local media, *Beijing Review* (5 Mar, 2008), vividly describes them as 'a generation breast fed on the economic milk and honey of China's reform and broken the conventional mould of how the Chinese are traditionally seen'. An article published in *Time Magazine* (2007) call them as 'China Me Generation' since they are 'self-centered', which is inconsistent with Confucianism principle. As the result of their mentality and the unique environment in which they grew up, they impressively differentiate from the elder generation in term of their values, and consequently exhibit different behavior. Therefore, studying them and discovering more about them is an urgent mission for China, since Chinese society has been preoccupied with this generation of 240 millions people.

Specifically, in relation to organisations, this issue becomes more vital. In most cases, the Chinese managers are influenced by Chinese traditional culture deeply, no matter in which year they were born, even those managers who were born in the 1970's which just a few years older than this generation. These Chinese managers find that they are now facing the strange subordinators. In an interview published in the '*Manager*' (8 Apr, 2008), one Chinese senior manager complained: '*in front them (the post 80's employees) all of my managerial experience are ineffective and is nothing*'. Managing this generation employees become a puzzle and challenge for the Chinese managers, in the worse case, some managers portray a 'post 80's-phobia'. However, managing 'post 80's' employees is an unavoidable phenomenon, since this generation is, and in a certain way, will be the majority source of the employee market. Reflecting on this

contemporary issue, Zhang Ruimin, the CEO of Haier China, advocates in the 2005 China Entrepreneur Summit Forum ‘...to manager the young employees, our previous method have to discard, even the successful one. Today, we have to adopt the new approach in order to match the environment’.

With the critical review of the literature on Chinese management, the author discovers that although several researches have addressed the changed cultural value for this generation in a quantitative sense, there is limited in-depth study to translate their cultural value in the context of being managed in the organisation, and lack of literature to purpose a utilisable guidance for managers in the day-today practice. As the DBA candidate, the work is required to apply the theoretical knowledge to the management practice and further to make a significant contribution to management practice. Therefore, the cognition of the theoretical gap and the sharp eye for the contribution of filling up this gap to the management practice in current Chinese society lead the author to choose this topic. Reflecting on the above criterions, this thesis timely addresses a researchable problem which connects to the practices in China, presents a vivid and engaging first hand information from both managers and young employees’ true stories, and unquestionably will benefit the managers in a local and global sense.

### **1.3 Research Question**

Stemming from the critical review of the existing theories on Chinese management style, the research question posed in this research is:

*To respond to the issue of the Chinese young generation employees’ changed values in today’s environment, what is the effective management style, in which management approaches is it constituted by?*

#### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

The primary aim of the research is to establish an effective and suitable Chinese management style model in today's organisation. The research seeks to propose a new management style model which fills up the theoretical gap on contemporary Chinese management. This model focuses on the young Chinese employees' Chinese tradition and individualism co-values, makes some adjustments based on Chinese managerial principles and absorbs some advantaged Western management approaches. The new management style model wishes to enhance the harmony between the Chinese managers and young employees, decreases the conflicts caused by different values, and in turn to ensure the organisation management effectiveness. To do this work, this research initially investigates the young employees' values, since understanding the young employees' values is the first step to build up this management style model. The management style is just an instrument, and the manager is the person who implements it. In this sense, the manager plays an important role on the application of the management style. Of particular importance, this research is to ask how managers are enacting their roles, and what sort of spectacle of the managers will be appreciated by young employees. The central aim of this research is to discover a new management style model. To achieve this aim, this research is involved investigating the detailed management approaches which are constituted by the manager's practical experience and young employees' wishes. Above young employees' values, manger's role and management approaches are the necessary elements for the management style model. With the identification of above works, the management style model is built up, which the aim of this research is achieved.

Therefore, the specific objectives of the research are:

1. To identify and embody Chinese young employees' cultural values
2. To picture an expected and accepted manager, from Chinese young employees' expectations influenced by their values and managers' self reflection in response to the young generation employees' values, who is qualified for managing the young generation employees
3. To introduce the effective management approaches, from Chinese young employees' expectations influenced by their values and managers' practical experience reflecting to the young employees' values and behaviour
4. To develop a practice based conceptual framework based upon the recognition of the previous research work, with which managers both in China and in the West can identify the essential ingredients in making strategic choices of managing young Chinese employees

In summary, above four objectives contribute to achieve the central aim of this research, and later the achievement of the research aim supports this research to answer the research question.

### **1.5 Research Design**

Given the excessive quantitative research on cultural value, this research instead on the individual's cultural value from a qualitative perspective. This qualitative research is conducted heading the social construction epistemology, qualitative methodology and using the case study approach. The social constructionism plays a fundamental role in the epistemology direction, as the knowledge of this research is constructed by both author and the participants. Based on its nature, the case study is applied in this research

as it is ideal for studying a real situation in life. The primary data in this research is qualitative and gathered from semi-structured interview. Story is the powerful meaning-making tool for people to convey meanings, share experiences and describe their daily life, therefore, it serves as an instrument for supporting semi-structured interview and generating insights into how participants review the researched phenomena in this research. Qualitative research largely deals with people talking. Narrative analysis, in particular, thematic approach is used to explore what the storyteller means and establish the categories. By concretely describing the phenomena and dynamically revealing how the parts of the phenomena interconnect, the qualitative design enables this research to help readers to '*understand the real situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing*' (Eisner, 1991, p58).

This research includes both pilot study and main study. The objective of the pilot study is to ensure that the research method will be tested before the main study which sustains credibility, to assist the author to improve the interview question based on the default from pilot study, and to ensure the whole research process will be conducted successfully. The pilot study has been conducted in the UK, where five participants have been involved in face-to-face semi-structured interviews to achieve sustainability of transferability. The main study has been conducted in Beijing, China. 5 IT companies and 26 individual participants have been interviewed.

## **1.6 Scope of this Research**

The scope of this research is the Chinese IT (Information Technology) industry. According to the employee statistics in China (2005), the average age of employees in the IT industry is the youngest among all industries in China. Employees' age rank is

from 25's to 40's on average. From the statistics, most IT companies are located in Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen. This research selects the IT companies where located in Beijing. A survey of 167,922 employees in Beijing's IT industry indicated these people are only 28.8 years old on average. The statistic also reveals that as the characteristic of the industry, the employees in the IT industry are more modern than employees in other industries. Evidently, this research sets five IT companies in Beijing as the target, to study the Chinese young generation employees' values, behaviour, and later to find an effective management style.

### **1.7 Significance of study**

It is believed that the contribution of this research is twofold. It is significant for the existing Chinese management theories and other scholars who are interested in the same area. Simultaneously, as the research domain in a DBA thesis should be delimited to the management practice, the second significance of this research therefore should place emphasis on managerial implication.

By providing the theoretical knowledge of previously undocumented young Chinese employees' cultural value, their effective commitment within the organisations and the relevant management behaviour, the findings of this research fill up the theoretical gap in existing Chinese management literature targeted to young employees. With the specific attention being paid to Chinese young employees, it proposes a management style is inspired by the Confucian value and Western management theories. Furthermore, this research builds up a basement for other researchers from the emerging issues related to Chinese young employees in this research's recommendations and directions towards further researches.

In addition to its academic contribution, the findings of this research have significant implications for the practice of Chinese managers and expatriate managers. Through the identification of young employees' cultural value and their expectations, the Chinese managers could realise the changes occurred to young employees and take their values into account as a leading factor in adapting their traditional managerial behaviour. Moreover, this research is also significant to the management practice in the context of globalisation. The findings provide insight to Chinese managers of Western individual's thought and consequent behaviour, which will potentially facilitate them to manage Western employees in the further, which the result of increasing expansion for Chinese organisations in international markets. On the other hand, the expatriate managers could update their understanding of Chinese employees by reading this research and bring these newest understanding into consideration when managing Chinese employees.

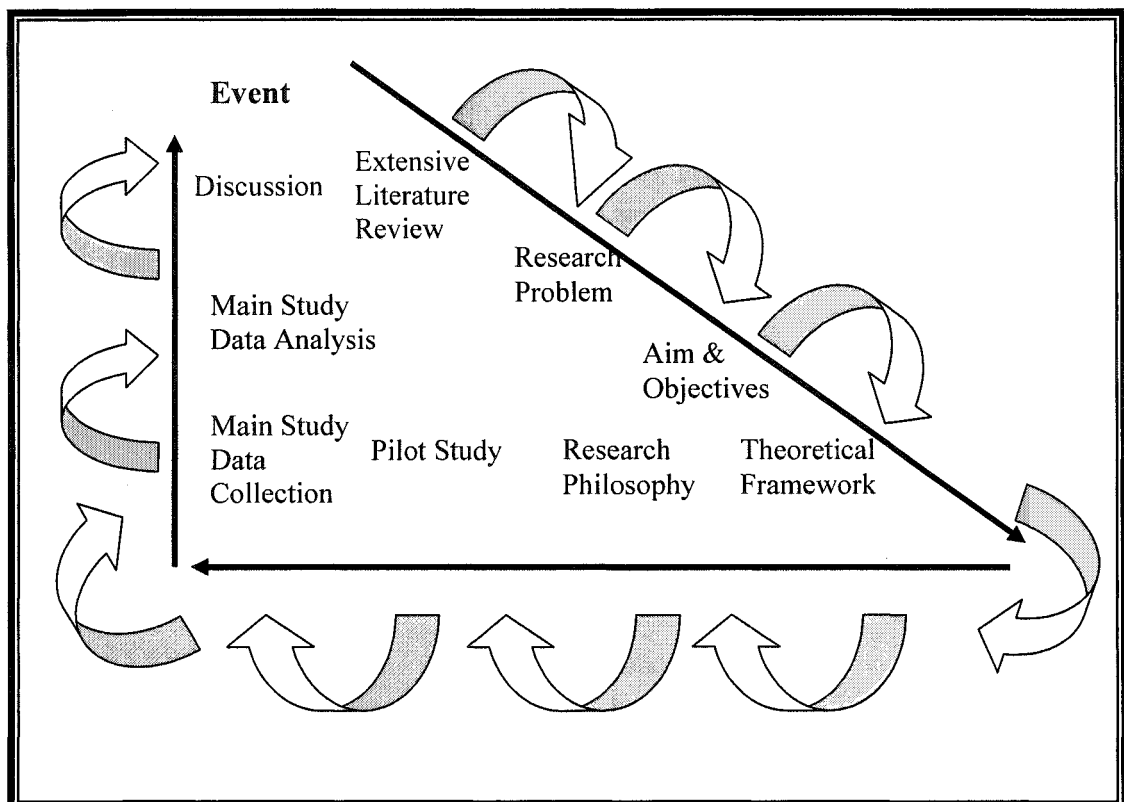
### **1.8 Process of the Research**

As stated above, the values of young generation of employees in China is the starting point of this research. As illustrated in Figure 1-1, the journey of this research starts off by the study of the current literatures on this event, after the extensive reading, the research interest is raised and turns to the research question. The consequent aims and objectives seek to answer the research question, and also keep the research focused. The research process moves to searching and reading again which is more specific and deeper, in order to develop the theoretical framework. The research philosophy determines which assumption of this research solves the research problem. Followed by a small scale pilot study, a large number of in-depth interviews including the main study will be undertaken in selected IT firms in China. The combination of a pilot study and main study build the strength of the research which sustains both internal and external



validity and the reliability of the research. The analysis and further discussion of the findings finally answer the research question and offer a reasonable solution for the event addressed in the beginning of this research.

Overall, this step by step research process includes identifying, searching, locating, assessing, analyzing, communicating, and expressing, and the goal is to solve a business problem, which is the nature of applied research and also the main reason why people want to be academic researchers in business and management study (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Remenyi, 1994).

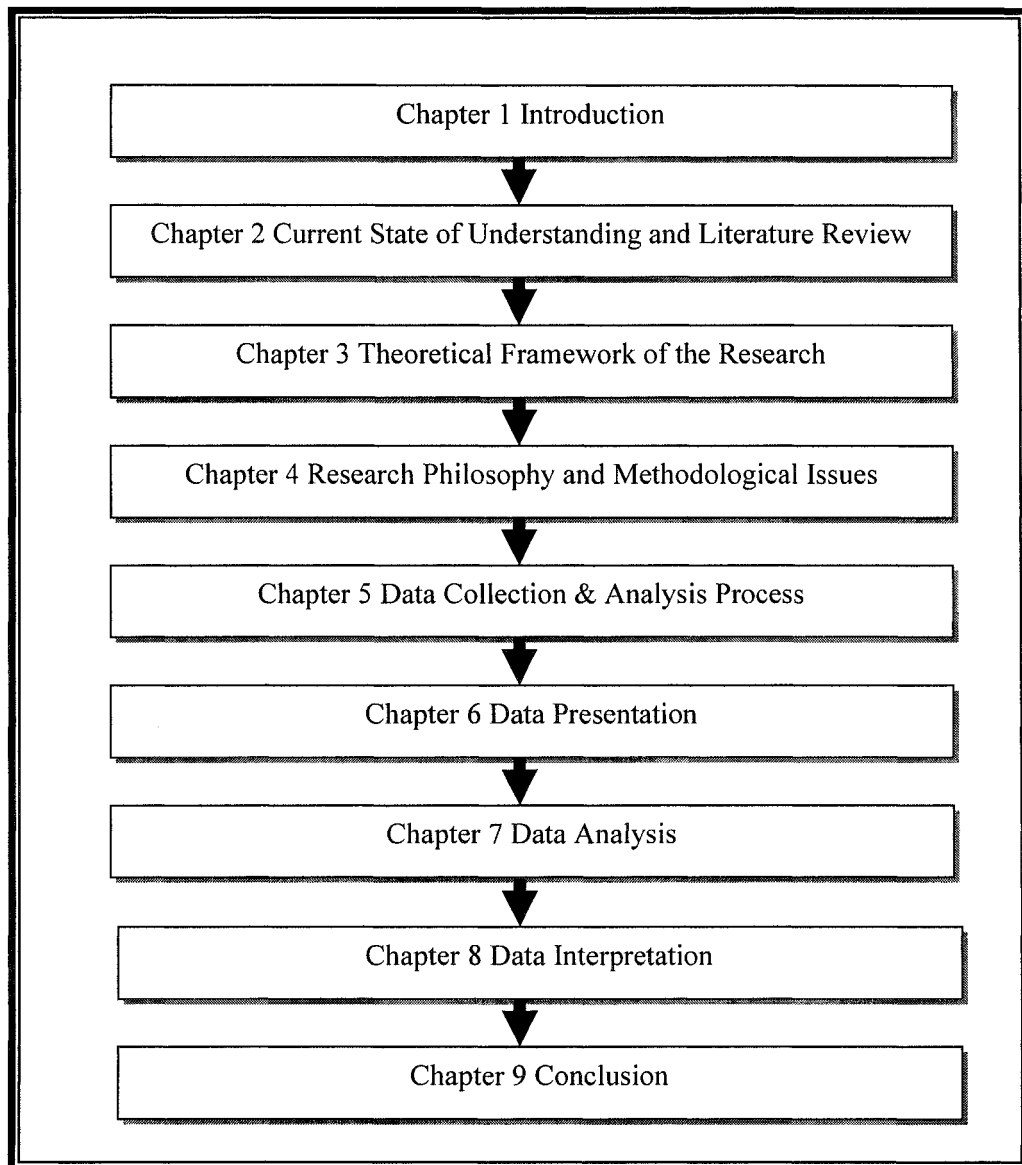


**Figure 1-1 Research Process of this Research**

Source: author

## 1.9 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in 9 chapters as illustrated in Figure 1-2. A brief summary of each chapter is set out below the figure.



**Figure 1-2 Structure of this Research**

Source: author

As an introduction chapter, Chapter 1 briefly unfolds this research by identifying the rationale of the research topic, addressing the research question, aims and objectives, presenting the research design, edging the scope, lighting up the investigation industry

and illuminating the significance. It ends with providing an explicit process of this research, and a structure of flow chapter.

Chapter 2 is a review of existing literature relating to the topic, which includes the disciplines of essential factors of management researches, culture and behaviour cycle and influence of national culture in the organisation. In the relation to this research, it specifically highlights generational culture value change in China, and the profile of the young generation. It also introduces Chinese tradition and explains Confucian value. In addition, it compares Chinese management style and Western management style, by addressing the similarities and differences. With the extensive reviews, chapter 2 explicates a gap in the knowledge and the limitation of existing literature, which encourages the investigation to fill up the gap and develops the theory. The distinctiveness of this research is given to indicate its feature.

Chapter 3 develops the theoretical framework to this research. Primarily, it highlights the significance of the chapter in this research. It broadly discusses the value dimensions, and later specifies the collectivism-individualism dimension, which is a fundamental foundation to this research. Four Confucian virtues related to management practices are given to reveal their influence in Chinese management. This chapter integrates the principle concepts of individualism and Confucianism, and puts them in the organisation context, further to develop a theoretical framework. Beyond the theoretical framework, the management style and management approaches are identified, developing a structure for the further findings presentation and discussion.

Chapter 4 discusses the philosophy stance underlying this research, methodology and strategy used for extracting data with the justifications. A detailed description of study design is presented to indicate the whole research process. With its feature, the method for data collection is given. Later, this chapter probes the nature of qualitative data, and principles of analysing data. This chapter also introduces the software which is used in the further analysis. Finally, the chapter ends with the discussion of ethical issue and research limitations.

Conjoining with the Chapter 4, Chapter 5 presents how the data has been collected and analysed in a pattern which is consistent with the philosophical principles described in Chapter 4. It starts with the practices of data collection, which includes all collecting activities, and a step-by-step analytic procedure is raised to indicate how the data have been analysed and created to findings. To ensure the quality of this research, the discussion of trustworthiness is given in the last to prove the rigor of this research.

Chapter 6, 7 and 8 are the data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Initially, Chapter 6 presents all information relating to the case organisations and individual participants in this research. In Chapter 7 the findings are analysed by thematic approach, and presented heading the themes, which reflect to the research question addressed in the Chapter One and the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Three. Chapter 8 summaries and refines the findings, answers the research question, and later achieves the research aims and objectives by developing a practice based framework.

Chapter 9 is a final chapter of this research. As an impressive ending, it re-evaluates the objectives of this research, and highlights the contributions to theory and management practices. The limitations of this research are also given, and later to direct the further research. The chapter finishes with the personal reflection of this DBA research, which identifies which great achievement this research offers to the author.

### **1.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presents a comprehensive feature to the whole research. It explains the reason for choosing this topic, and states the research question. It highlights the research aim and objectives. It briefly introduces the underlying philosophy of this thesis. The research design and method have been put forward and research scope and target organizations are set out. It also indicates the further significance of this thesis. It includes two figures. One is the outline of this thesis illustrated by an organizational figure, and other one is a visual figure illuminating the whole research process. The next chapter will give a comprehensive review of the literature associated with the topic of this thesis.

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>CHAPTER 2      CURRENT STATE OF UNDERSTANDING AND<br/>LITERATURE REVIEW</b></p> |
|---|

**2.1 Introduction**

This literature chapter is interdisciplinary which crosses some main issues about this research. It starts with the basic identification of the factors a management research should be considered, then, the factors are being taken into account on current Chinese management researches identifying the research gap on this research. The national, Culture and Behaviour Cycle and the implication of culture in organizations are given to address the underlying assumption of this research. Later this chapter uses sub-set to specific Chinese Confucianism, classify the generation in China society and profile Chinese young generations, which provides a detailed background of this research. A comparison of Chinese management style and Western management style is given to reveal the similarities and differences between the two management styles. Figure 2-1 is the outline of this chapter. Figure 2-1 places the position of this chapter in the whole thesis, and also presents the topic of each section of this chapter.

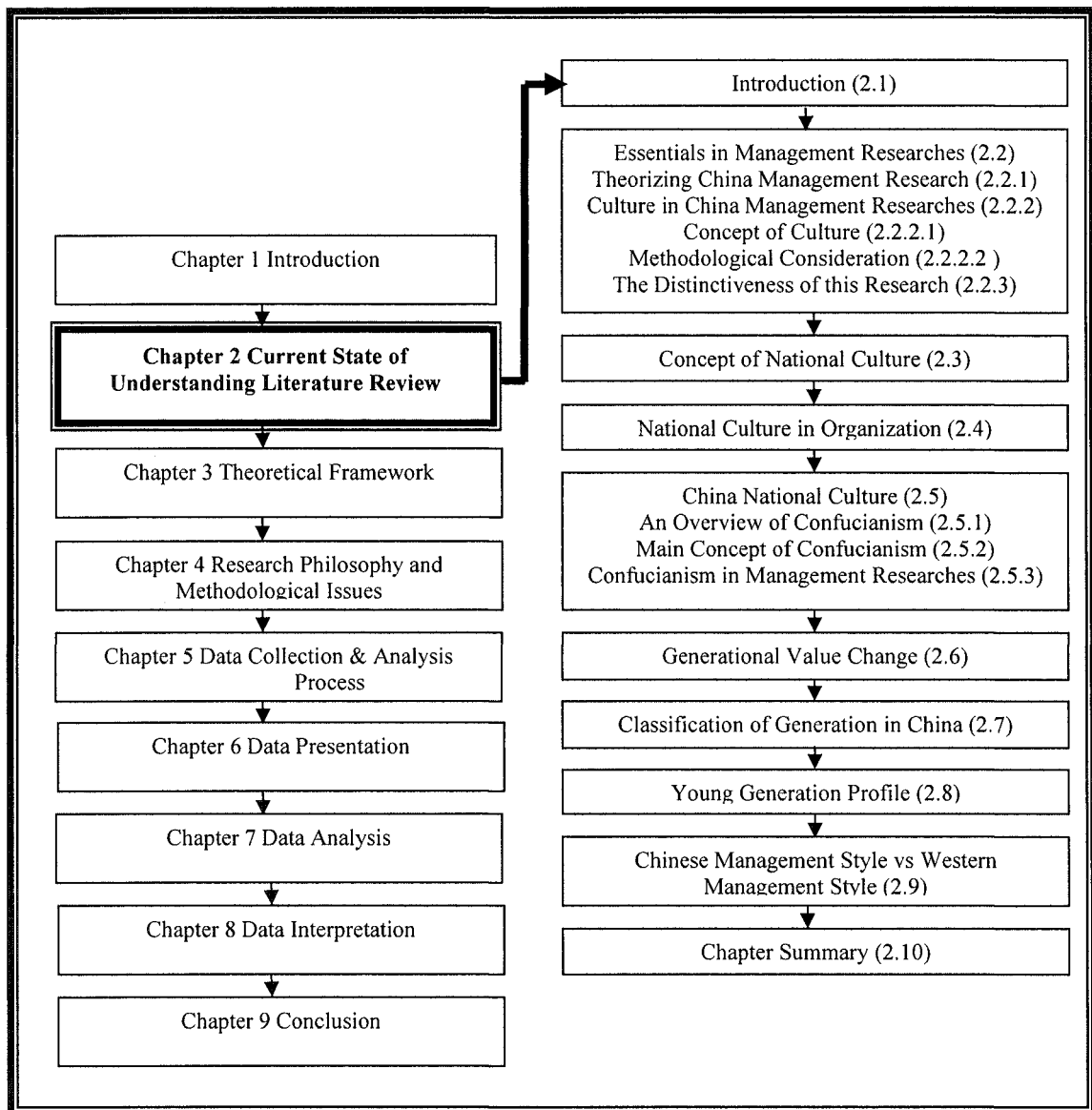


Figure 2-1 Outline of Chapter 2

Source: author

## 2.2 Essentials in Management Researches

Hofstede (1993) states that *'there is something in all countries called 'management', but its meaning is different from one country to the other, and it takes considerable historical and cultural insight into local conditions to understand its processes, philosophies and problems'*. From Hofstede's notion, the management researches

should be characterized as followings. Firstly, to study the management, it should a much large concern about local phenomena, local problem and serve to local managers. Secondly, culture can not be left in the study of management, as Hofstede (1984, p81) identifies that the nature of management skill and technology is '*culturally specific*' and the management can be viewed as an action effected by culture. In accordance with above two assumptions, the next section will primarily review the existing management researches on China, and then a research gap will be demonstrated based on the reviewing.

### **2.2.1 Theorising Chinese Management Researches**

To review the management researches in China, Tsui and colleagues (2004) comment '*the original theorizing on Chinese management is still in a primitive stage, especially in the behaviour area, because scholars primarily utilize existing management theories whose substance is based on Western firms*' (p137). To advance Asian management researches, country-specific (context-specific) research has been advocated to the researchers, in particular, Chinese researchers. The term of country-specific (context-specific) research has been advocated by Tsui in 2004, which refer to *indigenous research*. Tsui (2004) emphasize that North American and secondarily European research dominate the global management literatures, it is the time for Asian countries, especially China, the fast developing economy, fill the gap in global management knowledge (Tsui, et al, 2007). The indigenous research has been promoted by other scholars after its birth. March (2005) suggests that Asian researchers should develop indigenous researches on organisational phenomena, loosely coupled with global debates on related phenomena. In a supplementary view, Meyer (2006) emphasizes the reason for conducting locally contextualized research is that it contributes to the new



models and theories to explain locally interesting phenomena and develop to overcome low explanatory power of adapted theories. Bruton and Lau (2008) recognize that Asian contextualized research will help shift the management research paradigm, because the contextualized research strives to derive new theories of phenomena in their contexts (Tsui et al, 2007).

### ***2.2.2 The Consideration of Culture in Chinese Management Researches***

Culture is the unavoidably considered factor in the management research, because as what Alvesson (2002) described, culture offers a very inspiring and creative way to understand organizations, management and work life. As stated in the following, this section from conceptual thought and methodological thought to explicate the cultural issue in Chinese management research, the conceptual thought focuses on the context of culture, and the methodological thought considers the way the researchers to study the culture.

#### **2.2.2.1 Concept of Culture in Chinese Management Researches**

Confucianism has been labeled as the dominant cultural value in Chinese management researches. For example, Lee (1987) in his doctoral dissertation points out that the conception of Chinese management should base on Confucianism. However, when the culture value has been practiced in the management research, one critical issue must be considered: cultural value change. Tung (1996) claims that the cultural value should be seen as dynamic rather than static. In particular, for the application of Confucianism in the management practice in China, Jiang and Chen (2006) ironically claim that the image of Confucianism remains unchanged in the cultural study all the time, they argue

that it is inappropriate if considering all Chinese people hold a same value and randomly pick samples when studying Chinese culture. The statement made by Child and Warner (2003) support what Jiang and Chen's claimed that the single point along the cultural dimension does not fit the contemporary circumstance in China, because it ignores two aspects which are the diversity and cultural value change in China.

First, the context of China is much more complicated diversified, which has different ethnic regions or generations. Child and Warner (2003) advise that the researchers should justify 'to which China are referring to' when the Chinese is being studied. This point has been approved by other researchers. Zhao et al (2006) suggest that the contexts in China are varied which some factors should be considered by the researchers, such as: industry, business ownership, geographic regions and generations. In the study related to organisation, Liu (2003) points out that the study of macro-culture ignores the individual diversity, because the individual who were born and raised in different historical periods bring different attitudes, experiences, expectations, values and competencies to organizations, which the same organisation may embrace multiple cultures, different and even incompatible beliefs, values and assumptions held by different group of employees (Louis, 1980; Hofstede, 1984; Martin, 1992).

Second, China is experiencing a transitional period, which people are keen to learn from outside world yet also conscious of its history, the people's culture value are more complex than has generally been appreciated. Zapalska and Edwards (2001) assert that due to a market economy and intense competition, the traditional concepts of value are being confronted by the fast-changing environment. Evidentially, from a longitudinal study, Ralston et al (2006) indicate that cultural values changed much more in China in a recent 12-year period, especially the Chinese young generation. As a significant

contributor in the study of China's generational value shift, Ralston and his colleagues have concluded that Chinese young generation who have grown up during the Economy Reform in the stage of value cross-verge, which they are more individualistic, materialistic, entrepreneurial and less Confucianism (Ralston et al, 1993; Ralston et al, 1999; Egri and Ralston, 2004; Ralston, 2004). Their results have been approved by other researchers recently (Jiang and Chen, 2006) that they believed the Confucian value now is moving on the young generation and they have their desirable values. However, so far, the existing management literatures presents limit of the knowledge of the value change on Chinese young generation. As Jiang and Huang (2002) found from reading the management researches on China published in some leading American journals that less works have been done on how Confucian and Western cultural value interact each other and eventually impact the Chinese young employees' behaviour.

#### **2.2.2.2 Methodological Consideration of Cultural Study**

To review the existing studies related to culture, Earley (2006) criticises that the large-scale surveys are enough and it just is not useful to have more of them. Similarly, to search all researches appearing in three leading international business journals (International Marketing Review, International Business Studies and International Marketing) from 2000 to 2005, Gao (2005) found that current studies mainly characterize with comparisons between cultural contexts, rather than in-depth understanding of business interactions in the cultural context. Hence, Earley (2006) advises that it is time to move away from those value surveys to developing new theories and framework, which is required the researchers refocus their attentions to understand the linkage among culture, perception, actions and organisations. Evidentially, researchers (Earley and Ang, 2003; Thomas and Inkson, 2004; Ng and

Earley, 2006) have moved to the '*nascent culture research*' (Earley, 2006, p929) in most recently which focuses on an individual's capabilities to adapt in a cultural setting and as a driver of behaviour, how cultural value effects and influences on individual action.

### ***2.2.3 The Distinctiveness of this Research***

The management practices within organizations are strongly influenced by the value, perception and behaviour of managers and employees. Hence, with the critical consideration on the issues stated in section 2.2.2, a research gap is raised: the Chinese traditional culture based management theory is inappropriate to instruct today's managers in the practices. As a result, a new and practiced based management theory is necessarily needed with the specific attention to the young generation and addressing their changed cultural value.

Given the Chinese young generation has been impacted by both China traditional value and Western ideology, this research will purpose some new insights to Chinese management practices achieved by an in-depth study. Taking this notion back to above considerations of Chinese management research, firstly, this research factually respects the diversity of context of China which only focuses on young generation employees with a clear investigation boundary. Secondly, echoing to the results from previous surveys which the Chinese young generation employees are less Confucianism and more Western ideology, this research targets to discover what the Chinese young generation employees value, and further to seek how their work related behavior consequently be impacted by their values. It is in accordance with the direction Bruton and Lau (2008) offered to the China further management research, that from the stage of

answering the ‘what’ question, the study should also move beyond by asking ‘how’ question. Moreover, based on what discovered from young employees’, the management practices this research proposed meets the criteria of the mentioned China contextualized research, which it takes into account the influence of the deep cultural roots in analyzing the behaviour of firms and the individuals inside firms (Tsui and Lau, 2002).

In further, globalization is the important theme in today’s world. Although developing indigenous contextualized research is the further trend required by China management researchers, it should not narrowly understand that the indigenous contextual study could create artificial barriers for their acceptance in international scholarly conversations (Whetten, 2002). Despite this is research is Chinese indigenous contextualized, it does not mean compromising on the generalizability of the knowledge, like what Cheng (1994) advocated, it is consistent with the ‘context-embedded’, which based on China, single country, this research contributes to the global management knowledge and universal knowledge by developing local relevance and valid management models (Tsui and Lau,2002). The detailed contribution of theoretical knowledge will be highlighted in the conclusion chapter.

### **2.3 Concept of National Culture**

Schneider and Barsoux (1997) describe that the job of defining culture looks like exploring the ocean, which giving an acceptable definition to the term of culture is not an easy job. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) have identified that there are over 160 different definitions of culture. The earliest cited definition of culture made by Tylor (1881), ‘father of cultural anthropology’, as: *‘that complex whole which includes*

knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'. After that, many scholars have made the efforts for explaining what the culture is, and following is some of their works as presented in Table 2.1.

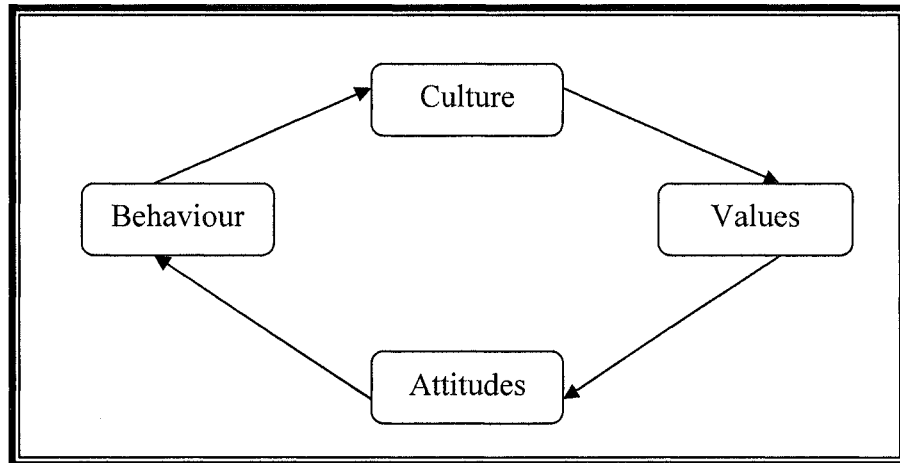
| Author                       | Publish Year  | Contribution to the Knowledge  |
|------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Kroeber & Kluckhohn          | 1952          | Culture is transmitted patterns of values, ideas and other symbolic system that shape behaviour  |
| Mead                         | 1951          | Culture is a body of learned behavior, a collection of beliefs, habits, and traditions, shared by a group of people and successively learned by people who enter society   |
| Hofstede                     | 1984, p5      | Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another  |
| Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars | 1993, p6      | Culture is a shared system of meanings. Culture dictates what we pay attention to, how we act and what we value  |
| Triandis                     | 1994, p22     | Culture is a set of human-made objective and subjective elements that in the past have increased the probability of survival and resulted in satisfaction of the participants in an ecological niche, and thus became shared among those who could communicate with each other because they had a common language and lived in the same time and place |
| Tung                         | 1996,<br>p491 | Culture is an evolving set of shared beliefs, values, attitudes and logical processes which provide cognitive maps for people within a given societal group to perceive, think, reason act, react and interact   |
| Matsumoto                    | 1996,p16      | Culture is the set of attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviour shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communication from one generation to the next   |
| Groeschl & Doherty           | 2000,p14      | Culture consists of several elements of which some are implicit and others are explicit. Most often these elements are explained by terms such as behaviour, values, norms and basic assumptions   |
| Spencer-Oatey                | 2000, p4      | Culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural conventions, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and each member's interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour  |
| Scarborough                  | 2000          | Culture is the set of values, attitudes, and beliefs shared by a group which sets the standards of behaviour required fro acceptance and participation in the group  |
| Rosinski                     | 2003, p20     | Culture is the set of unique characteristics that distinguishes its members from other group   |

|          |      |  |
|----------|------|--|
| Schwartz | 2003 | Culture is rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices, symbols, norms and values prevalent among people in a society |
|----------|------|--|

**Table 2-1 Definitions of Culture**

Source: author

To sum up above definitions, it is clear that culture can be described as everything that human made (Herskovits, 1955); everything that people do as members of their society (Ferraro, 1990); a set of common understanding (Becker and Geer, 1980); meaning and interpretation (Louis, 1983); a set of understandings shared among persons who have been similarly socialized (Terpstra and David, 1991), or a system consisting of subsystems, such as educational, economic, political, religions, and recreational systems (Harris and Moran, 1996). As presented in above table, the term of value and behaviour appear in the each definition of culture, which reveals that there is a correlation between culture, value and behaviour. This notion has been approved by Adler. Adler (1991) offers a culture and behaviour cycle which illustrates how the culture leads the person's behaviour. As shown in Figure 2.2, individuals express culture through the value they hold, the value then influence their attitude about the form of behaviour considered most appropriate under a given situation, the attitudes then in turn provide the basis of their behaviour, the continually changing pattern of individuals' behaviour eventually influence the society's culture and a new cycle begins (Chen, 2004).



**Figure 2-2 Culture and Behaviour Cycle**

Adler, 1991, p16.

Along with the review of vast literatures of culture, Liu and Mackinnon (2001) summarise the three basic themes of culture: a psychological concept, a tool bonds a group of individual and a framework to analysis behaviour. No matter what the function is, the culture focus on '*beliefs and values*', '*the way things are done and shared*' and '*accepted perception*' (Liu and Mackinnon, 2001, p118). Culture is an inherently multi-level phenomenon, enacted at numerous levels (Dickson et al, 2000). Hofstede (1994) identifies six levels: national level; regional level; gender level; generational level; social class level; and organizational level. Trompenaars (1993) divides culture into three broad levels: national or regional, corporate or organizational and professional or ethical. Further, Fan (2000) claims five level of the culture: international level; national level; regional level; industry and professional level and organisational level. In term of the above classification, this research focuses on the national level. The next section will highlight the status of national culture in the organisation.



## 2.4 National Culture in Organization

The ample works identify that national culture has a major impact on all aspects of management behaviour (Mead 1994; Laurent 1989; Schneider and Barsoux, 2003). Morden (1996) illustrates the management process within the organization actually is a value chain that are established by the values, behavior and perceptions of priority of manager, employees and other relevant partners. The reason is that the managerial practices represent certain cultural frameworks (Erez, 2002), because the practical behaviour the individual presented in the organization are influenced by their value, orientation which they bring to the job (Lachman, et al, 1995). Thus the managers' culture strongly influence their attitude and behavior (Mason and Spich, 1987), and in particular, their managerial practice and management skill is '*culturally specific*' (Hofstede, 1984, p81). In the other side, the national culture is a central organizing principle of employees' understanding of work, their approach to it, and the way in which they expect to be treated (Newman and Nollen, 1996).

Some scholars list several possible actions employees would take when management practice against their value, which to identify the importance of national culture in the organisation. Erez (2000) indicates that in most simple cases, the employees won't adopt those managerial practices that are at odds with their cultural value. Newman and Nollen (1996) mention that when the management practices are inconsistent with their cultural values, employees are likely to feel dissatisfied, distracted, uncomfortable, and uncommitted, and consequently the employees less able to perform well. Holland (1976) observes that the employee has two ways in responding to the incongruent organizational rule and management. They first tend to modify these rule requirements, then, they may change their jobs if they fail the modification. It clearly expresses that

employees either modify the rule or leave the jobs, rather than their values. Therefore, Lockett (1988) canvasses that, in particular, the elements of China national culture are most appropriated focus in the first instance when study China organizations and management.

## **2.5 Chinese National Culture**

Generally speaking, the Chinese culture results from the crossing three doctrines: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. In a basic sense, Taoism is the influential native philosophy with its main concept 'why of life' (De Bary, et al, 1960), while Buddhism provides a kind of spiritual food to Chinese to endure hardship, suffering and other vicissitudes in life and to look forward to a better life (Lee, 1995). Confucianism is not a religion; but, rather, a set of guidelines for proper behaviour; it has exerted a fundamental influence on Chinese thinking, especially the way of behaviour for over 2,500 years (Tu, 1998b; Hofstede, 1991). The following section would like present an initial discussion of Confucianism which includes the introduction and concept of Confucianism, and its significance for the management researches. The detailed concept of Confucianism and its implication in management practice will be illustrated in next chapter.

### ***2.5.1 An Overview of Confucianism***

Confucius (551-479 BC) was born in the state of Lu, known today as the Shan Dong province, China. He was primarily interested in the development of moral character, with social harmony through self-cultivation. He travelled to many principalities to advocate his view and seek to have his view accepted by the princes in administrating

their states. However, his voice seemed not to respond. Therefore, Confucius devoted all his energies to education. Confucius had a total of 3000 students in his life of whom seventy-two were outstanding scholars. His political views have been propagated successfully through his teaching. Confucius never wrote down his views. In order to remember his teaching, his disciples wrote down all his saying and dialogue with them after he die, which later edited in the Confucius analects. The teachings of Confucius mainly concerned with moral conduct, proper social relationship and the principles of governance. Confucius' ideas were the single strongest influence on Chinese society, in the most time of China's history, the Confucian value was the official one made by China government.

### ***2.5.2 The Main Concepts of Confucianism***

Confucianism considers proper relationships among human being as the basic of the society (Huang, 2000). It identifies *WuLun* (Five Cardinal Relations) between individuals: king and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, and friends. The functional role of Five Cardinal Relations has been defined by some scholars (Bond, 1991; Bond and Hwang, 1986; Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Littrell, 2002) that they instructs each one knows own place and whom they defer in a given environment, provides a correct and best way of conducting relationship, and maintains all levels of the hierarchy. In the study of the application of the Five Cardinal Relations, Chen (2004) cites a statement from Hu (1919) that the Five Cardinal Relations can not be understood absolutely: king-subject and husband –wife, it can fall into either the first category or the second, but it has significant implication for the role of 'self' in social relationship.

Besides the Five Cardinal Relations, the central principle of Confucianism is harmony, which has been maintained and maximized by other five virtues: *Ren* (benevolence); *Yi* (righteousness); *Li* (propriety), *Zhi* (wisdom) and *Xin* (trustworthiness). The first virtue is *Ren* (benevolence). As the fundamental principle of Confucian, *Ren* is benevolence and humanity, which it identifies the capacity of the human person to extend generosity and compassion to all of humanity (Arcodia, 2003). Followed *Ren* is *Yi*. ‘*Derived from the root meaning correct, Yi has greatest manifestation being in the honouring of the worthy* (Plaks, 2003, p37), and is a judgement appropriate to the situation at hand and individual’s social status or roles, which clear defined in the concept of *Lun* (relations) (Cheung, 2008). The concept of *Li* lead individual to act or behave appropriately with others. It expresses as unwritten laws and regulations that lead person’s desirable action and behaviour in the society. The individual’s knowledge and wisdom is *Zhi*. The elder age is understood as the indication of knowledge and wisdom, which should be respected by others. *Xin* is the meaning of trust or believe, which indicates that individuals should trust or believe each other.

### ***2.5.3 The Significance of Confucianism in Management Researches***

As noted above, Confucian value infuses into Chinese life, hence it undoubtedly has been brought into managerial practice. This section is a representation of Confucianism in the management researches in China, Asian and worldwide. Although, the three Chinese doctrines are relevant to Chinese management and organisational behaviour (Redding, 2002; Bond, 1996), Confucianism is the most cited in the management researches, which crosses the all subjects, such as Buttery and Leung (1998) discuss the implication of Confucianism in business negotiation; Lau and Roffey (2002) emphasise the position of Confucianism in business education in today’s China; Littrell (2002)

claims that Confucian value constructs a distinct Chinese leadership pattern; Yan and Sorenson (2006) examines the Confucianism value in the Chinese family business success and Jin and Butcher (2008) investigate that how Confucian value affect customers' satisfaction and loyalty.

In the early time, Confucian value has been identified by Cheng (1998) as the factor of economic miracles of Japanese and other Asian four countries. Recently, Gilbert and Tsao (2000) discover the connection between Confucian value and service quality of Taiwan hospitality industry and Choi (2004) evaluate the Korean HRM system based on Confucian value. Confucian value is not only taking place in Asian countries, but also in the worldwide, since Confucianism makes the contribution in global social and cultural transformations (Little and Reed, 1989; Dallmayr, 1993). For instance, Acordia (2003) links Confucian value to study the tourism industry in Australia and Jia et al (2005) identify the significance of Confucian value in international HRD.

## **2.6 Generational Value Change**

Liu and Mackinnon (2001) say that value is core of culture, Bond (1996) echoes that value plays a pivotal role in explaining culture and difference in the behaviour. Also, Brooks (2006) agrees that the most deep-rooted element of culture is the set of value held by people, and such value manifest all manner of phenomena in people's attitude and behavior. That can be an explanation that why people to view or behave to the similar phenomena in quiet different ways. In a same sense, Triandis (1972) advises that studying value is the better way to capture the relationship between the national culture and behavior, because the culture is primarily a manifestation of core value (Straub et al, 2002). By values, it is generally consistent in the meanings. Athos and Coffey say that

is 'we mean ideas about what is desirable' (1968, p100), and Guth and Tagiuri agree that value is 'desirable end state' (1965, p125). Kluckhohn (1951, p395) defines: 'a value is a conception, explicit or implicit distinctive of an individual or a group, which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action'. Conner and Becker (1975, p551) indicate that 'values may be thought of as global beliefs about desirable end-state underlying attitudinal and behavioural processes'. In light of above definitions, value 'specify an individual's personal beliefs about how he or she 'should' or ought' to behave' in a given situation (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998, p354).

According to Tung (1996) and McGuire et al (2002), the culture is not static, but is stressing the evolutionary and dynamic structure in a specific society at a particular point in time. Thus, as the essential factor to explain the culture, the people's value waves over the time. Several factors lead the cultural value change, and generation is labelled as one of the factors (Hosftede, 1997). Strauss and Howe (1990) define generation is a group of people or cohorts who share birth years and experiences as they move through time together. Each generation has own characteristics which include relatively enduring values, attitudes, preferences and behaviours (Kupperschmidt 2000). The principle concept of generation theory created by Inglehart (1997) notes that significant macro-level social, political and economic events that occurred during a birth cohort's impressionable pre-adult years result in a generational identity comprises of a distinctive set of values, beliefs, expectations and behaviours that remain relatively stable throughout a generation's lifetime. Kupperschmidt (2000) lists some aspects of a generation's life which could be influenced by the events, related to this research, it refers to the generation's attitude toward authority and organisation, what the generation

want and need from work; and how the generation expect to meet these work related needs and wants.

In their researches, Ralston et al (1999) say that very few countries in recent history have experienced the number and magnitude of social changes that have occurred in China. China recent history (1949 to present) has been divided by the historians into two phases: 'closed door period' (1949-1978) and 'open door policy' (1978-present). China Economic Reforms has begun in 1978. From then, China has substantially upgraded its old style '*command economy*' to a new '*socialist market economy*' (Warner, 1997, p569) and shifts its Centrally Planned Economy strictly controlled by Government to transition economy (Wang, 2002). With the transition economy, China has experienced some remould events, such as attracting foreign investment, and entry into WTO. These events not only develop the economy, but also lead to Western capitalistic ideologies infuse to in Chinese business and education (Vohra, 2000), bring the new concept to people's life, reshape the people's beliefs, and consequently make a marked change on the values of both Chinese society and workforce. Thompson and Thompson (1990) indicate that an individual's values are entrenched by one's late-teens, and the value learned in childhood distinguished one group of people from another (Beck and Moore, 1995). Thus, the cultural value of young generation are strongly impacted by China fast developing economy, and as a direct result, their value appear differently since they grow up in a different environment comparing to the elder generation.

## 2.7 Classification of Generation in China

There is a general way to classify the generation in today's workplace. Lancaster and Stillman (2002) concretely classify the people into four generations: Traditionalists (born 1900-1945); Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964); Generation X (born 1965-1980) and Generation Y (born 1981-1999). This classification is proved by the Yu and Miller (2003). In an empirical investigation in Taiwan about generational gap and culture influence, Yu and Miller argue that modern workplace are typically diverse with three generational groups: Baby Boomers (1945-1964); X Generation (1965-1980) and Y Generation. According to Solomon (1992), Y Generation refers to people who were born after 1980's. Similarly, in a study of strategies for managing multigenerational employees within organisation, Kupperschmidt (2000) employs same way to identify the classification of generation, but with a different ranking of age: Traditionalists (born before 1940); Baby Boomers (born 1940-1960) and Generation Xers (born 1960-1980).

To classify the generation in today's Chinese organisations, some researchers present their opinion based on their researches. Ralston et al (1999) segment Chinese as old generation, current generation and new generation. The new generation refers to the people who '*grew up mostly during the era of Social Economic Reform*'. In a most recent research, Jiang and Chen (2006) divide Chinese people into young generation and last generation based on the Culture Revolution (1966-1976). They define the young generation are people who were born after the Culture Revolution and spend their adolescence in the Social Reform period.

Hence, the term of 'young generation of employees' in this research are identified as the employees who were born after 1980 and have grown up in the Economic Reforms.



First, it is accordance with the above mentioned broad classification; second, it specially reflects the characteristics of Chinese history and society. Economic Reforms is a milestone during the Chinese recent history which not only has significant meaning for Chinese economy, but also for Chinese life style and beliefs. Moreover, as stated in Chapter One, the specific attention on this group people echoes the contemporary and controversial issue in today's China, which is an essential for management research.

## **2.8 Young Generation Profile**

In their research, Jiang and Chen (2006) draw a general picture for today's young Chinese: as a direct result of China's opening of the door to foreign investors, all kinds of international products flooded in. They describe that the young Chinese dress in European brands, eat American fast food, watch Hollywood movies, bid trades in international website, make foreign friend online, and study English from the primary school. These social activities not only bring the different life style and quality to these youths, but also a fresh ideology. As shown in the Table 2-2, many recent researches have specifically demonstrated the changed values of the young generation employees in the context of an organization.

| <b>Author</b>      | <b>Publish Year</b> | <b>Profile of Chinese young generation</b>   |
|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| Rosen              | 1990                | Although social reforms have brought Confucius back into official favour, Chinese youth who have grown up during the Social Reform are individualistic, materialistic, hedonistic and entrepreneurial. |
| Bimbaum-More et al | 1995                | The acquisition of individualism of young PRC managerial trainees even higher than Hong Kong.  |
| Ralston            | 1995                | A growing spirit of 'Chinese-style' individualism and more Western ways of thinking are being adopted by these young Chinese in China.   |
| Chen et al         | 1998                | The traditional Confucian values have been found fading out among these young people.  |

|                  |      |  |
|------------------|------|--|
| NG               | 1998 | It is believed that younger generation of employees will be more receptive to foreign values and many therefore be more willing and ready to accept the Western approach to management.  |
| Ralston et al    | 1999 | New generation of Chinese are clearly more individualistic, and less Confucian philosophy.   |
| Bishop et al     | 1999 | With the loosening of state control over daily lives of the Chinese people, the move toward a more market-driven economy, and the success of the one-child policy, new attitudes are developing. Young employees are generally more self-centered, more individualistic, and less political than the older generation of employees and tend to be more receptive and adaptive to Western management. |
| Jianmin          | 2000 | Many Chinese traditional values are either changing or being challenged, especially by the young generation.   |
| Yang             | 2002 | Young generations easily absorb the Western ideology, and emerge with capitalist values.   |
| Child and Warner | 2003 | The Chinese managerial values should be expected in generational differences. The young generation have been more exposed to new economic and social forces, such as consumerism, the internet and contact with foreign firms. Such exposures encourage them to deviate from traditional Chinese cultural norms and to question that underlying values as well.                                      |
| Cai              | 2004 | In responding to the changing cultural environment, young Chinese who are growing up at a time when Chinese society is quickly becoming commercial, modern and technological, are adopting new cultural values, attitudes toward human relation, the heightened behaviour. They today are self-centered, overindulged, egocentric, I-conscious, and lack the values of persistence and cooperation   |
| Chan et al       | 2006 | The exposure to materialistic messages frequently found in the television programmes and commercials from the West may be associated with the demise of traditional Chinese values among Chinese teenagers   |
| Bhasin           | 2007 | There is no place in China for individualism, it has been always a collective society based on personal relationship which is hierarchal, following from the leader or order family number down. But, the new generation has been somewhat eroded due to external influence.   |

**Table 2-2 Chinese Young Employees' Profile**

Source: author

Much research has been done on the distinct character of Chinese values, the more influential and substantial works include of Hofstede, Trompenaars and Bond. In his study, Hofstede identifies five dimensions to study Chinese value: power distance; individualism/collectivism; masculinity/femininity; uncertainty avoidance and Confucian Dynamism. In addition, Trompenaars identifies seven value dimensions which are used as other value system to study Chinese value. The Chinese Value Survey developed by Michael Bond and others (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). The study identifies 40 values that center Chinese culture, and Bond categorizes these 40 values into four dimensions: Integration; Confucian Dynamism; Human Heartedness and Moral Discipline. Table 2-3 is a summary of above three works.

| Hofstede<br>Cultural Dimension  | Trompenaars<br>Cultural Dimension  | Bond<br>Chinese Value Survey   |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Power Distance</li> <li>● Individualism/Collectivism</li> <li>● Masculinity/Femininity</li> <li>● Uncertainty Avoidance</li> <li>● Confucian Dynamism</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Universalism vs. particularism</li> <li>● Individualism vs. collectivism</li> <li>● Neutral vs. emotional</li> <li>● Specific vs. diffuse</li> <li>● Achievement vs. ascription</li> <li>● Attitudes to time</li> <li>● Attitudes to the environment</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Integration</li> <li>● Confucian Dynamism</li> <li>● Human Heartedness</li> <li>● Moral Discipline</li> </ul> |

**Table 2-3 Works of Hofstede, Trompenaars and Bond on Chinese Value System**

Source: author

Despite having brought out the facts of certain aspects, all three research projects, academically significant as they are in the areas of Chinese value system, still fall short of fully explaining the relation between the economic performance of the East and the Chinese value system (Lee, 2003). As he himself agreed, Hofstede's findings do not point out explicitly any close or causal relations between the economic take-off of the

Asian countries and his so-called 'Chinese value system' (Lee, 2003), and the works of both Trompenaars and Bond also neglect this point. It has been approved that economic development and transition could change the people's value, and Eastern and Western cultures can coexist in an industrialised nation (Matthews, 2000; Guan and Dodder, 2001).

In this sense, the works of Hofstede, Trompenaars and Bond have the limitations in the study of today's Chinese values, especially for the young generation. Certainly, the profile offered by Jiang and Chen (2006) and other findings presented in Table 2-2 are more appropriate and relevant to study today's young Chinese values. Firstly, this profile emphasises the status of economic development in the study of people's value, in particular, it highlights the influence of economic development in the study of Chinese young generations' values, which is ignored in the works of Hofstede, Trompenaars and Bond. Secondly, this profile convincingly explains that why the next chapter should respectively studies the management style under Chinese and Western culture. The study of management style can not leave the culture value, in this sense, this profile provides a message that the single management style either based on Chinese value or Western value is irrelevant in today's China, and the new developed management style should consider both values and their influences in the management.

## **2.9 Chinese Management Style vs Western Management Style**

Following by above discussion, it is clarified that there are many differences established between Chinese management style and Western management style, since they are created on the different culture assumptions. Whilst, there are some shared values for both management styles. This section will elaborate such similarities and differences.

Western countries are rooted deeply by the thought of equality and respect for others. In addition, modesty, honesty, avoidance of confrontations and eagerness to learn are the important values and virtues in Western societies (Hestflatt, 2005). As stated in the early, above values are also the virtues Confucianism advocated. In this sense, both Chinese and Western societies share above basic values, and these values have their impacts in the organisations and management styles.

Impacted by the national culture and people's value, the management under different cultural background indicates the different features. Generally, the five major differences between Chinese and Western management have been found: management ideas; management basic points; management methodology; management behaviour and management principle (Zhang and Zhang, 2007). These differences manifest themselves in the supervision style, decision making style, communication style and paternalistic orientation, which are the four managerial activities under the management style.

- Supervision style: As characterised by hierarchy, the power distance between Chinese managers and the employees is high. 'Father-son' supervision style is the distinct feature in Chinese management. The Chinese managers place themselves as 'father' in the organisation and have the responsibilities to take care their employees. In the mean time, the employees should express their respects and obedience to the managers. Contrarily, the Western managers play an assistant role to their employees. In stead of controlling, Western managers guide and support their staffs. It is clear to see that the relationship between the Chinese managers and employees is vertical and an equal one appears in the Western management.

- Decision making style: Chinese tradition emphasises 'harmony with each other', and the group as the optimization criterion, unlike the Western thinking of optimizing one's self-interest (Li *et al.*, 1992). Additionally, centralised decision making is a common feature in Chinese management, which the decision making is only the duty for the managers, not employees. In Western management practices, the decision making is a collaborative process between the managers and employees.
- Communication style: Since Confucianism emphasises the avoidance of confrontation, indirect communication style is the distinct feature of Chinese management style, and appears in the all managerial activities, such as decision making, task allocation, etc. In the daily managerial activities, the managers do not provide the clear information, and left the meanings to the employees. Compare to Chinese communication style, Western style is more clear, direct and articulate. The information managers ordered and employees received is clear-cut, and less ambiguity.
- Paternalistic orientation: Paternalistic orientation can not be found in the Western management style, since the employee's private life is not a part of his organisational life, and the Western managers only concerns about work related issues. Impacted by the sense of family, the Chinese managers separate their concerns into employees' work life and personal life. The managers involve in the employees' personal life that regards it as a way to maintain harmony and express manager's benevolence, and also, the manager hopes to receive the employees' appreciations about his/her concern, and in turn the appreciations into the good performance.

The following Table 2-4 is the summary of the similarities and differences between the Chinese management style and Western management style.

| Shared Values             |   |                            |  |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| Modesty                   | Honesty   | Avoidance of confrontation | Eagerness to learn   |
|                           | Chinese Management Style  |                            | Western Management Style   |
| Supervision Style         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vertical relation</li> <li>● Father-son supervision style</li> </ul>   |                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parallel relation</li> <li>● Assistant supervision style</li> </ul>                       |
| Decision Making Style     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● centralised decision making</li> <li>● 'harmony with each other', and the group as the optimization criterion</li> </ul>   |                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● collaborative decision making</li> <li>● optimizing one's self-interest</li> </ul>        |
| Communication Style       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● indirect/non-verbal communication</li> </ul>   |                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● open/direct/articulate communication style</li> </ul>                                     |
| Paternalistic Orientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● managers are involved in the employees' private life</li> <li>● a way to build harmony and express manager's benevolence</li> <li>● exchange to employees' good performance</li> </ul> |                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● not applied in Western management style</li> <li>● manager are task orientated</li> </ul> |

**Table 2-4 Chinese Management Style vs Western Management Style**

Source: author

Form above discussion, it is clear that Chinese style of management is more indirect, while the Western is more bold. The Western styles of management certainly have their advantages, but the Chinese style is good at fostering enthusiasm and generating harmony among employees (Li, 1999). It is unwise for managers only apply one management style to manage today's Chinese young employees, since both management styles have their advantages and limitation. In this sense, a combined management style is appropriated since it absorbs the merits of both management styles and is suitable for today's Chinese young employees' mixed cultural value. Above four managerial activities will be concretely discussed in the section 3.5.

## **2.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter first reviews the existed management literatures in China, and therefore a research gap is explicated. The character of this research then has been given to identify its rationalization. The basic knowledge of this research are discussed which include the national culture and generation classification in China. This chapter specifically advocates Confucianism, since it is the underlying concept of this research.

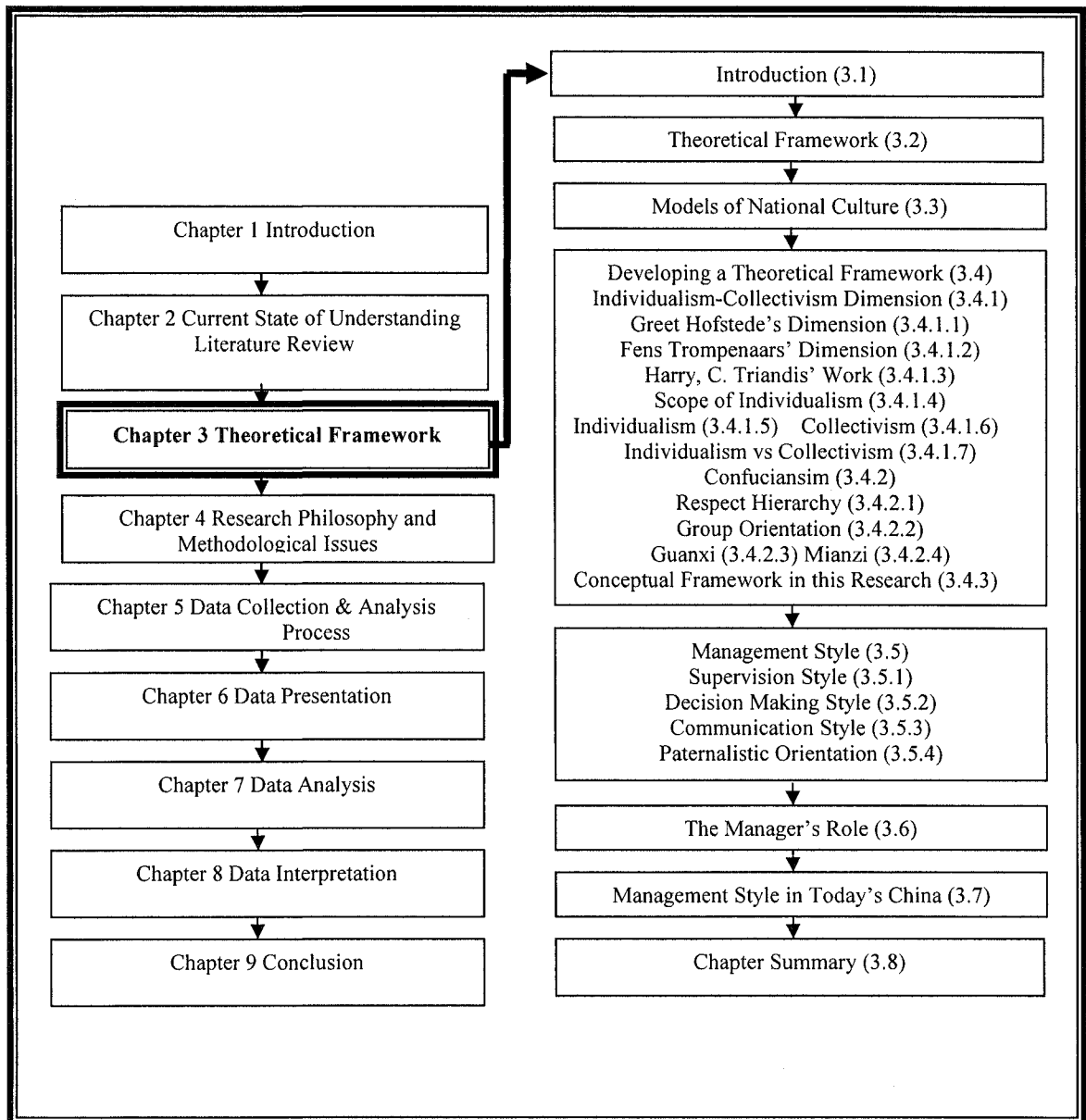
This chapter provides the knowledge of this research from a basic and fundamental level. The core knowledge embodied by the theoretical framework will be presented in next chapter with the comprehensive and depth discussion of Confucianism and individualism and their implications in the management practices.



## **CHAPTER 3      THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a logical extension of the literature review to develop a theoretical framework. Initially, this chapter makes an explanation of the rationale of this chapter by addressing the function and content of theoretical framework and illustrates the link between the previous literature review chapter and this chapter. The main concept is the development of theoretical framework. The first step in developing the theoretical framework is to review the recent studies of national cultural dimensions, followed by a brief description. The second step starts with the description of Collectivism-Individualism and Confucianism listed in the review in the first step, which will form the basis for the development of the theoretical framework, in turn to develop the underlying theoretical framework for this research with the combination of highlighted Collectivism-Individualism and Confucianism dimensions and supplement literatures. After the developed theoretical framework, this chapter moves to the discussion of management style with the several implementing management practices. The four detailed management practices will be respectively addressed heading the Chinese management and Western management. Further, a discussion of a suitable management style model in today's environment is raised, which will direct this research to develop a proposed management style in the Discussion Chapter. Figure 3-1 is an outline of this chapter. Figure 3-1 is a general picture of this chapter. It places the position of this chapter in the whole thesis, and also presents the topic of each section of this chapter.



**Figure 3-1 Outline of Chapter 3**

Source: author

### 3.2 Theoretical Framework

The significance of theoretical framework for a research is that it determines the direction of the research and addresses the research question. In the quality, theoretical framework is a collection of several interrelated concepts that have been identified as important elements to answer the research question. In addition, the theoretical

framework is not unattached, it relates to the literatures. In this sense, the theoretical framework stands between the literatures and research question, which it has logic link with both literatures and research question.

As stated above, the research question in this research is: *to respond to the Chinese young generation employees changed values in today's environment, what is the effective management style, in which management approaches is it constituted by?* The preceding literature review chapter has clearly stated that today's Chinese young generation are more individualistic and less Confucian philosophy, and their values in the mixed stage. Based on this context, three elements could be identified to answer the research question: 1) mixed Confucianism and individualism value; 2) suitable management style based on such mixed values, and 3) the detail managerial activities based on such values. Therefore, this chapter should develop and explain the following concepts: individualism, Confucianism, management style and its constituted managerial approaches, and these concepts divide into two segments.

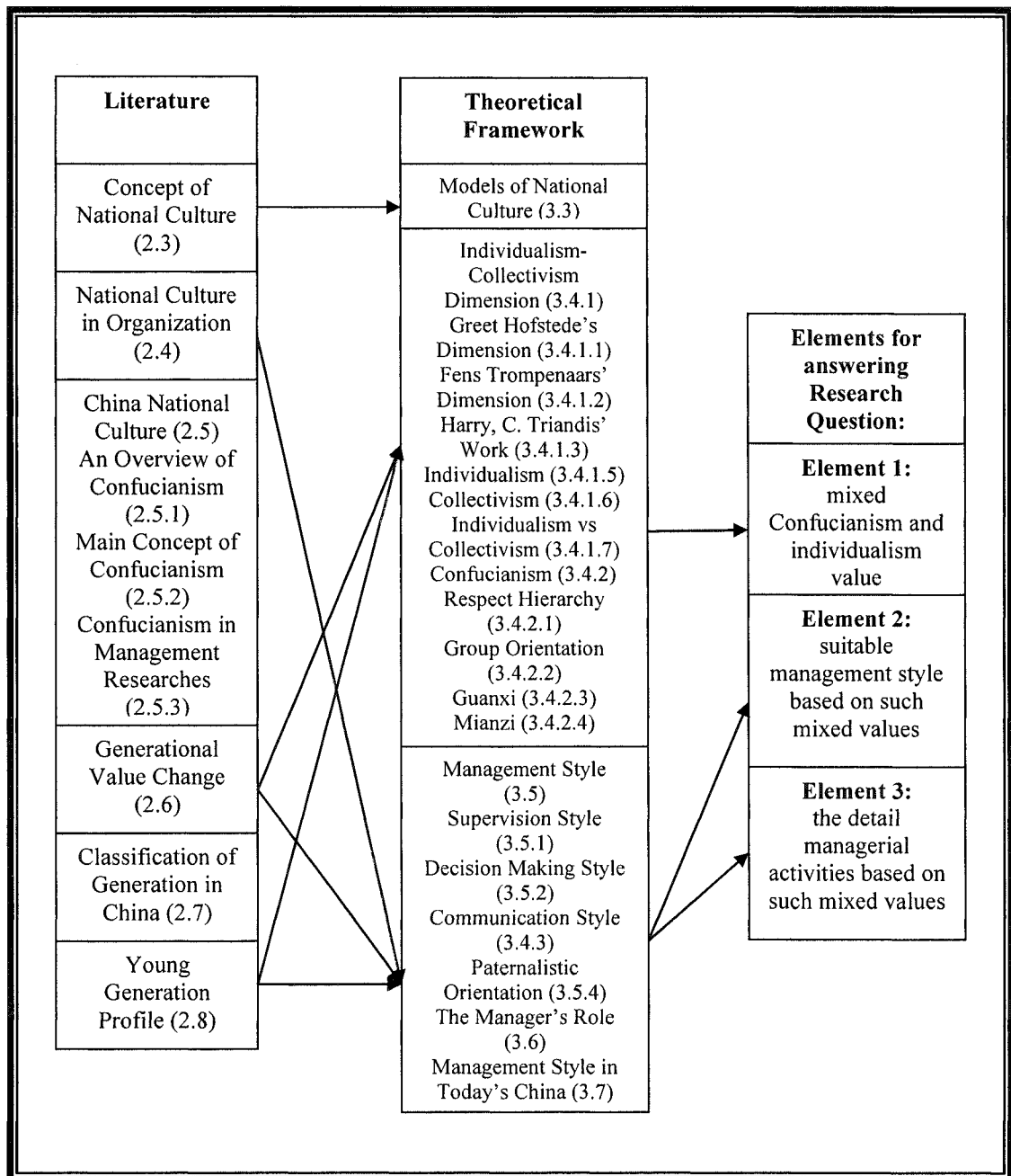
Firstly, the concept of national culture dimension grows out of the literature review in the field of national culture. Initially, this chapter reviews the recent studies of national cultural dimensions. Individualism-collectivism dimension has been studied by three key scholars: Greet Hofstede, Fons Trompenaars and Harry, C. Triandis. The chapter moves to the concrete study of individualism by comparing above three scholars' theories and highlighting the characteristic of individualism in the management. Parallel to the study of individualism is the study of Confucianism. The literature review chapter provides a general knowledge of Confucianism which includes the history and main concepts of Confucianism, the status of Confucianism in Chinese society and

management researches. This chapter concentrates Confucianism into four principles: respect age/hierarchy, group orientation, *Guanxi* (interpersonal relationship), and concept of *Mianzi*. These four values have been examined by a great number of scholars that they extremely play a central role in the Chinese management.

Secondly, this chapter moves to the discussion of management style with the several management practices. The detailed management practices will be respectively addressed heading the Chinese management and Western management, in order to reveal the influences of Confucianism and Individualism in the management style. Further, based on the analysis of characteristics of Chinese and Western management styles, the model of today's suitable management style is discussed, and this model serves to answer the research question. Figure 3-2 explains the content and function of theoretical framework, and also illustrates the relationship with the last literature Chapter.

The Figure 3-2 is an illustration to explain the logic link between this theoretical framework Chapter and preceding literature review Chapter and research question. As stated above, the theoretical framework should place between the literature and research question. Therefore, the left column is the contents of literature review Chapter, the right column is the elements of research question, and the theoretical framework is in the middle. The column of literature review and theoretical framework Chapters are cited from the outline of these two Chapters (see Figure 2-1 and Figure 3-1). From the Figure 3-2, it is clear to see that the national culture dimensions is the further discussion of the concept of national culture which presented in the literature review Chapter, and it provide the foundation for this Chapter to deeply study individualism. The detailed

study of individualism and Confucianism are developed by young employees' changed values and profile which stated in the last Chapter, since they are the two current values Chinese youths hold, and the function of this segment is to facilitate to answer the research question. Literature review Chapter has argued the culture's influence in the organisation and management, this Chapter explores this point by addressing the management style and practices under Confucianism and individualism respectively. This segment could be regarded as an in-depth and integrated study of the impact of Confucianism and individualism in the management style, which is just separately and broadly discussed in the literature review Chapter. At the mean time, this segment directs the further data analysis and discussion, in order to answer the research question. In summary, the literature review Chapter sets a boundary and starting point of the research question, and the theoretical framework Chapter explores and extends the study, and builds up a path to the research question.



**Figure 3-2 The link between Theoretical Framework, Literature Review and Research Question**

Source: author

### 3.3 Models of National Culture

There is strong evidence to show that many scholars contribute to value dimensions characterized the concept of national culture. The meaning of the value dimension is that the dimension breaks the complex the concept of culture and reflects different aspects of the construct of culture (Yang, 2003), as Bollen (1989) described, dimension is the ‘*components that can not be easily subdivided into additional components*’ (p.180). With the consideration on the relevance of national culture to the study of the practice of management, Morden (1999) classifies these cultural dimensions as three types: single dimension model, multiple dimension models and historical-social dimension models. The following Table 3-1 gathers the existing cultural dimensions (Hall 1976; Lewis, 1992; Fukuyama, 1995; Hofstede, 1991; Trompenaars, 1993; Schwartz 2004; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Laurent, 1983; Smith et al, 1996; House, et al 2003; Inglehart, 1997; Bond et al 2004; Lessem and Neubauer, 1994; Min, 2004; Cragg, 1995; Seagrave, 1995) and outlines each scholar’s works in a very general sense; furthermore, Collectivism- Individualism and Confucianism will be amply illustrated in the subsequent section as they are fundamental cultural dimensions supported to this research.

|                                | <b>Authors</b>     | <b>Dimensions</b>   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| <b>Single Dimension Models</b> | Hall (1976)        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication context</li> <li>• Perception of space</li> </ul>  |
|                                | Lewis (1992)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monochromic culture</li> <li>• Polychromic culture</li> </ul>  |
|                                | Fukuyama (1995)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High trust society</li> <li>• Low trust society</li> </ul>   |
|                                | Hofstede (1991)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power distance</li> <li>• Individualism vs. collectivism</li> <li>• Uncertainty avoidance</li> <li>• Masculinity vs. femininity</li> <li>• Long-term vs. short-term orientation</li> </ul> |
|                                | Trompenaars (1993) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universalism vs. particularism</li> <li>• Individualism vs. collectivism</li> </ul>  |

|                                  |                                 |  |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Multiple Dimension Models</b> |                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neutral vs. emotional</li> <li>• Specific vs. diffuse</li> <li>• Achievement vs. ascription</li> <li>• Attitudes to time</li> <li>• Attitudes to the environment</li> </ul>   |
|                                  | Schwartz (2004)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embeddedness</li> <li>• Hierarchy</li> <li>• Intellectual autonomy</li> <li>• Effective autonomy</li> <li>• Egalitarianism</li> <li>• Mastery</li> <li>• Harmony</li> </ul>   |
|                                  | Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature of people</li> <li>• Person's relationship to nature</li> <li>• Person's relationship to other people</li> <li>• Primary mode of activity</li> <li>• Conception of space</li> <li>• Person's temporal orientation</li> </ul>   |
|                                  | Laurent (1983;1989)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager's attitudes towards hierarchy</li> <li>• Willingness to bypass lines of hierarchy in the organization</li> <li>• Manager's relationship with subordinates</li> <li>• Importance of manager in society</li> </ul>  |
|                                  | Lessem & Neubauer (1994)        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pragmatism</li> <li>• Idealism</li> <li>• Rationalism</li> <li>• Humanism</li> </ul>  |
|                                  | House, et al (2003)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance orientation</li> <li>• Assertiveness orientation</li> <li>• Future orientation</li> <li>• Human orientation</li> <li>• Institutional collectivism</li> <li>• Family collectivism</li> <li>• Gender egalitarianism</li> <li>• Power distance</li> <li>• Uncertainty avoidance</li> </ul> |
|                                  | Smith, et al (1996)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egalitarian commitment vs. conservatism</li> <li>• Utilitarian involvement vs. loyal involvement</li> </ul>   |
|                                  | Inglehart (1997)                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional vs. secular-rational orientation</li> <li>• Survival vs. self-expression values</li> </ul>  |
|                                  | Bond et al (2004)               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dynamic externality</li> <li>• Societal cynicism</li> </ul>   |
|                                  | <b>Historical-Social Models</b> | Euro-management  |
| Bloom et al (1994)               |                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mistrust of authority</li> <li>• Desire of security</li> <li>• Business objectives</li> </ul>   |
| South East Asian                 |                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taoism</li> </ul>   |



|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>Management</p> <p>Min, (1995);<br/>Cragg (1995);<br/>Seagrave(1995);</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confucianism</li> <li>• The role of mandarin</li> <li>• Guanxi(Personal Relationship)</li> <li>• Mianzi (Face)</li> <li>• The five cardinal relations</li> <li>• The strategy thinking of Sun Tzu</li> <li>• The role of Taipans</li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

**Table 3-1 Summarisation of Culture Dimensions**

Source: author

The study of Hall (1976) is to look at how people communicate in different cultures. The most significant distinction Hall made was high-context culture and low-text culture. The monochromic culture and polychromic culture are defined by Lewis (1992) to discover how many things people to do in a time. People in monochromic culture only concern about one thing at a time, whereas, polychromic people are in unplanned or opportunistic sequence since they can do many thing at once. Fukuyama (1995) identifies the high trust society culture and low trust society culture which rely on the analysis of relationship between trust, society, and the development of organization and management.

According to Morden (1999), several works are entitled the multiple cultural dimensions. Hofstede (1991) offers four values on the basis of their influence of work environment and management: power distance; individualism-collectivism; uncertainty avoidance and masculinity-femininity. Trompenaars (1993) advocates the additional cultural aspects of specific and diffuse cultures, ascribed and achievement status, and universal versus particular ethical orientation (Rarick, et al, 2007). Schwartz (2004) identifies the seven interconnected value dimensions. The work of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) is known as the earliest one on analyzing culture dimensions (Brooks, 2006). From their perspective, culture is a collection of ‘value orientation’, they classify

the six value orientation focus on relationship among space, time and people, belief about human nature, activity orientation and relationship to the environment (Rarick, et al, 2007). With the specific on managers' work value, Laurent's (1983; 1989) proposes four key issues to prove that the manager's value is a result of national culture, therefore, Laurent criticizes the universal management theory and argues that a management approach work in one country will less effective in another. The work of Lessem and Neubauer (1994) build up on the European management system, which four inter-related (Morden, 1999) criteria impacted by national culture have been presented: pragmatism, holism, rationalism and humanism. During a project entitled GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research), House et al (2001, 2004) surveyed 18,000 managers from 62 countries, and concluded nine cultural dimensions related to leadership. Inglehart (1997) works out two attitude-belief-value orientations; and Bond et al (2004) indicate two value dimensions of social axioms (Matsumoto and Yoo, 2006).

The historical models summarized by Morden extensively rely on some leading scholars' contributions for the implication of value in the management. The notable studies of Euro-management are conducted by Bloom et al (1994), and the specific study on South East Asian management is carried out by Chen (1995). The same assumption the two scholars made is that the historical elements play a role in the developments of management practices in either European or East Asian. For the European management, Bloom et al (1994) conclude six contextual factors which reflect to the main characteristic of European: more humanistic than other countries. Chen (1995) and other scholars (Cragg, 1995; Seagrave, 1995) canvass that Asian management has built up on following cultural factors which is distinct to other

management systems: Confucianism, Taoism, Sun Tzu, Taipan (a super ruler or big boss), *Guanxi* (personal relationship) and *Mianzi* (Face).

### **3.4 Developing a Theoretical Framework**

The above extensive discussion of cultural dimension has built upon a foundation to study cultural value. Specifically, the collectivism-individualism dimension will serve to this research to study the young generation employees' cultural value. This section will justify why collectivism-individualism dimension is selected by this research. The three leading theorists' work will be given to study the collectivism-individualism dimension from different perspectives. Parallel to collectivism-individualism dimension, Confucianism, with the relevance in management practices will be highlighted, further to construct the conceptual framework. Combined with these notions and thought, a conceptual framework will be developed to reveal the influence of Confucianism and individualism in individual's behaviour, especially in the relation to the Chinese organisation.

#### ***3.4.1 Individualism-Collectivism Dimension***

The individualism-collectivism is strongly associated with value dissimilarity (Hofstede, 1980; Probst et al, 1999; Triandis, 1990), and shape attitudes and behaviours (Wagner and Moch, 1986) which has great potential for influencing organizational outcome. The group members categorize other group members based on stereotypes prompted by overt characteristics, and practically, the organisation will be effective largely be determined by their ability to be open to dissimilar values (Schneider, 1987; Fujimoto and Hartel, 2006). The dimension of individualism-collectivism is taken by many

scholars as the theoretical framework. Triandis (2002) notes that in recent years there are near 100 articles published annually which study the phenomenon from this dimension, the studies across the different disciplines, such as: sociology, psychology, economy and business and management (Cai, 2004). In the subject of business and management, the individualism-collectivism has been examined and applied in different contexts: such as group creativity (Goncalo and Staw, 2006); employees' attitude in India and Ireland (Ramamoorthy, et al, 2007) and human resource management in Russia (Vereshagin and Vadi, 2006).

In relation on the research purpose, this research adapts the individualism-collectivism as the foundation of the conceptual framework. The essential reason is that this dimension not only provides a relatively general framework for analysis, but also reliably links to everyday cultural encounters and behaviors (Dahl, 2004). More particularly, Confucianism is reinforced by collective orientation (Li, 1999), Confucian influenced culture are among the most collectivist, and Confucianism has fostered collectivism in China, (Yan and Sorenson, 2006; Tsang, 2007). From the reflection on their own research, Chen et al (1998) advise that Hofstede's individualism-collectivism dimension provides a very good contract to study Confucian-influenced culture and individual-influenced culture. The efforts have been made by some scholars to address the collectivism-individualism dimension, the following section will present three leading theorists' works: Hofstede, Fens Trompenaars and Harry, C. Triandis.

### **3.4.1.1 Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimension**

Hofstede is known as a pioneering theorist on the culture study. From 1967 to 1978, Hofstede delivered 116,000 questionnaires to over 60,000 managers, supervisors and employees at IBM over 50 countries worldwide. Based on the data they received, Hofstede identifies the four national cultural characteristics: power distance; collectivism-individualism; masculinity-femininity; and uncertainty avoidance. Later, Hofstede and Bond (1988) extend the fifth dimension which named Confucian Dynamism or time orientation which attempt to discuss the culture in Asian countries.

Hofstede's framework has been widely cited as the framework in the management research (Gales, 2008). However, from a critical view, Hofstede's work has been never less of controversies. The arguments can be summarised as: instrument utility, cultural homogeneity, national divisions, political influences, too few dimensions, statistical integrity, out-dated and one company approach (Jones and Alony, 2007). Cultural homogeneity is the most popular argument. Other researchers (Nasif, 1991; McSweeney, 2002; Myers and Tan, 2002) against that Hofstede's assumption ignore the different group and units in a nation and regard national domestic population is a homogenous whole. They highly suggest that the study of culture is constrained by the character of the individual being assessed. Since Hofstede's work has been conducted by 20 years ago, its validity has been questioned by some scholars (Fernandez et al, 1997; Verbeke, 2000; Spector et al, 2001) which the results are out-date and lost relevance of modern day. One company approach is also a debate point. The data Hofstede collected from a single multinational company of each country, although the size of the company is large, some scholars (Graves, 1986; McSweeney, 2002; Olie, 1995; Chinta and Capar, 2007) argue that one company is not representative the respective country's national cultures.

Despite the Hofstede's dimension faces to some criticisms, the five dimensions of national culture never stop be cited by other scholars, as what Sondergaard (1994, p448) commented that Hofstede's work is *relevance, rigour and relative accuracy*. To maintain his comment, Sondergaard illustrates evidence from Social Science Citation Index that Hofstede has received total of 1,036 citations during the period 1980 to 1993, and further, to make his statement is more persuasive, he compares that the typology of strategy, the another famous typology in the management from Miles and Snow only be cited 200 time in the almost same period.

#### **3.4.1.2 Fens Trompenaars' Cultural Dimension**

Another significant contributor of cultural dimension study is Fens Trompenaars. Trompenaars regards the culture as an indication for people solving the problems, and the problems can be classified into three headings: the relationship with other people; time and environment (Trompenaars, 1993). He collected 50,000 data from 50 countries in a 15 years period, the questions was designed considering the relevance of participant's values and their behavior in the business and organizational context. Based on the data, Trompenaars (1993) identifies a national culture model including seven factors: universalism vs particularism; individualism vs collectivism; neutral vs emotional; specific vs diffuse; achievement vs ascription; attitudes to time and attitudes to environment. The first five factors are reflected to the relationship with people, and the last two separately are heading time and environment. In a comparative sense, there is one overlapping dimension between Hofstede's work and Trompenaars' work, which is individualism-collectivism. To study the relationship between people, both of them identify the individualism-collectivism dimensions, however, like what Trompenaars and Charles (1997) respond to the Hofstede's attack, that one of the eight different

assumptions between the two works is that the data Hofstede received from IBM pale imitations of academic research and reflect management's compliance, while Trompenaars' resultant framework potentially links the culture aspects of organizational behavior (Mullins, 2005). This can be approved from Trompenaars' book: *Riding the waves of culture*. In his book, individualism and collectivism has been specifically highlighted under the subject of when managing and being managed, which substantially directs the author to develop the conceptual framework for this research.

#### **3.4.1.3 Harry, C. Triandis' Work**

Except Hofstede and Trompenaars, Harry C. Triandis is also a leading theorist who specific focuses on the study on individualism-collectivism. Chanchani and Theivanathampillai (2002) comment that the significant contribution of Triandis is that he distinguishes the objective element of culture from the subject one. The work of Triandis states that if the objective of culture includes the tools, while the some basic elements effecting people's behavior could be the subjective of culture, such as: value, norms and roles (Chnchani and Theivanathampillai, 2002). Triandis (2002) categorizes the culture into four syndromes: complexity; tightness; individualism and collectivism. From the psychological point, Triandis dedicates to the study on individual's behavior reflect the individualism and collectivism, his theory has been widely cited in the management literatures.

#### **3.4.1.4 Scope of Individualism**

Before the deep discussion moves to the individualism, the scope of the individualism is needed to justify. The rationale for the justification is to make the clear boundary for the

concept of individualism and reduce the unnecessary confusions. The scopes can be summarized as: the typology of individualism and the context of individualism.

Some scholars (Abraham, 1997; Singelis et al., 1995; Markus and Kitayama, 1991) argue that the dichotomy of individualism and collectivism is too simplistic to capture the more nuanced differences across cultures, thus, they produce the four-cell typology to delineate the individualism and collectivism. Specifically, the individualism is delineated as horizontal individualism and vertical individualism with the concerning about equality or hierarchy is emphasized (Triandis, 2001), Triandis and Gelfand (1998) also delineate the individualism as economic individualism and expressive individualism. Moreover, some context is included under the individualism, such as gender role. With the respect of the above scholar's different views for the individualism from their own perspectives, the sense of individualism in this research is the notion of relationship between the individual and group. Also, the context of individualism and Confucianism only focuses on the value reactions. In other word, the study of individualism and Confucianism in this research reveals the assumption difference between them, explain and clarify their influence on individual's work related behaviour in the organisation.

#### **3.4.1.5 Individualism**

Individualism is the one of the strongest notions of Western cultural values. English philosopher, John Locke, spelled out in detail in seventeen century, which each individual is unique, special, completely different from all other individuals, and is the basic unit of nature (Stewart and Bennett, 1991). Hofstede (1991) gives the definition to individualism is to '*pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose,*



*everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family'* (p51). The other leading theorist on individualism-collectivism, Triandis, defines the individualism as:

*'a social pattern that consists of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of collectives; are primarily motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights, and the contracts they have established with others; give priority to their personal goals over the goals of others, and emphasize rational analyses of the advantages and disadvantages to associating with others'* (1995, p2).

Also, in a broad sense, the other scholars conceptualize individualism as: an independent and unique human being (Tsang, 2007); an emphasis on self-sufficiency and control (Zhang and Neelankavil, 1997); an orientation towards self as an autonomous individual embedded by one's own skin (Ramamoorthy et al, 2007); and personal goals taking priority over their allegiance to groups, like the employer (Goleman, 1990).

#### **3.4.1.6 Collectivism**

Earley (1994) indicates that Chinese majority societies are collectivist societies and the Chinese at work are assumed to be collective subjects with the characteristics of high collectivism. As the essential of Confucianism, this section expatiates the collectivism in the first stance and the next section will flow to the Confucianism.

Opposite to the individualism, Hofstede (1991) indicate that collectivism is a social pattern *'in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout out people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for*

*unquestioning loyalty*' (p51). Reflect to the definition given to the individualism, Triandis asserts that collectivism is a social pattern which is

*'consisting of closely linked individuals who see themselves as parts of one or more collectives; are primarily motivated by the norms of, and duties imposed by, those collectives, are willing to give priority to the goals of these collectives over their own personal goals; and emphasize their connectedness to members of these collectives'* (1995, p2).

### **3.4.1.7 Individualism vs Collectivism**

With the different assumptions and concepts, individualism and collectivism are conflicting views of the nature of individual, group and the relationship between them. Hence, influenced by individualism and collectivism, the people behave differently in the work place. Some scholars summarize the contrast between the individualism and collectivism as generalised in the following.

The sense of 'I' is emphasized in individualistic culture, the tie between the people is loose and everyone is expected to look after themselves. As the result, individualistic employees see themselves primarily as engineers, managers, professors, etc, and secondarily as group members of specific organizations, the personal time, challenge and material rewards as the motivators for work, the self interests foster the individual behaviour and self needs take advantage of opportunities for personal enrichment (Tsang, 2007; Triandi et al, 1988). The individual socio-economic goals over the group's, and also, there is a restraint on the power. In the opposite side, the collectivism focuses on 'we'. Littrell (2002) summarizes that the 'we' group is source of identify, protection, loyalty and dependent relationship, and people are integrated into the group which protect them and, also demand the loyalty throughout their lifetime. Hence, in collectivism, the group's harmony is more important than truth, silence more than

speaking, and 'face' is striving for the maintenance.

In summary, individualism is based on the super ordination of personal over group goals, while collectivism is the emphasis of group over personal goals through the derivation of firm and explicit group boundaries (Kim, 1994). Thus, individualism emphasises independence, achievement, freedom, high levels of competition and pleasure, whereas, collectivism emphasises interdependence, family security, social hierarchies, co-operation and low levels of competition (Triandis, 1989; 1990; Zhang and Neelankavil, 1997).

The contrast of individualism and collectivism has been condensed by Hofstede and Trompenaars into two tables. The Table 3-2 is developed by Hofstede, which to address the indication between the collectivism and individualism. The Table 3-3 is carried out by Trompenaars (1993), as stated above, this table specifies to the behaviour led by two value when people being managed and managing. This research later will combine these two tables and develop a conceptual framework.

|               | <b>Collectivism</b>   | <b>Individualism</b>  |
|---------------|---|---|
| Self          | Identify is based on the social network to which one belong                                   | Identify is based on the individual   |
| Behaviour     | Behaviour are more likely to be driven by social norms, obligations and duties                | Behaviour are more likely to be driven by their own beliefs, values, and attitude       |
| Relations     | Harmonious relationships, sometimes at the expense of task accomplishment                     | More oriented toward task achievement, sometimes at the expense of relationships        |
| Personal Goal | Personal goals as a subordinate to the group goals.   | Personal goals prior to the group goals   |
| Loyalty       | People are born into extended families which continue to protect them in exchange for loyalty | Everyone grows up to look after him/herself and his/her immediate (nuclear) family only |
| Honest        | Harmony should be maintained and direct confrontation   | Speaking one's mind is characteristic of an honest                                      |

|                                |   |   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
|                                | avoided   | person  |
| Relationship employer-employee | Relationship employer-employee perceived in moral terms, like a family link | Relationship employer-employee is a contract that is supposed to be based on mutual advantage |
| Promotion                      | Hiring and promotion decision take employees' in group into account         | Hiring and promotion decision are supposed to be based on skills and rules only               |
| Relationship-task              | Relationship prevails over task   | Task prevails over relationship   |
| Interest                       | Collective interests prevail over individual interest                       | Individual interests prevail over collective interest   |
| Opinion                        | Opinions are predetermined by group members                                 | Every one is expected to have a private opinion   |
| Harmony                        | Group harmony and consensus is the ultimate goal                            | Individual self-actualisation is the ultimate goal  |

**Table 3-2 Hofstede's Work of Collectivism-Individualism**

Adapted from Hofstede, 1991, p67 and p73.

| <b>When managing and being managed</b>                        |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Collectivism</b>   | <b>Individualism</b>  |
| Seek to integrate personality with authority within the group | Try to adjust individual needs to organisational needs                          |
| Give attention to esprit de cores, morale and cohesiveness    | Introduce methods of individual like pay-for-performance, individual assessment |
| Have low job turnover and mobility                            | Expect job turnover and mobility to be high                                     |
| Extol the whole group and avoid showing favouritism           | Seek out high performers, heroes, and champions for special praise              |
| Hold up super ordinate goals for all meet                     | Give people the freedom to take individual initiatives                          |

**Table 3-3 Trompenaars' Work of Collectivism-Individualism**

Trompenaars, F. 1993, p6.

### 3.4.2 Confucianism

The basic concepts of Confucianism have been addressed in Chapter Two, this section will illumine the key features of Confucianism which has been identified having practical relevance for management practice in China. Rarick (2007) summarizes the

following feature characteristics when managerial approach of Chinese is being described: authoritarian; centralized control; expectation of hardworking employees; family-staffed business and collectivism and harmony, and these characteristics are rooted by Confucianism. A great number of studies (Buttery and Leung, 1998; Chen and Pan, 1993; Fang, 2006; Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Lau and Roffey, 2002; Lockett, 1988; Jia et al, 2005; Smith, 1974; Tu, 1984; Zapalska and Edwards, 2001) identify the influence of Confucian in China management could be embodied as: respect age and hierarchy; group orientation, *Guanxi* (interpersonal relationship), and concept of *Mianzi* (face). In general, hierarchy implies that individual should be conscious of their position in the society and abide by it (Eberhard, 1971), group orientation reviews personal aggrandizement as a threat to establish group hierarchies (Pye, 1981), *Guanxi* emphasizes the loyalty, faithfulness, sincerity and harmony between people (Huang, 1999), and *Mianzi*, functionally maintains the *Guanxi* between the people.

#### **3.4.2.1 Respect Age / Hierarchy**

In an early study, Nevis (1983, p19) mentions the impression of China is that the '*underlying principle that governs Chinese management is respect age*'. The other compared study conducted by Duan and Huang (1986) show that Chinese manager naturally accept the hierarchy. Chinese managers want a clear distinction between themselves and subordinate (Lockett, 1988), and in Confucian paradigm, the hierarchy and relations of subordinates and superiority are considered natural and proper (Jia et al, 2005).

As stated in section 2.5.2, *Wulun* (Five Cardinal Relations) concepts that each one has own position in society, and each one's behaviour should fit to the position. The *Wulun*

(Five Cardinal Relations) is also applicable in the organization. According to Liu (2003), the application for the *Wulun* (Five Cardinal Relations) to organization life requires that workers and managers behave in accordance with the distinctive roles they hold respectively. Therefore, as Wayle (1983) states that in China, a manager's role is to manage, and an employee's role is to work. To reflect the principles what prescribed in Confucianism, Chinese employees have to demonstrate the correct behaviour to their managers, which they as a rule fulfil their obligations to authority by being obedient. For example, in stead of calling manager's name, the employees should call manager's position to express their obligations to the authority. Fan (1995) emphasizes that in China organization, protest, dissent and criticism are appropriate only when the authorities have inadvertently deviated from the good government, but questioning the pre-defined social order is forbidden.

#### **3.4.2.2 Group Orientation**

Family is the single most essential concept of Confucian (Yang, 1972) and '*presents a natural extension of oneself in the Chinese culture*' (Allinson, 1989, p6). Such culture regards the people as numbers of colonies, not individuals (Wang, 1986). In the modern work place, the concept of family still exists that it has been transformed to the form of work unit (Jia et al, 2005). Lockett (1988) indicates that the implication of group orientation in China is that the cultural assumptions of Western management theories make take their findings less appropriate to Chinese organizations. In the practice, followed by this concept, the Chinese employees are different to distance themselves from the work group they belong to and are more likely to be influenced by the norms of the group (Ford, 1997). The concept of group is the basic starting point for Chinese management, whereas Western management typically starts with the individual and

moves to the group (Bond and Hwang, 1986; Su et al, 1998). Thus, the group orientation makes its indication in Chinese organization and management practice. Chinese organization holds a deep believe in group collectivism, viewing challenges as collective endeavors rather than personal objectives. The basic and most important rule is that in any case, the group has priority than the individual. The individual's interest and opinion should not prevail to group's which the employees are required to sacrifice self's demand and need to follow group's. Also, the group's goal and reputation is more important than individual's, according to Confucianism, the work is more important than leisure, and the individual's hard working is reviewed as a contributing to group welfare than competing it (Zapalska and Edwards, 2001). In this sense, the individualism always appears as selfishness by Chinese (Fan, 1995).

Some researchers (Chen, et al, 2000; Bishop, 1998; Bishop and Scott, 1997) argue that the group orientation promoted better commitment to team work, which it contributes to the desirable outcomes of the organization. In further, the group orientation in the other side may lack the individual accountability. Jia et al (2005) emphasize that such lack personal accountability influenced by Confucian, leveraging team orientation may make the barriers for the implementing the Western theory based team performance issues in Chinese organization. The lack personal accountability also is embodied in the decision making, as the nature of group orientation, the decision making in Chinese organization is not individual decision making, but a group decision making which the final decision is the group's decision.

### 3.4.2.3 Interpersonal Relationship (Guanxi)

*Guanxi* is described by King (1991) as a key building block of Confucian societies since Confucianism is very concerned with relationship between the individuals. For example, Yg and Huo (1993) made a comparison between America and China and found that the overlap between work and relations much more pervasive in China, hence Su and Littlefield (2001) label the Chinese management system as the management of interpersonal relationship. Simply saying, *Guanxi* refers to relationship; it can be translated as connection or networking. However, Jia et al (2005) argue that the *Guanxi* in China is more complex than all of those, they explain that the literality of *Guan* in Chinese means door or barrier, and *Xi* means to tie up and extend into relationship, therefore *Guanxi* expresses passing the door and getting connected (Lee and Dawes, 2005). In the other way, it could say that whether the door opening or the barriers conquering depend on the connecting. The concept of *Guanxi* does not exist in the Western country, and it comes from an opposite way if it is existed. Ambler (1994, p71) offers a logical explanation to it, '*the Chinese believe that one should build the relationship and, if successful, transactions will follow, Western build transactions and, if they are successful, a relationship will follow*'. In a simply speaking, Chinese embrace that *Guanxi* comes first, then something, as the result, will be done. Reversely, Westerns convince that because something has been done, then the *Guanxi*, as the result of doing something, has been built up.

*Guanxi* has several types, such as organization to organization, personal to personal, and this research focuses on the *Guanxi* between the manager and employee. The *Guanxi* between the manager and subordinate has been identified by Wong et al (2003, p484) as '*the relationship between a subordinate and their immediate supervisor, and this*



*definition has the sense of social connections based on mutual interest and benefit*'. The *Guanxi* between the manager and employee could bring both positive and negative result to the management (Han and Altman, 2008). Positively, the smooth *Guanxi* between the manager and employee is salient functional to the organization outcomes, since it generates the trust of employees to the managers (Wong et al, 2003), exchange between the managers and employees (Chen and Tjosvold, 2007) and in-role performance (Tsui et al, 2000; Tsui and Farh, 1997). However, *Guanxi* also has negative impact, since in China, building *Guanxi* literally means developing a relationship for special reasons (Ambler, 1995). As Luo (1997) characterized, *Guanxi* has five features: transferable; reciprocal; intangible; utility and personal. Among these five characteristics, reciprocity can be understood as the primary reason or final wish why people want to build up the *Guanxi* with others. In Chinese organization, obviously, building a smooth *Guanxi* with the manager could offer the employees advantages, because the managers are effective agent and enact the formal and informal procedures of organizational activities (Chen, et al, 2002). Mo and Berrell (2004) explain that the managers in Chinese organizations are heavily involved in the decision about employees' performance, appraisal, promotions, rewards, punishments, education and so forth. In this sense, the good *Guanxi* could help the employee receive the special caring or minimum punishment from the managers.

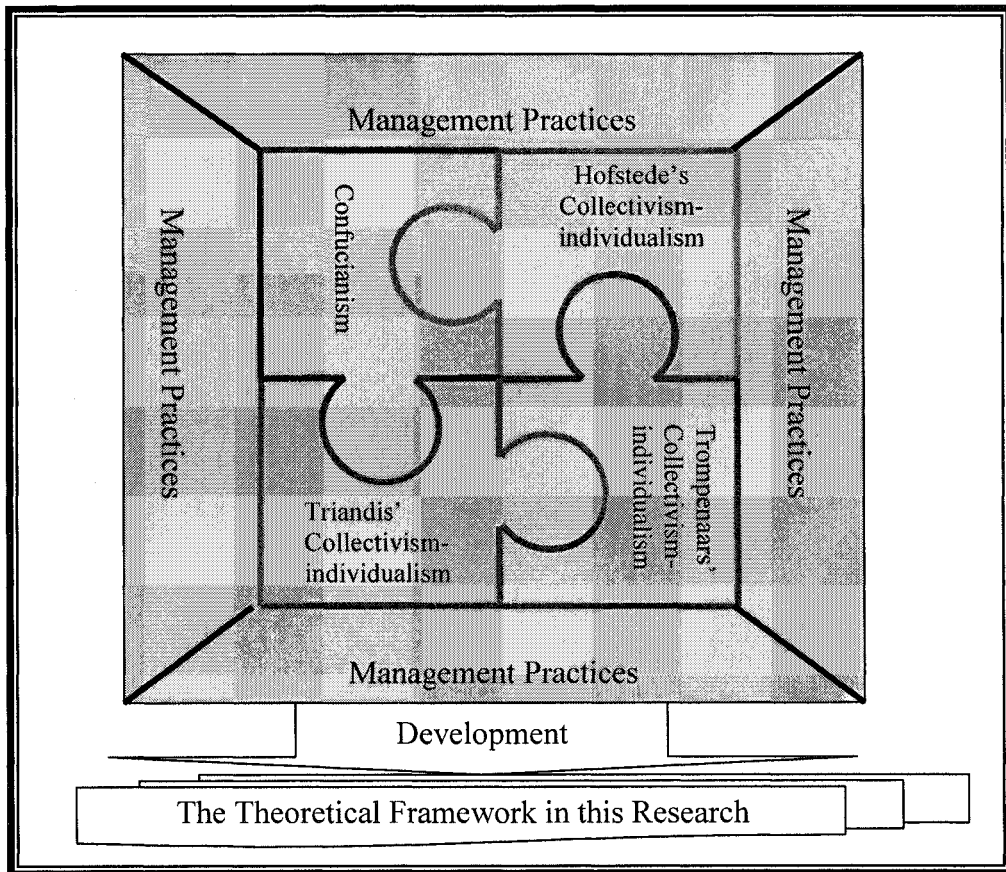
#### **3.4.2.4 Mianzi**

Simply speaking, '*Mianzi*' is '*Face*'. *Mianzi* is a unique context belonging to China society. As a famous Chinese say goes: '*Men live for face as trees grow for bark*'. Hu (1944) indicates that the Chinese *Mianzi* corresponds to the Western concept of 'face' from physical level. However, from the connotative level, *Mianzi* refers to a

combination of dignity, self-respect, social position and status, as perceived and dealt with by others (Chen, 1995). *Mianzi* has important meaning for Chinese, it enters much more into everyday transactions, especially as a particular mode of behaviour reinforced by cultural value in Chinese workplace (Hofstede, 1991; Hu, 1944). Chinese are very sensitive to give, take, gain or protect 'face' is on the reciprocity of obligations, dependence and the protection of the esteem of the person involved (Brunner and Wang, 1988). Thus, in a simply saying, giving someone's face means showing respect for one's social status and reputation in society (Jia et al, 2005), also giving a face to somebody is the effective technique to maintain the *Guanxi* (interpersonal relationship). Buttery and Leung (1998) found that in China society, giving somebody's face is more important than protect one's own. In the relation to the employees and manager, relate to the Five Cardinal Relations in Confucianism, the employees should know own place and respect the hierarchy and position of the manager, the practical technique of expressing their respects is that the subordinates should always give managers faces. Practically, giving manager's face is embodied as stay trustworthy or to honour obligations in manager's social interaction (Jia et al, 2005). The following action can be viewed as losing manager's face, rejecting the manager's requesting, or in most worse case, questioning or blaming the managers' opinion, especially in front people, because these actions is the indication of fighting the status, despising the reputation, and lack of loyalty. As Jackson and Bak (1998) found that the Chinese managers well be motivated to save 'face' and to tell the employees what they want to hear, rather than what may be regarded as the absolute truth in Western eyes.

### ***3.4.3 Theoretical Framework in this Research***

The following Figure 3-3 is the process to display how the theoretical framework is developed. As shown in the figure, the developed theoretical framework in this research is integrated by the collectivism-individualism dimension and Confucianism, and built upon on the theme of management practices. In the other word, this theoretical framework mainly merges the work of Hofstede, Trompenaars and Triandis on individualism, and other scholars' work on Confucianism, to identify the two values' influence of the individual's behaviour in the organisation. Above three scholars have identified some items to study individualism, this research does not cite all of theses items, yet picks up some items. The selected values directly impact behaviour when individuals are managing and being managed in the workplace. In the mean time, the above four Confucian values discussed have been selected as well since they have a close link to the management. As the result of development, Table 3-4 is the detailed theoretical framework in this research, which stands behind the Figure 3-3. As illustrated in the table, the value presented in the theoretical framework has come from the above discussion which are the primary source to study young Chinese employees' behaviour in the organisation, and later as a foundation, to construct a management style which reflects the influence of these values.



**Figure 3-3 Development of Theoretical Framework**

Source: author

|   | Confucianism   | Individualism   |
|---|--|---|
| Sense of Self                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify is based in the social network in which one belongs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify is based on the individual</li> </ul>   |
| Relationship of employer-employee             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relationship employer-employee perceived in moral terms, like a family link</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relationship employer-employee is a contract that is supposed to be based on mutual advantage</li> </ul>   |
| Respect Age/Authority                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Authority, power or position should be respected</li> <li>● Seek to integrate personality with authority within the group</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give people the freedom to take individual initiatives</li> </ul>  |
| <i>Guanxi</i><br>(Interpersonal Relationship) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relationship prevails over task</li> <li>● Harmonious relationships, sometimes at the expense of task</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Task prevails over relationship</li> <li>● More oriented toward task achievement, sometimes at the expense of relationships</li> </ul>   |
| Group Orientation                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personal goal as a subordinate to the group's goal</li> <li>● Collective interest prevail over individual interest</li> <li>● Group harmony and consensus is the ultimate goal</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personal goals prior to the group goals</li> <li>● Individual interest prevail over collective interest</li> <li>● Individual self-actualisation is the ultimate goal</li> </ul> |
| Mianzi  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mianzi should be maintained and direct information avoided</li> <li>● People should offer and protect other's Mianzi</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Every one is expected to have a private opinion</li> <li>● Speaking out one's mind is characteristic of an honest person</li> </ul>  |
| Behaviour                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Behaviour are more likely to be driven by social norms, obligations and duties</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Behaviour are more likely to be driven by their own beliefs, values, and attitude</li> </ul>   |
| Heroism                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Extol the whole group and avoid showing favouritism</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seek out high performers, heroes, and champions for special praise</li> </ul>  |

**Table 3-4 Collectivism and Individualism in Individual Work Related Behaviour**

Source: author

### **3.5 Management Style**

Management style has been described by Tull and Allbaum (1971) as ‘a recruiting set of characteristics that are associates with the decisional process of the individual managers’. Based on the management style framework offered by some scholars (Culpan and Kucukemiroglu, 1993; Fiedler and Chemers, 1974; House and Mitchell, 1974; Likert, 1961; McGregor, 1960), management style includes following managerial activities: supervision style, decision making style, communication style and paternalistic orientation. Practically, these management practices affect the managerial effectiveness directly. Page et al (2003) point out that managerial effectiveness is assessed on the basis of managers’ role-specific managerial effectiveness and the degree to which they are able to accomplish the goal requirements of the organization. Although the different point offered by Deming (1982) addressing the managerial effectiveness, there is an agreement that managerial effectiveness occurs when a manager’s efforts result in the ongoing satisfying of organizational goals. Drucker (2001) and Wood et al (2004) suggest the main element influencing the manager accomplish the organizational goals are the above managerial practices which occupy in the manager’s daily work and how do they do the daily work.

The scholars emphasize that so far there is no universal and global applicable management style, and the followed management practices have an obvious connection with cultural value (Poon et al, 2005). As individualism is typical Western culture value, and Confucianism is the feature of China, the following discussions of the management practices lever Western and Chinese managerial thoughts, however it has to be clear that this is not a comparative study, although comparative management research has been a subject of increasing interest during the latest decades as the process of globalization of

the world economy accelerated (Mikhailitchenko and Lundstrom, 2006), the rationale for Western and Chinese managerial thought are explicated is that it reveals the influence of culture in the management practice, and how the management style should adapted to the cultural value which is the one objective in this research.

### ***3.5.1 Supervision Style***

Supervision style is the degree of manager's participation in subordinates' routine work flow (Mikhailitchenko and Lundstrom, 2006). Getting things done through the people, particularly those who are subordinate to them within the organization is the primary job of managers (Braithwaite et al 2008), Drucker (1974), one of the world most respected thinker of management simply defines this job as building the relationship, a two way relationship which the upward relationship toward to superiors and the downward relationship toward to subordinates, and the downward relationship toward to subordinates is more important. As Minzberg (1980) observed that the managers spend one of third time everyday in dealing with their subordinates. To support Drucker's notion of relationship, Evans et al (1995) point out that the managerial effectiveness is obviously a function of the general nature of this relationship. They explain that the managerial effectiveness is depend on the manager's ability to communicate their wishes to subordinates, and the subordinates commitment to carrying out the appointed tasks in a manner that conforms with the manager's wishes or in a way that products the result they desire. Hence, the managerial effectiveness can be reviewed as a direct result of the relationship between managers and subordinates.

This relationship is characterized as mutual dependence (Drucker, 1974). Arnold et al (2000) and Pfeffer (1994) supply that the mutual dependence is the central insight in the

leader relationship. Tjosvold et al (2003) points out an increasing recognised fact in the organisation that the employees have their information resource and abilities that can affect the managers. Thus, he recommends a cooperative relationship between the manager and employees which they combine each other's abilities for mutual benefit, and in turn promotes performance and strengthens their interpersonal relationship.

To build effective downward relationship, Drucker (1974) indicates that there is only one word the manager should keep in mind: assistance. He details the assistance as following responsibilities or behaviours the manager should take or act to the subordinates: understand the subordinates' demand; help the subordinates to set their objective; help them to achieve their objectives; help the subordinates with advice and counsel and teach them to do better.

However, the supervision relation in China appears very difficultly. The Chinese way of management is rooted by the Confucianism (Richter, 2002), therefore, Confucianism significantly creates the distinguishing characteristics of the Chinese managerial practice (Wah, 2001). Specifically, 'Father-son' relationship is the notable distinctive character for Chinese managers and employees. Family is the central insight in Confucian value, influenced by this value, the Chinese organization is managed by the same principles as the family and the manager are the father of the organization and employees the children (Chan, 1963). This statement has been approved by the later researches (Martinson 1996; Redding 1993; Wong 1985, Rarick, 2007) which the paternalistic management are common in China enterprises with a family head or other paternal figure serving as the organisational leader. 'Father-son relationship' leads the managers in China organisation take the father's role which to provide a direction to the



employees and control everything, look after the employees and act as mentors by providing a positive role model for employees. Although Confucianism stresses on the harmony, the hierarchical relationship does not interfere the harmony, which the harmony does not mean that the authority and position of superiors can be challenged (Li, 1999). At the mean time, subordinates have to show respect and obedience to supervisors and those of unequal status maintain a social distance from one another to prevent familiarity destroying the order (Redding, 1990; Whitely, 1992). Hence, the supervision style in China organization has such characteristic appearances: hierarchically authoritative rather than democracy; reciprocal interpersonal relationship and humanitarian relationship (Lee, 2001).

### ***3.5.2 Decision Making Style***

Decision making style refers to the employees participate in managerial decision making. In Chinese organization, the employees are less initiative in decision making and the manager is expected to make decision on behalf of the group (Tang and Ward, 2003; Jia et al, 2005). This can be partially explained by the influence of Confucianism into two reasons. The first reason is that Confucian value advocates obedience, absolute authority and respects hierarchy (Lee, 2001), therefore, the manager is in authority and there is no question asked by lower ranked people whether they agree the decision or not (Hestflatt, 2005). The second reason is that Chinese employees are reluctant share their opinions since they fear of loss the face (Reading and NG, 1982). In Chinese organization, offering one's opinion without invitation is often considered as lack confidence for the manager and insubordination, implying making the manager loss face (Cui, 1998). The Chinese employees also concern about losing own face if the opinion is rejected by others. Influenced by these two value, Chinese employees always

participate inactively and offer no suggestion in the decision making, because they are more likely to consult their superiors even for ordinary tasks (Jia et al, 2005; Li, 1999).

In the Western management, decision making appears its distinguish feature which it is a collaborative process where debate and consensus between workers and manager are a matter of course in order to make good decisions (Schramm-Nielsen et al, 2004). The collaboration is the essence of this decision making, which both employees and managers contribute to the decision. The employees free to involve in the decision making and express their ideas, whilst, the manager is still responsible for the final decision made and in situations where there is no consensus about a certain issue the manager still has to make a decision based on the things discussed (Hestflatt, 2005). Hestflatt (2005) summarizes that such decision making process has own advantages, which it is easier to follow through with plans when each employee has agreed on it, or at least to know what the decision is. However, this decision making is only feasible in the individualistic culture, which it requires democracy, equality and flat hierarchy.

### **3.5.3 Communication Style**

Simply speaking, communication style refers to information flowing (Lung and Yuan, 2005). Cuplan and Kucukemiroglu (1993) summarize that it includes providing the informational input to decisions, establishing missions, roles and power, achieving cooperation, guiding action toward goals, and providing feedback.

An indirect, implicit and non-verbal communication is described as Confucianism communication style (Braithwaite et al, 2008). Gao et al (1996) find that the communication in Chinese culture is '*not primarily utilized to affirm self-identify or to*

*achieve individual needs and goals'* (p238), which that could be an explanation for why Chinese do not understand Western people believe what the people says, because the principle of Chinese communication is do not spell out everything, but leave the unspoken to the listeners (Gao, et al, 1996). Huijser et al (2002) assert that the indirect communication is a creation of Confucianism. They explain that Confucianism emphasises the harmony in the group and maintains the individual's *Face*, using the more subtle context of the message, indirect communication manner is less chance of breaking group harmony or causing someone to lose face, whereas, since diversity and personality flourishes in individual culture, spelling out explicitly individual's thought and opinion in mind is often necessary and a habit to be encouraged, the direct communication has more possibility to cause strain in the relationship (Hall, 1976; Huijser et al, 2002). Hence, with the attempting of minimizing the loss of face and preserve harmony relationship between each other, the Chinese individual favour to communicate indirectly, which extremely is different to Western communication style (Gao and Gudykunst, 1996; Bjorkman and Yuan, 1999).

Jandt (2004, p29) defines the communication in Western country as '*involving a speaker, the speech act, an audience and a purpose*'. Hence, the Western communication is direct, clear-cut and definite, and there is always an open way between the managers and workers (Hestflatt, 2005). Hestflatt (2005) further offers an explanation for the open communication between the managers and employees that due to the flat hierarchy, in Western organizations, every topic between the manager and employees can be put on the table and nothing should be hidied.

#### 3.5.4 *Paternalistic Orientation*

Paternalistic orientation refers to the degree of supervisory concern for employees' non-work related matters, which means the managers care about employees' personal and family life and provide some social support (Lung and Yuan, 2005; Pasa, et al, 2001). Paternalistic orientation is not only existed in Chinese organizations, but also alive in other Eastern cultures, such as Japanese and Korean. In a recent study on leader and member relationship in Turkey, Pellegrini and Scandura (2006) emphasize that as its influence on Eastern countries, the paternalism should added in the sixth cultural value dimension. The paternalism orientation expresses the concept of *Ren* (benevolence), one of Five Confucian virtues, which the manager is required to show their caring and love to the subordinate's personal life. Westwood (1992) indicates that the Chinese management style indeed is a management style combining authority and benevolence, since the Chinese employees accept the authority from their managers, and then the managers reciprocate their respecting by showing the benevolence, the same way that a father shows concern and protection for his children. Hence, it is common for Chinese managers concern about the subordinates whether having boyfriend or girlfriend, asking about subordinates' family information, introducing the boyfriend or girlfriend, arranging a dating for the employee and attending the employees' social day, such as wedding or funeral. All of these attempt to show their concerning to their employees. Although it is in the modern time, *Ren* (benevolence) is still focused by Chinese managers. In a survey conducted with 210 Chinese managers, Heffernan and Crawford (2001) find that Western lifestyle does not reduce the Chinese managers' adherence to benevolence. By receiving the caring and concerning, in turn, the employees should show loyalty, deference and compliance to the manager (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2006).

However Western management theory perceives paternalistic orientation negatively, which the paternalistic orientation has been sarcastically named '*benevolent dictatorship*' (Northouse, 1997, p39), '*noncoercive exploitation*' (Goodell, 1985, p252), and '*cradle to grave management*' (Fitzsimons, 1991, p48). In the individualism, the self space is be emphasized, and the self privacy is be respected. The managers are only task orientated, which the personal matter is not involved in the employees' organizational life. Triandis' (1995) points out that in England, an employee would not tell his manager that his father had just passed away. It can be the best description for how the employees' personal life be dealt in the individualistic culture.

### **3.6 The Manager's Role**

Followed by the discussion of management style and management practices, the manager's role in managing young employees will be highlighted in this section. The formatted definition for manager is that the manager is an organizational member who intergrades and coordinates the work of others, they could have direct responsibility for a group people in one department, or only supervising a single person, or coordinating a team composed people from different departments (Robbins and Coulter, 1999). Typically, the managers in the organization classify as first-line manager, middle managers and top managers, and each type of managers have different responsibilities. This research aims to study the daily interaction between the manager and their employees. According to the structure of the Chinese IT organization, the employees have much touch with their department managers, hence, the manager in this research has been identified as middle level department manager.

Characteristically, Armstrong and Stephens (2005) generalize the middle level manager's role as followings: the middle managers should act as models or exemplars by promoting appropriate behaviour and influencing the department members by what they do and how they do it. Practically, they are responsible for providing guidance and support to their employees, advising and helping employees to learn by complementing learning on the job.

Moreover, Selvarajah et al (1995) has identified that an excellent manager is deemed to impact by four factors: environment influences, organisational demands, managerial behaviour and personal qualities. Taormina and Selvarajah (2005) offer the definition of 'excellent' as '*surpassing others in accomplishment or achievement*' (p395). Among above four factors, personal quality and managerial behaviour have the practical relevance to the personal value. Beyond the managerial behaviour which has been addressed above, the manager personal quality need specifically highlighted since it plays the essential role in the interaction of manager and the employees.

Personal quality has been interpreted as personal skills, attitudes, behaviour, qualities, knowledge and emotional intelligence (Selvarajah and Mayer, 2008; Wright et al, 2008). In a recent study focusing on the influence of Chinese generational culture change in the perception of managers, Selvarajah and Meyetr (2008) scale the manager's personal quality from quantitative perspective. The excellent manager's personal qualities in today are depicted as: morality, good communication by speaking clearly; emotional maturity, be informal when with employees outside work; listen to other's opinion; treat employees trustworthy and honest and accept responsibility for mistakes. Although the study indicates that the as the cultural change, the difference between the views of the

Chinese younger manager and elder manager, the most valid value for an excellent manager are closely associated with Confucian values, which approved that even with the cultural change, the Chinese manager belief in Confucianism is highly valued, and Confucian virtues still maintain the manager's through and in turn to lead their managerial behaviour.

### **3.7 Management Style in Today's China**

Lavaty and Kleiner (2001) identify that one distinguishing feature of 21<sup>st</sup> century is the diversity in the work place. In the context of organization, the diversity has been extended by the scholars (Bhadury et al, 2000; Dessler, 1998) as the people with different identifies including cultural value. Particularly, as Chinese young generation employees are more individualistic and less Confucian value, it is not difficult to predicted that the existing Chinese traditional value based Chinese management style are not fit to today's environment any more. Therefore, developing a new management theory is be putted in the agenda, which attempts improving the manager's managerial skills and supporting the managers to deliver the relevant management practices. As what Child and Warner (2003) emphasized that the biggest issue has been extent to which management style in China will be fashioned according to 'best practice' as opposed to following its own principles and practices.

Therefore, given young generation employees' cultural change, is China foregoes its Confucian value and Western management style can be applicable and consequently contribute to the further Chinese management? The proposition of the current Chinese management style has been definite by many scholars. Shankar (2003) clearly claims that China work place won't become Westernized and any ideas of a further

management based on Western-style individualism and capitalist-oriented are totally wrong. Although China is in incredible pace of change and the Confucian teaching were eliminated, the ideals espoused by Confucians never left Chinese people (Lin and Chi, 2007). Yan and Sorenson (2006) support that as sayings, proverbs, stories, Confucian value always has been used by families to teach their children. Rozman (2002) emphasises that it is too earlier to demise of Confucianism, Confucian is not dead, on contrary, it is revival and even worldwide, since China continues to dominate the global market, and as the expression of basic value and traditions, Confucian value will spread the world with China's economic expansion (Hu, 2007; Miles, 2008). The persuasive example is that established by Tsinghua University and London School of Economics and Political Science, sponsored by the HSBC and BP, the first UK Confucius Business Institute was launched in London in Apr 2006, the aim of Institute is as well as other Confucian centres located worldwide to deliver knowledge of Confucianism for local managers to train their managerial abilities in China market. In the relation of management, this proposition has been reinforced by many scholars. Evans et al (1995) point that although Chinese culture is in the cross-verge stage, it does not mean that it is changing by reject its Confucianism. Rather, they argue that the cross-verge is an evidence of rationalization of Confucianism, otherwise, Confucianism has been washed out. Su et al (1998) point out that if the new Chinese management theory aims to contribute enhancing the organisation's performance and success, it has not left the Chinese tradition. Tjosvold et al (2003) argue that traditional Chinese cultural values do not obstruct effective ways of working, and they need not be discarded in the application of management.



However, it is cautioned that Confucianism traditional value can not be applied literally. Based on his extensive studies on Chinese generational value change, Ralston () advocates that an unique hybrid Chinese management style is need to created, which relies on the concept of Confucian fundamental principles and interlards Western management methods. Some Asian countries has set a good example for China, from the research, Jacobs et al (1995) find that the management of Japan, Singapore and South Korea is a blend of Confucianism and Western scientific management, and have a successful running. Evidentially, Choi (2004) and Rowley and Bae (2002) generalise that the HRM system current Korean implemented is just to combines the benefits of Confucian value and those Western HRM modern practices.

In summary, with the consideration of young generation employees cross verge cultural value, and it will continually become the further trend in China, a contemporary Chinese management style is emerged. It characteristically combines two cultural assumptions which is rooted by the Chinese traditional Confucian value and facilitated by the Western scientific management methods. Since Confucian value only plays in an innovative way that helps Chinese organisations effectively in rapidly changing environment (Tjosvold, et al, 2003), this management style not only reflects to the existing value for young generation employees, but also functionally strengthens flexibility and innovation for the Chinese management by adopting Western management approaches, and such managerial flexibility enhances the development of effective work relationship and organizational effectiveness (Kupperschmidt, 2000).

### **3.8 Chapter Summary**

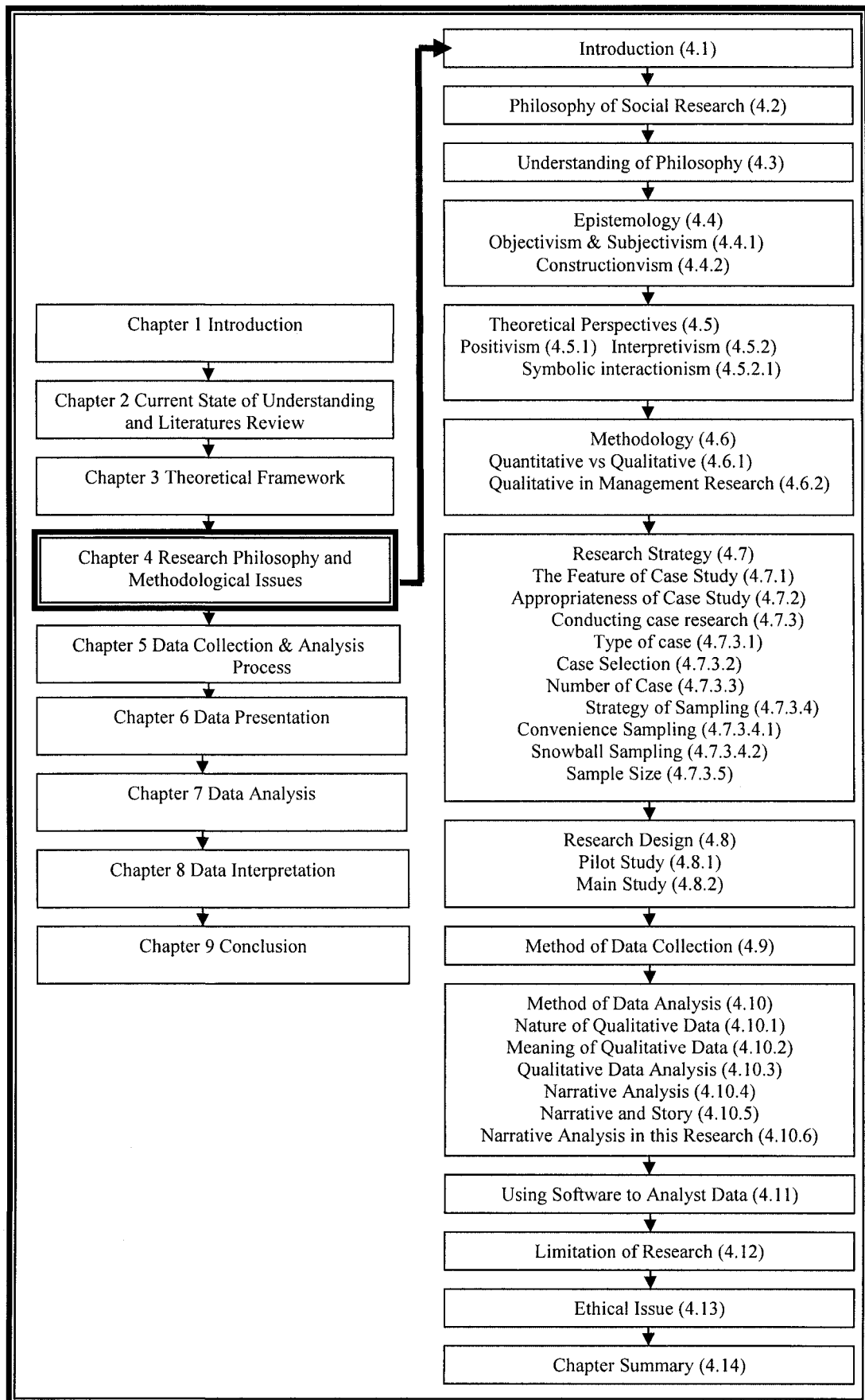
This chapter includes two major parts. At first, it focuses on the study of cultural value by outlining the numerous literatures, specifying the leading theorists' works, and integrating the theoretical framework which serves a theoretical foundation for this research to understand its investigators. In the second part, relies on the extensive literatures, this chapter weights itself into the study of management style, which provides the well structured framework to answer the research question.

After the extensive literatures and specific theoretical framework, the next chapter addresses the philosophical foundation and methodological orientation for this research. It positions this research's approach and describes the nature of the overall research, which includes research strategy and data collection method. Pilot study and main study will be illumined to present research design. Also, it demonstrates how the research limitation and ethical issues have been dealt in this research.

**CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY AND  
METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES**

**4.1 Introduction**

Previous chapters review the existing literatures related to this research and develop a conceptual framework to serve this research. Chapter Four and Chapter Five go through the philosophy and instrument of this research. Following by the discussion of dominated research paradigms with epistemology, methodology and research strategy, this chapter highlights the justification and rationale in which selected in this research. A research design including the main study and pilot study will be given, to indicate how the main study is improved from pilot study. This chapter also addresses which method will be used in the data collection and analysis. In addition, a special attention gives to using software in the qualitative analysis. Finally, the discussion of ethical issues explicates how this research is to meet the ethics standards and the limitations are points out in terms of some unavoidable imperfect issues for this research. Figure 4-1 is an outline of this chapter. Figure 4-1 is a general picture of this chapter. It places the position of this chapter in the whole thesis, and also presents the topic of each section of this chapter.



**Figure 4-1 Outline of Chapter 4**  
Source: author

## 4.2 Philosophy of Social Research

Social research is a purposive and rigorous investigation of discovering, expanding the horizons of the knowledge, confidence, new idea and conclusion about all aspects of people's life (Sarantakos, 2005). As a human science, social researches can not, for the most part, followed the natural science which separate or dissociate themselves from philosophy. The principal reason why philosophy and social research deeply interconnected is because philosophical view provides a '*foundation*' (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997; Crotty, 1998) for the researcher to find the '*truth*' (Williams and May, 1996). Garcia and Quek put the purpose of discussing philosophy in a social research is '*to quality the use of specific techniques in both the underlying assumptions guiding the research and in the theoretical framework*' (1997, p5). Easterby *et al* (2002) summarizes three benefits of social researchers considering philosophy. Firstly, philosophy helps the researcher to decide which research strategy and methods to be used in a study. Secondly, understanding of research philosophy helps the researcher identify and evaluate different methodologies and methods. It brings a benefit to the researcher that avoids inappropriate use at an early stage by identifying the limitations of particular approaches. Thirdly, it helps the researcher to create and innovate in method either selecting or adapting that is outside the researcher's previous experience. At the same time, Easterby *et al*, (2002) warns that failure to think through philosophical issues can seriously affect the quality of research.

## 4.3 Understanding of Philosophy

A successful doctoral thesis is very likely to be judged whether making contribution to knowledge. If the researcher claims to contribute some knowledge, then the researcher must prepare to answer following questions: 'what kind of knowledge exists in the

world, what is our warrant to believe the knowledge' (Thomas, 2004) and what the researcher's view of the world (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The answers of above questions build upon three fundamental foundations of each research process: *ontology*, *epistemology* and *methodology* (Sarantakos, 2005; Crotty, 1998). Simply speaking, ontology deals with the nature of reality, and epistemology informs the nature of knowledge. Followed by the ontology and epistemology, methodology is the '*packages*' (Sarantakos, 2005, p30) of appropriate research designs and methods for the researcher and instructing the researcher to focus on the research activities and recognize the knowledge.

In a broad sense, philosophy is '*the interrelationship*' (proctor, 1998) between ontological, epistemological and methodological views, '*the specific way*' (Machamer, 2002; Nelson, 1990) in which ontology and epistemology influence the structure of research, and construct a '*frame of reference*' (Williams and May, 1996) for the researchers. Respectively, Sarantakos (2005) and Crotty (1998) present two figures to illustrate the research process, which appear much similarities. With the respect of Sarantakos, this thesis adopts Crotty's work to structure the following sections to expatiate the philosophical stance length by length.

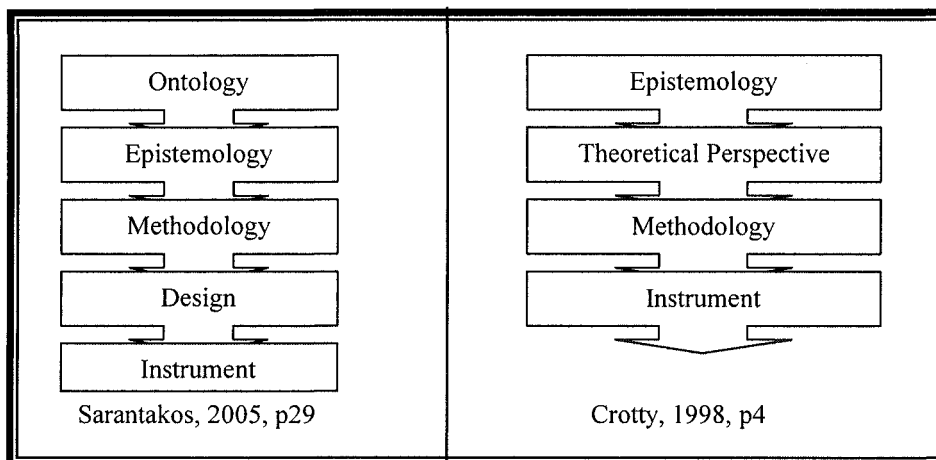


Figure 4-2 The Works of Sarantakos and Crotty for Research Process

#### 4.4 Epistemology

As illustrated in above figures, the difference between Sarantakos (2005) and Crotty (1998) is that ontology is not appeared in Crotty's work. Crotty retains the '*theoretical perspective*' to reserve the term 'ontology', since he elaborates that '*theoretical perspective*' embodies a certain way of understanding what is (ontology) and as well as a certain way of understanding what it means to know (epistemology). However, Easterby et al (2002) indicates that *ontology* is the starting point for most of the debates among philosophers. Thus, this research would like draw a few lines to illuminate the ontology before the discussion of epistemology.

Ontology is the study of being (Crotty, 1998). Ontology concerns about the nature of existence and the structure of reality (Mautner, 1996; Crotty, 1998). The philosophical point of ontology is '*the most pervasive features of reality, such as real existence, change, time, causation, chance, life, mind, and society*' (Bunge, 2003, p 201). In the social research, the ontology invariably affects its epistemology. Denzin and Lincoln explain as:

*the epistemological question is that what is the nature of the relationship between knower or would-be knower and what can be known? The answer that can be given to this question is constrained by the answer already given to the ontological question: that is, not just any relationship can now be postulated* (1994, p108).

Hence, the researcher's view of reality, in turn leads the researcher to identify the reality and further to gain the knowledge of the reality.

Epistemology is a '*theory of knowledge*' (Harding, 1987, p3). Some researchers (Guba and Lincoln, 1998; Harding, 1987; Hesse-Bilber and Lracy, 2004) describe that epistemology is a philosophical beliefs system about who can be a knower and what can

be knows. Maynard (1994, p10) states that '*epistemology is concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate*', and '*both quantitative and qualitative researches are infused with epistemology*' (Hesse-Bilber and Leavy 2004, p2). The epistemological positions are frequently referred to respectively as: objectivism, subjectivism and constructionism. The next sections will briefly outline the objectivism and subjectivism, and then highlights the constructionism amply.

#### ***4.4.1 Objectivism & Subjectivism***

Objectivists assert that meaning and meaningful reality exists as such apart from the operation of any consciousness (Crotty, 1998). It implies that social phenomena and categories that we use in everyday discourse have an existence that is independent or separate from actors (Bryman, 2006). The objective does not make contribution to the generation of meanings in subjectivism. In contra to objective, subjectivists believe that meaning is created out nothing, which the meaning people endow to the objective come from ourselves, such as dreams, religious beliefs, or the conjunction and aspects of the planets (Crotty, 1998). Crotty summarizes that for a subjectivist, meaning from anything but an interaction between the subject and the object to which it is ascribed.

#### ***4.4.2 Constructionism***

The basic assumption of constructionism is that there is in practice neither objective reality nor objective truth (Sarantakos, 2005). This world exists outside people's consciousness, but in itself it is meaningless (Spinelli, 1989), the meaning of the world and social reality are constructed by people (Berger and Luckmann, 1967).



Constructionism assumes human are self-aware and endow the world they live in with meanings (Thomas, 2004). In this sense, reality is not objective and exterior, but is socially constructed and given meaning by people (Easterby et al, 2002) based on culturally defined and historically situated interpretations and personal experiences (Sarantakos, 2005). This means that the reality perceived by people is not the 'reality', what people constructed through their experience is the reality (Lueger, 2000; Luhman, 1997) which named *constructed reality* (Sarantakos, 2005). The significant feature of constructionism is that '*both the researcher and the subject receive information via their senses and use their minds to construct knowledge*' (Schwandt, 2000, p197), and the '*researcher and responder co-create understandings*' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p21). Therefore, the construction of reality can be described as a process, which the researcher listens to respondents' life experience, then gains the impression of constructed reality provided by the respondents, hence, the researcher creates the meaning of the world by the researcher's reconstruction.

Constructionism supports a subjective view of reality with an emphasis on the importance of the individual's conceptualisation in relation of their own worlds (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). In other word, the objectivity is still existed in this world, but how to understand these phenomena highly depend on people and the meaning is constructed by peoples as well. Therefore, constructionism is *simultaneously realist and relativist*, says Crotty (1998), because it brings objectivity and subjectivity together and an interaction is appeared between two.

Constructionism assumes relativist ontology which means there are multiple realities (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Ontologically, this research has two different data source,

who are the department managers and their young subordinates. Both of them share their value and perception of management practice, which the realities is '*multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature . . . and dependable for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions*' (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, p.211). It provides multiple constructs of reality. Furthermore, constructionism assumes both knower (the researcher) and subject (participant) create the knowledge (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). In this research, the influence of Confucianism and individualism for young employees, and the desired management style are constructed and created by the author and participants, which the author not only describes what she listened, but interprets the phenomenon she gained through the '*investigation proceeds*' (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, p207).

#### **4.5 Theoretical Perspective**

Theoretical perspective describes that how the researcher gains knowledge and refers to the philosophical stance that lies behind and informs the selected methodology (Crotty, 1998). Two major theoretical perspectives dominate the social sciences (Bruyn, 1966; Deutscher, 1973) that are positivism and interpretivism.

##### **4.5.1 Positivism**

The word 'positivism' is always attributed by French philosopher, Auguste Comte, who is the first person to encapsulated positivism. Auguste (1853) voiced '*all good intellects have repeated...that there can be no real knowledge but that which is based on observed facts*'. Auguste's statement claimed the ontological assumption of positivism is that reality is external and objective, whilst the epistemological assumption is that

knowledge is only significant when it bases on observations of the external reality (Easterby *et al*, 2002). Positivists strongly believe that subject (the researcher) and objective (the phenomena in the world they research for) should be separate and independent things, and human experience of the world reflects an objective which provides the foundation for human knowledge (Weber, 2004).

Followed by above ontological and epistemological assumptions, positivists seek the facts or laws of social phenomena apart from the subjective states of individual (Tony and Bogdan, 1998) and regard the social facts and phenomenon as '*things*' (Dukrheim, 1938, p14) that exercise an external influence on people. Wardlow (1989) claims that positivism is based on the universal laws that govern social events, and uncovering these laws enables researchers to describe, predict, and control social phenomena. Positivists develop knowledge by investigating the social reality through observing objective facts. In positivism, the research starts with identifying theory and deducing the observations support or reject the theory.

#### ***4.5.2 Interpretivism***

Going a step deeper into the construction of reality process, the construction and reconstruction are laden with personal inputs, therefore, the interpretation is the key facilitate of construction and reconstruction (Sarantakos, 2005).

The interpretive researcher asserts the life-world has both subjective and objective characteristics. The subjective characteristics reflect the people's perception about the meaning of the world, the objective characteristics reflect what the people constantly

negotiate this meaning with others whom people interact (Weber, 2004), therefore, the reality is not objectively determined, but is socially constructed (Husserl, 1965).

In interpretive perspective, human beings are creators by the actors through assigning meaning systems to events. In contrast to positivism, interpretive research looks for culturally, derived and historically situation interpretations of the social life-world (Crotty, 1998), thereby obtaining *verstehen* (a deep and sympathetic understanding) of human cultural activities and experiences (Smith and Heshusius, 1986). Interpretivism has three streams: hermeneutics, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. The following section will discuss the symbolic interactionism which is used in this research

#### **4.5.2.1 Symbolic Interactionism**

Symbolic interactionism typically deals with small scale, everyday life, seeking to understand processes, relationships, group life, motivations and adaptations (Woods, 1992). Blumer (1969) explains how the people construct the meaning in three ways, which can be described as premises of symbolic interactionism, and also reveals the relevance of symbolic in this research. First, the human being act toward things on the basis of the meaning; second, the meaning is derived from the social interaction that one has with fellows, third, the meanings are modified through an interpretive process by the people in dealing with the things they encounters. In a summary, the symbolic interactionism focuses on the events in people's everyday life, and studies how people define these events and act in relation to their beliefs (Chenitz & Swanson, 1986).

In symbolic interactionism, human has unique concept of self, and they toward the self as toward others. This concept leads to meaning of their everyday's life and a self-direct

behaviour. In symbolic interactionism, language acts as a significant symbol for people to express their feelings, thoughts, and communicate to others. Symbolic interactionism is selected by author in this research to develop a robust understanding of how the managers and young employees define themselves, construct the perceptions of each other and how they affected by the actions of each other, and all of these are achieved by their narration through the language they used.

## **4.6 Methodology**

Methodology is a strategy that translates ontological and epistemological principles into guidelines that show how the research is to be conducted (Cook and Fonow, 1990; Lather, 1992). Two methodologies serve to the social researches: quantitative methodology and qualitative methodology. It has been cleared in the introduction chapter that this is a qualitative research, hence, this section will distinguish qualitative methodology and quantitative methodology by identifying their features, then, the section will illumine the qualitative methodology in management researches.

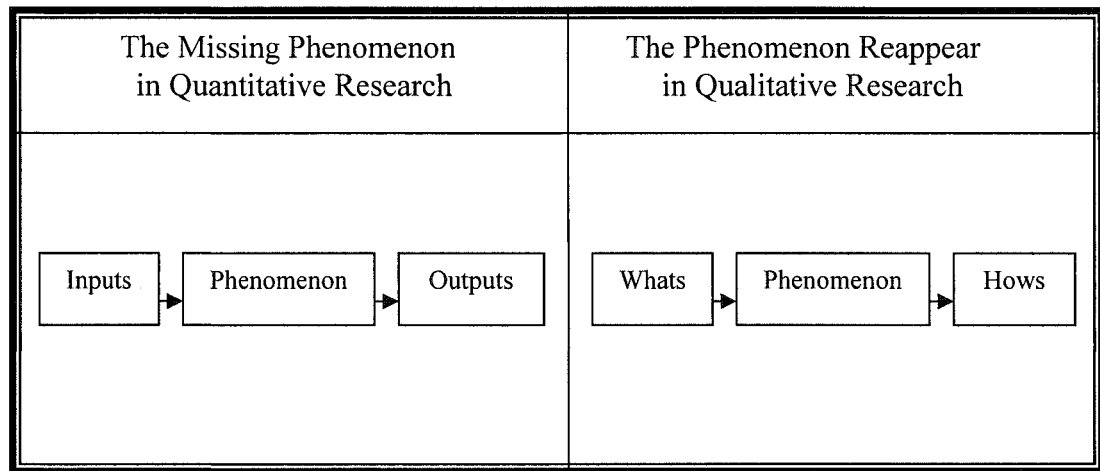
### ***4.6.1 Quantitative Methodology vs Qualitative Methodology***

Firstly, quantitative methodology and qualitative methodology differs in the methodological assumption. Quantitative methodology is those positivism followed by a *realist* and *objective ontology* and an *empiricist epistemology* (Sarantakos, 2005), which the researcher relies on numbers, rates and percentages typically presented in a table, grid or chart in order to communicate meanings (Hesses-Bilber and Leavy 2004). As the other methodology, the central principles of qualitative methodology come from a *relativist orientation*, a *constructivist ontology* and an *interpretivist epistemology*

(Maindok, 1996). In a broad definition, qualitative research is '*any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical produces or other means of quantification*' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p17), but arrived from real world where the '*phenomenon of interest unfold naturally*' (Patton, 2001, p39). '*The way in which people being studied understand and interpret their social reality*' is the central motifs of qualitative research (Bryman, 1988, p8). Secondly, they also differ in the concept, which the quantitative research which highly concentrates to the 'fact' and the 'law', the qualitative researcher seeks instead illumination, understanding and extrapolation to similar situations (Hopefl, 1997).

Except above *methodological* and *conceptual* issues (Minchiello et al 1990), Silverman (2006, p44) identifies other key feature to distinguish qualitative research from quantitative research: '*the ability of studying phenomena*'. As shown in Figure 4-3, Silverman (2006) states that quantitative research concerns about a lot of inputs and outputs to some phenomenon, which only provides an '*operational*' definition of the phenomenon without the resources to describe how that phenomenon is locally constituted. Such definitions assist measurement, but they lose sight of the way that social phenomena become what they are in particular contacts and sequences of action. Hence, studying the phenomena with deep understanding is a main strength of qualitative research. As a result, the contribution of quantitative research is necessary lopsided and limited to social problems. In contra to quantitative research, qualitative research concerns with interpreting meaning of textual data. Using '*naturally occurring*' data, qualitative research finds the sequence (how) in which participants' meanings (what) are deployed and thereby establish the character of some phenomenon. Hence, except the differences in doing research, quantitative research and qualitative research

essentially differs in the ways of thinking, which qualitative research strengths the deep understanding of a phenomenon.



**Figure 4-3 Qualitative Methodology vs Quantitative Methodology**

Adapted from Silverman, D. 2006, p44.

#### 4.6.2 *Qualitative Methodology in Management Researches*

Qualitative research developed significantly after the mid-1980's, and there are now many approaches researching phenomena that not quantifiable (Morse and Richard, 2002). According to Cassell et al (2006), qualitative researches have made a significant contribution to numerous substantive areas of management research. The examples can be listed as: the nature of managerial work (Mintzberg, 1973; Waston, 1994), relations with employees (Gouldner, 1954; Collinson, 1992), the everyday experience of work (Kondon, 1990; Meyerso, 1994) and gender and work (Kanter, 1977; Parker, 2000).

An extended issue needs to take into account when the author claims that this is a qualitative research. Qualitative research means different things to different people (Tesch, 1990). Some researchers work under '*qualitative positivism*' (Prasad and Prasad, 2002, p6) to quantify the outputs of their qualitative researches, while others may draw

upon different epistemological positions: postmodernism, critical theory (Gephart, 1999) and a phenomenological framework (Miles and Huberman, 1984). The notion of qualitative research in this research is made explicitly that is constructionism followed by interpretative approach.

#### **4.7 Research Strategy**

Research strategy is a general plan (Saunders et al, 2003) for researchers how to answer the research question. It aims to put the social research in the best possible position to gain the best outcome from the research (Denscombe, 1998). According to Denscombe (1998), there are five research strategies: experiment, survey, case study, action research and ethnography. With its characteristics, case study serves to answer the research questions in this research.

##### **4.7.1 The Feature of Case Study**

Robson (2002) defines case study as '*a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence*'. It is ideal when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed (Feagin *et al.* 1991) and produces knowledge of a high quality (Eisenhardt, 1989; Guba and Lincoln, 1992; Yin, 1994). The following strengths of case study have been raised by Voss (2002). Unconstrained by the rigid limits of questionnaires and models, case study leads to new and creative insights, development of new theory, and has high validity with practitioners - the ultimate user of research. The validity can be increased further by the triangulation with multiple means of data collection. Eventually, case study enriches the researchers as well. The individual



researcher will personally benefit from the research process by being exposed to real problem, creating insights of people at all levels of organisations, and the varied contexts of cases, and conducting research in the field.

Denscombe (1998) summarises that case study characteristically distinguishes from other research strategies in four aspects: 1) case study studies a '*naturally occurring*' phenomenon (Yin, 1994); 2) opposite of any mass study, case study focuses individual instance rather than a wide spectrum; 3) case study focuses on one instance of a particular phenomenon, thus, the in-depth study is be devoted by researchers in researching. What a case study can do that survey cannot is to discover things deeply; 4) case study focuses on events, relationships, experiences or processes occurring in that particular instance. To solve one problem, it is necessary to understand others and how the parts linked. Case study unravels the complexities of a given situation with detail and tends to be holistic rather than deals with isolated factors. As follows, the subsequent section will justify why this research selects case study, especially, an explanation is given to why the ethnography not adopted.

#### ***4.7.2 Appropriateness of Using Case Study in this Research***

To consider the appropriateness of adopting a case study, three conditions are raised by some scholars (Yin, 2003; Hartley, 2004; Eisenhardt, 1989): research questions, research context and when the case study is used. First, case study is particularly suited to research questions which require detailed understanding of individual and organizational phenomena (Eisenhardt, 1989), because of the rich data are collected in context (Hartley, 2004) and the investigation retains the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events, such as individual life cycles, organisational and

managing process, international relations and neighbourhood change (Yin, 2004). Yin (2003) concretely identifies the above research questions as ‘*how*’ and ‘*why*’ questions. Second, Hartley (2004) summarises several possible research contexts which can be considered using case study. The one possibility is that case study is a useful tool to understand everyday practices and their meanings to those involved, which is not revealed in brief contact. In the last, Yin (2003) directs some circumstances for using a case study, which when the investigator enable to control over and access the events, and when the focus is a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life contexts.

In light to above statement, this research seeks to discover ‘how does Confucianism and individualism interact and impact young employees’ value and consequently lead their behaviour?’ which is a typical case study question. Additionally, the rationale behind this is that the case study can be much feasible for the author to explain the influence of mixed cultural values for young employees, and illustrates their particular behaviour in a defined situation. Moreover, the young employees’ changed value can be reviewed as the result of China recent economic development, hence, the circumstance in this investigated and analyzed is under the ‘contemporary phenomenon’.

Among the five research strategies, the ethnography also aims to illuminate and understand human behaviour. However, the ethnography researcher is necessary to be part of the ‘tribe’ (Remenyi, et al, 1998) and ‘from the inside’ (Thomas, 2004) to conduct a full participant observation through a long-term period. Therefore, the researcher would live with the tribe over a large number of years and return to write up findings with the research diaries. Although some researchers suggest mini-ethnography (Robson, 2002) or micro-ethnography (Wolcott, 1990) to cut period down, they still

need develop an intimate understanding of group (Robson, 2004). With the consideration to the length of time and cost, hence, the author abandons ethnography strategy, and selects case study as research strategy.

#### **4.7.3 Conducting Case Research**

There is a wide set of choices when the case study has been determined in the research, and any of inconsiderable choice may disqualify the case study. The considerations should include following aspects: type of case study, case selection, cases numbers and samplings (Voss et al, 2002). This section will elaborate on above choices.

##### **4.7.3.1 Type of Case Study**

According to Voss (2002), based on the research purpose, the case study can be classified as: exploration, theory building, theory testing and theory extension/refinement. In terms of the purpose of above each case study type, this search has been designed as an exploratory study. Characteristically, the exploratory is suitable when the things are unclear, because it finds out *'what is happening, to seek new insights, to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light'* (Robson, 1993, p42). As stated in the introduction chapter, as the young generation employees' changed value, the suitable management style is not clear yet and needs to find out by this research. In the other side, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), in exploratory study, the social phenomena are investigated with minimal a priori expectation in order to develop explanation of the phenomena. Although the management style is not explicit before the research, an expectation should not be doubted that the current management style will be replaced by the new one. Hence, the journey of this research starts with the author's

minimal prior expectation and the broad and scattered interesting on this phenomena, becomes progressively narrower and focused, and finally to discovers new insight which is expected to answer or understand the stated investigated phenomena (Naipaul, 1989; Adams and Schvaneveldt, 1991).

#### **4.7.3.2 Case Selection**

Achieving the greatest understanding of the critical phenomena depends on choosing the case well (Patton, 1990; Yin, 1989), and the essential purpose of choosing cases is to *'illuminate a situation, get insight, or collect information about a particular event'* (Wadsworth, 1984, p14). In short, the selected case should closely associate to the studied phenomena.

The action of selecting case has been recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994) as *'determine and set boundaries'* (p27), which directly connect to the research questions, and include the examples which the researcher further wants to study. The IT (Information Technology) companies has been set as the case in this research. The reason is that IT industry appears a particular relevance on the research question and literatures: 1) according to the employee statistic of China (2005), IT industry is the youngest industry among all industries in China. Particularly, a survey of 167,922 IT employees in Beijing , where is the targeted city the researcher wants to investigated, the employees only are 28.8 years old averagely. 2) the statistic also indicates that the employees in IT industry *'very modern values'* characteristically.

Moreover, according to Yin (1994), there are four main factors which relate to the selection of case study organisation: relevance, feasibility, access and application. In

this research, accessibility is the first consideration for the author to select the case organisation. Yin (1994) identifies the accessibility that is the nature of business should be non-security sensitive, and the organisation is available for participate in the research, which includes the executive level for approval and operational level for participation in the whole research. The selected five case organisations in this research agree the author to conduct the research with the organisation, and willing to provide the information which the author desired. In the other sense, all of above criteria are satisfied by selected five organisations.

#### **4.7.3.3 Number of Cases**

After setting the boundary, the sequent consideration is about the number of case. The term of number in this research will be discussed from two perspectives: 1) single case or multiple-cases; 2) the number of multiple-cases. The consideration initially starts with the comparison of single and multiple cases followed by the limitation of single case and the advantages of multiple cases. Next, the number of multiple cases will be discussed in section 4.7.3.5. entitled 'Sampling Size' .

Although that the fewer cases, the greater the opportunity for depth of study (Voss et al, 2002), the single case has some limitations. The central limitation is embodied: *making dangerous to produce the generalization and leading potential risks*. Despite the generalisation is not an appropriate goal for qualitative study, (Guba and Lincoln, 1981; Denzin, 1983), the consideration of ensuing generalisation does not go away. Single case is be questioned as it can not provide something about the relevance or applicability of the findings to other similar settings (Miles & Huberman, 1994), transcend '*radical particularism*' (Firestone & Herriott, 1983) and a conclusion, model

or developed theory with generalisation (Voss, et al, 2002). Single case only works in one particular situation (Kennedy, 1979) that is to determine whether some alternative set of explanations are more relevant or whether a theory's propositions are correct (Yin, 1994).

Some potential problems are also led by single case (Leonard-Barton, 1990), such as risk of misjudging of a single event, and risk of exaggerating data. Objectively speaking, all case study unavoidably suffer to above risks, however, multiple cases functionally can mitigate these risks in some ways. Compare to single case, multiple cases prevent the observer bias and augment external validity. Additionally, multiple-cases provide more speedy recovery if one case is unusable and fail in some reasons. The advantage of using multiple cases is often identified that it helps the overall research be more robust (Eisenhardt 1989). The limitation of single case and the advantage of multiple cases are summarized in Table 4-1.

| Choice         | Advantages  | Disadvantages  |
|----------------|---|--|
| Single Case    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great depth</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limits on the generalizability of conclusions drawn.</li> <li>• Biases such as misjudging the representativeness of a single event and exaggerating easily available data.</li> </ul> |
| Multiple Cases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augment external validity</li> <li>• Help guard against observer bias</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More resource needed, less depth per case</li> </ul>  |

**Table 4-1 Single Case vs Multiple Cases**

Adapted from Voss et al. 2002, p203.

Further to the above discussion of the benefit the multiple cases offered, this research hence designs multiple cases in order to present a robust and vivid research, and augment the generalisability and external validity of the conclusion.

#### **4.7.3.4 Strategy of Sampling**

The purpose of sampling in qualitative research is ‘*illuminate a situation, get insight, or collect information about a particular event*’ (Wadsworth, 1984, p14), hence the samples tend to be purposive rather than random (Morse, 1989). The statistical representative sample is always used in quantitative research since it always focuses on statistical significance. Differ to quantitative research, qualitative research uses non-probability sampling to select its sample, since in most cases, qualitative research is usually a small and in-depth study, and non-probability provides the units which reflect particular features of or groups within the sampled population (Lewis, 1997). Several sampling strategies work for the qualitative samplings. With the consideration of the

characteristic of each strategy and the relevance of this research, finally, the convenience sampling and snowball sampling are adopted by this research.

#### ***4.7.3.4.1 Convenience Sampling***

As one type of purposive sampling, convenience sampling is widely used and common in exploratory and inductive study (Yin, 2003). The persuasion of this strategy is that it selects the participants who have knowledge and experience on the area being investigated. Also, this strategy is advantaged on accessing, which the researcher could easily and quickly access the organizations. The application of this strategy in this research helps the author to select the organizations, where majorly employ young generation and offers the author availability and accessibility (Bryman, 2004). Practically, the author believes that the practical knowledge and experience of the managers in these organizations will benefit the research question this research investigated.

#### ***4.7.3.4.2 Snowball Sampling***

Combined with convenience sampling, snowball sampling helps the author to select the interviewee in this research. The author initially contacts one familiar individual who previously acted as a lawyer for several IT companies, and asks him to introduce the author to one IT company. Once access is gained, the author then asked the middle managers and young employees of this company to put the author in touch with the other 'like' (David and Sutton, 2004) people they know within their company or outside their company. The following Figure 4-4 concretely depicts the snowball process. Snowball approach helps the author generate new contacts and assure rich information that is a good interview subject to this research. Practically, this research received one



pleasant surprise from the snowball sampling. The owner of Company E (See Company Profile in section 6.2.1 and 6.2.2) is the business partner of one participant in this research, he volunteered to accept the author's interview after he knew the research from his partner, since he has suffered by his young employees and just fired the last one. He wished having a conversation with the author and shared his experience. Literally, although his company currently does not employ the young generation employees, but the author strongly believed his previous experience, especial the current situation, would provide robust and persuasive information to this research.

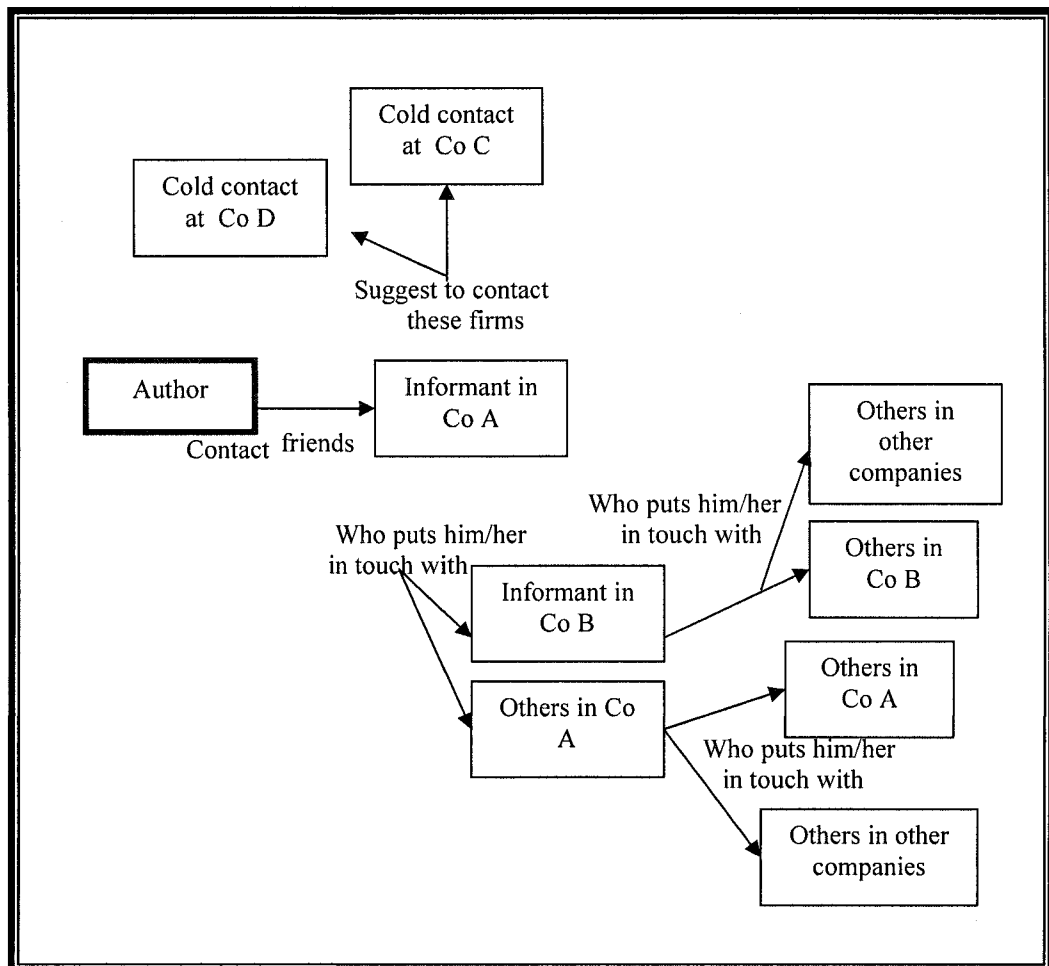


Figure 4-4 Network of Snowball Sampling

Adapted from Maylor and Blackmon, 2005, p270.

#### 4.7.3.5 Sample Size

Once the multiple cases studies are to be used, a vital question is raised: how many cases are suitable? Patton (1990, p181) claims that '*there are no rules*' for sample size in qualitative research. Similarly Romano (1989) states out that '*the literature recommending the use of case studies rarely specifies how many cases should be developed and the decision is left to the researcher*' (p36). Obviously, there are no precise answers to above question. Fortunately, the author is not isolated in the qualitative research, other researchers have made some recommendations to solve this issue from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

Theoretically, Easterby-Smith et al (2002) suggest that researchers need to clarify two thoughts when deciding on the sample size: what the researchers are basically interested in (the phenomena) and at what level of analysis (the in-depth of the investigation). This research focuses on Chinese young generation employees' changed values and the implications in the management style. Hence, the phenomena this research interested is qualitative nature, and an in-depth analysis should be conducted. Yin (2003) suggests that replication logic, not sampling logic, should be used for multiple-case studies. In this sense, the representativeness is not the criteria of this research, the case should be made such that it either predicts similar results (literal replication), or produces contrary results for predictable reasons (theoretical replication). This way offers the researcher right to determine whether the number of the case reach '*theoretical saturation*' (Eisenhardt, 1989) and '*to the point of redundancy*' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p204).

The other researchers' practical experiences offer the useful explanation for above theoretical terms. Eisenhardt (1989) asserts from 4 to 10 cases usually work well, since

fewer than 4 cases difficultly generate theory, and more than 10 cases hard to cope with the complexity and volume of the data. Hedges adds that '*in practice four to six groups probably from a reasonable minimum for a serious project*' (1985, p76). Yin (2003) voices that multiple-case design needs to select three or four cases with the consideration of each different aspect, reasons and purposes.

With the acceptance of above suggestions made by other scholars, five companies are selected and they are made up of twenty-six individuals who are company's middle level department manager, owner of private company and young generation employees. These five companies include China state-owned company, private companies and joint venture companies. From the preliminary background research of these companies, the author found that young generation employees are major resource of each company, and the managers have rich and first hand experience about managing young employees. It is believed that these five companies are robust and worthy samples since they will present similar characteristics and also variation for the comparison.

#### **4.8 Research Design**

Research design is the logic that links the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial question of study (Yin, 2003). Each research needs a well design, since it helps the research activities achieve the aims and avoids the situation in which the data do not address the research question (Easterby- Smith, et al, 2002). This research is designed in three phases: the philosophical and methodological decision, pilot study and main study.

#### 4.8.1 Pilot Study

*'Do not take the risk, pilot test first'* (De Vaus, 1993, p54). Pilot study is a *'small scale version, or trial runs, done in preparation for the major study'* (Polit et al., 2001, 467). Pilot study is a crucial element of a good research design, since it gives advance warning to the researcher about whether proposed methods or instruments are inappropriate, where research protocols may not be followed, or where the main research project could fail. Although it does not provide the guarantee success for the main research, it does increase the likelihood (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001).

The pilot study in this research has been completed in Aug 2006, which the five interviews have been conducted. With the accordance to the further main study, the participants in pilot study have been divided into two categories: manager and young employees. Practically, two of the five participants are managers and the rest are young employees. The whole pilot study conducted in UK. Two managers work in China companies located in UK who manage the Chinese young employees currently. The three young employees are the current postgraduate students in Newcastle with the previous work experience in China IT companies. The initial interview guide was used in the pilot study, and also the initial data analysis method, narrative analysis was tested in the initial analysis. The author has received a positive conclusion from the pilot study that qualitative structured interview and narrative analysis are appropriated methods in this research.

To test feasibility of research method is not what pilot study only offered to this research, to make a modification after pilot study and improve the main study is the more significant contribution of conducting a pilot study. From pilot study, the author

realized some weaknesses of further main study and consequently made a change and improvement. The first change the author made was to narrow down the research focus. The interview questions in pilot study paid broad attention to the implications of Confucianism and individualism, which tries to cover too many issues without developing deeper insights. Hence, the author narrowed this research down and only focused the influence of value on the managing behaviour and being managed, in order to make the research manageable and appropriately profound. The second sign the author received from pilot study was the manners of interview questions. The author directly used academic terms in the pilot study, such as Confucian value, collectivism, et, which led participants feel stress, or even rejected to answer question. In the main study, the author will speak participants' language instead of academic language and some terminology, and pay specific attention to the interview skills as well.

Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) point out 'contamination' to discuss the data in pilot study, which whether the data from the pilot study are still used in the main study, or whether pilot participants are included in the main study, but new data collected from these people. Holloway (1997) states that for qualitative research, the pilot study is not necessary separated, because the qualitative data collection and analysis is often progressive, second interview should be 'better' than the previous since the interviewer may have gained insights from previous interviews which are used to improve interview schedules and specific questions.

Holloway's statement sounds logically, however, the participants in the pilot study are not the people who work in the final investigated companies, and the data are not relevant much since the interview question need to redesign after the pilot study, thus,

the author abandons the pilot participants and data, while to select the new interviewees in the main study. The agreement the author made with Holloway is that she have learned lessons and gained insights from pilot study which are believed to improve the main study.

#### **4.8.2 Main Study**

With the positive confirmation of the data collected method and amendments of the initial interview guide, this research conducted the main study in Beijing, China in 2007. As present above, the constructionism epistemology and qualitative methodology rooted semi-structured interview has been conducted to collect the primary data. Totally, five IT companies including twenty-six individual participants were involved in the main study. Each organisation is designed as the majority of employees are '*post 80's*'.

The following Figure 4-5 is the research design for this research, which includes all philosophical and methodological issues discussed above.

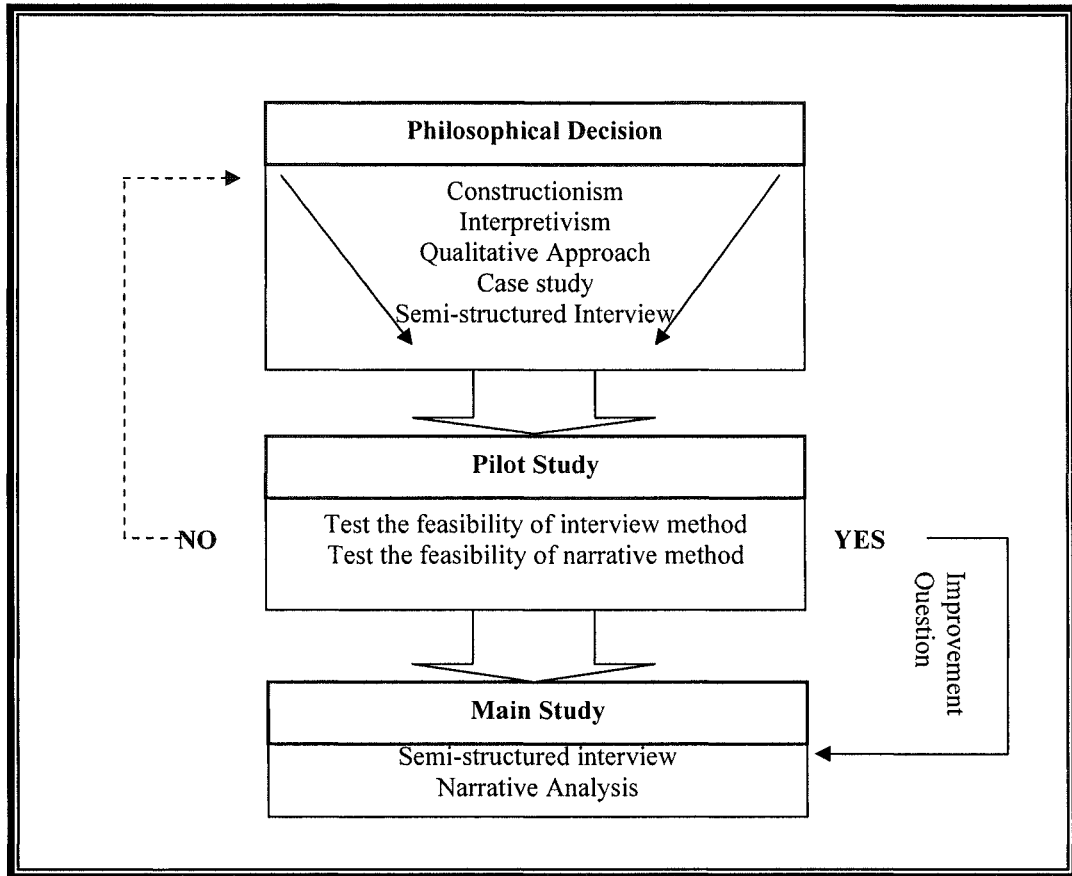


Figure 4-5 Research Design

Source: author

#### 4.9 Method of Data Collection

Case study is the selected strategy of this research, according to Yin (2003), interview is the essential sources of case study, and the interview can be used as the only approach in a research (Robson, 2002). Burgess (1982, p107) describes ‘(the interview) is... the opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply to uncover new clues, open up new dimensions of a problem and secure vivid, accurate inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience’. The significant uses of interview is summarised by Weiss:

*‘interviewing can inform us about the nature of social life. We can learn about the works of occupations and how people fashion careers, about cultures and values they sponsor, and about the*

*challenges people confront as they live their lives. We can learn also, through interviewing about people's interior experiences....We can learn the meanings to them of their relationships, their families their works, and their selves. We can learn about all the experiences, from joy through grief, that together constitute the human condition' (1994, p1).*

Interviews differ in style. A common distinction of interview is based on the level of structure of the interview, which it is typically categorised as structured interview, semi-structured interview and unstructured interview. Some scholars offer different perspectives to the interview and yield the different forms of interview, such as *in-depth interview* (Burgess, 1984; Lofland and Lofland, 1995), *respondent interview*, *informant interview* (Powney and Watts, 1987), *life history* and *oral history* (Thomps, 2000; Miller, 2000). Although the different perspectives lead different priorities and emphases in the interview, the key features of interview remain broadly consistent.

The author would like claim the interview in this research as *qualitative interviewing* (Rubin and Rubin, 1995), which always intends to refer to in-depth and semi-structured interview or loosely structured forms of interviewing (Mason, 1997). Kvale (1983, p174) defines qualitative interview is '*an interview whose purpose is to gather description of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena*'. Burgess gave qualitative interviewing other name as '*conversation with a purpose*' (1984, p102), but, the objectives and the role of researcher and participant are obvious different to normal conversation (Kvale, 1996; Rubin and Rubin, 1995). In reality, the qualitative interview appears naturalistic, but it bears little resemblance to an everyday conversation (Legard, *et al*, 2003). The researcher acts as a participant in the interview in which he/she co-construct the



meaning with the interviewee, rather than depersonalizing the interview process (King, 2002). The following statements made by some scholars picture the key feature of qualitative interviewing as a research method, and also indicate how the qualitative interviewing serve to this research effectively.

- Interviews, especially qualitative interviews, allow for understanding and meanings to be explored in depth (Arksey and Knight, 1999)
- Qualitative interviews examine the context of thought, feeling and action and can be a way of exploring relationships between different aspects of a situation (Arksey and Knight, 1999)
- Qualitative interview is particularly useful as a research method for accessing individuals' attitudes and values-things that can not necessarily be observed or accommodated in a formal questionnaire. Open-ended and flexible questions are likely to get a more considered response than closed questions and therefore provide better access to interviewees' views, interpretation of events, understandings, experiences and opinions (Byrne, 2004)
- Qualitative interview is a way of uncovering and exploring the meanings that underpin people's lives, routines, behaviours, feelings etc (Rubin and Rubin, 1995)

Turning from the number of cases to the number of interviews, there is also no fixed rule on how many interviews need to be conducted in a research. The principle is elicited by Flick (2007, p43) that '*interview as many as subjects as necessary to find out what you need to know*'. In qualitative research, the interview subjects trend to be small. This research totally conducts 26 interviews, which can be echoed from Weinberg's

advice (1983) that about thirty men is an average size of in-depth probing studies. The detailed data collection will be illuminated in the next chapter.

#### **4.10 Method of Data Analysis**

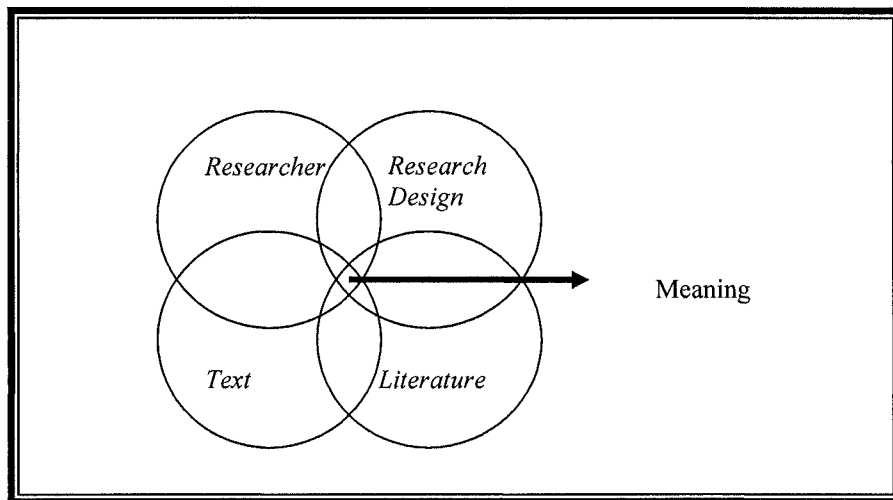
Data analysis is a part of research process, and how the data analysis will be done should be systematically planned for a research (Maxwell, 2005). This section will start at the identification of the nature and meaning of the qualitative data. Qualitative analysis and several common methods will be introduced shortly. As the particular analysis method in this research, narrative analysis will be illuminated along with its development and the relevance in this research.

##### ***4.10.1 Nature of Qualitative Data***

Strauss and Corbin (1990) regard qualitative research as '*any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification*'. In this sense, qualitative data is not a number (Miles and Huberman, 1994), it emphasises on essences of people, objects and situations (Berg, 1989) and deal with meanings that people locate to the events and process (Dey, 1993). Particularly, the biggest strength for qualitative data is that it handles on '*what the real life is*', because of qualitative data '*focus on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings*' (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p10). It comes in a variety format: word, text, picture or even a sound. Whatever the format is, the essential feature of qualitative data is meaning. The sequent section will explain what the 'meaning' refer to.

#### 4.10.2 Meaning for Qualitative Data

As illustrated in the following Figure 4-6 Arskey and Knight (1999) identify the meaning of the qualitative data is an interaction of *researcher*, *text*, *research design* and *literature* (p 150).



**Figure 4-6 Meanings of Qualitative Data**

Arskey and Knight, 1999, p150.

The *researcher* directly affects the data meanings since he/she determines the interpretation and the way reading the data. *Text* refers to interviewees' responses, which has a straightforward influence for the meanings because the text contains a variety meaning. *Research design* directs the data the researcher collected, shapes the way the data analysis will be carried out, and reflects the researcher's own perception, belief and understanding. *Literature* leads how the research looks at the data. Because actually what is appeared in the qualitative interview data transcription is not always relevant and much data is discarded in the search for meaning, therefore, what data gets discarded and what data gets more or less attention really depends on how the

researcher understands the literature. It can be understood as a reflection of the influence on the researcher's sense of the literature (Arksey and Knight, 1999).

#### ***4.10.3 Qualitative Data Analysis***

Qualitative data analysis transforms data into findings (Patton, 2002) and draws a conclusion and verifying the sturdiness (Miles and Huberman, 1984). In a vivid saying, analyzing qualitative data is the process of systematically organizing the materials that have been collected, making them tell a coherent story, bringing the meaning to the story, developing a theory about the phenomena that have been observed and writing them all up so that others can understand what the researcher have learned (Turner, 1983; Rossman and Rallis, 1998).

The characteristic of qualitative analysis has been identified by many scholars. It is a continued and iterative process (Dey, 1993), because the analysis process begins as data are being collected, not after data collection has ceased (Stake, 1995; Marshall and Rossman, 1999). It is an intuitive and inductive process because most qualitative researchers analyze and code their own data, and the researcher's own behaviour and thinking can become a vital source of data for the analysis (Dey, 1993). It is a dynamic process and be described as a '*dance*' (Miller and Crabtree, 1999). It is a creative process, because the researchers attempt to gain a deeper understanding of what they studied and continually refine their interpretations (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). At last but not least, it is a process which is no clearly agreed rule or analytic procedure (Dey, 1993; Ritchie and O'Connor, 2003), although '*the increased popularity and use of qualitative methods, there is relatively less information available about how to conduct qualitative data analysis*' (Symon and Cassell, 1998, p5)

As presented in the previous chapter, qualitative research is stemmed from several epistemological assumptions, these assumptions locate the different researchers' positions, which procreate different analytic approaches. Many scholars make a contribution for identifying the approaches of qualitative analysis, such as *ethnography analysis* (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006; Creswell, 2007), *discourse analysis* (Flick, 2007; Teymur, 1982; Edwards, 1997), *content analysis* (Berelson, 1952; Kracauer, 1993; Miles and Huberman 1994), and *ground theory* (Glaser, 2005; Glaser, 1978; Tavakol, et al, 2004). In particular, as the employed analysis method, the narrative analysis will be illuminated in the subsequent section with the history and development of narrative analysis, the basic element of narrative analysis, rationale of narrative analysis in this research and using software in the narrative analysis.

#### ***4.10.4 Narrative Analysis***

Initially, the narrative analysis has applied in the nursing and health researches in 1970 (McLeod, 2001), from that time, narrative has rapidly become an extraordinarily rich site of interdisciplinary studies (De Vault, 1994), such as philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and organizational study. According to Priest et al (2002), the various disciplines have led to several approaches of narrative analysis. Hence, one statement is must be made when talking about narrative analysis that there is no single, clear delineation about how the researchers go to use it, it is a very poorly branded analysis because it does not appear to exist as a '*named*' analysis in the same way (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p79). Manning and Cullum-Swan (1994) echo that there is no one thing can be described as narrative analysis, and it has a wide range of different approaches. The researchers are encouraged to create their own analysis produces (McLeod and Balamoutsou, 2002). Although a range of approaches under the heading

of narrative analysis, the essence of each approach is not divaricated that the data are treated as stories since it convey the meaning of people's life (Emden, 1998a).

#### **4.10.5 Narrative and Story**

Human life is filled with narrative fragments, enacted in and reflected upon storied moments of time and space (Heeok, 2004). There is no any human experience that can not be expressed in the form of a narrative (Bauer and Gaskell, 2000), because narrative activity starts in people's early childhood and characterises the whole of human life (Fusai et al., 2003). Narrative can be a story to make known or convey information (Berge, 1997; Lacey, 2000); '*an intentions of human actors*' (Richardson, 1995, p200); '*an event and its consequence*'; '*a relation between an event and other events*' (Wiles et al, 2005, p90); a performance of the self as a story of identify (Parker, 2005); a discourse with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and /or people's experiences of it (Hinchman and Hinchman, 1997) and '*a spoken or written text giving an account of an action which chronologically connected*' (Czarniwska, 2004, p17). Drawing down a comprehensive picture of narrative, the following three key features are mentioned by Elliott (2005): 1) narratives are meaningful; 2) narratives are chronological as they are representations of sequences of events; 3) narratives are inherently social in that they are produces for a specific audience.

Based on above definitions, the assumption of narrative is storied nature of human experience. People are storytellers by natures (Lieblich et al, 1998). According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990, p4), '*people are both living their stories in an ongoing experiential text and telling their stories in words as they reflect upon life and explain*

*themselves to others*'. People through the story they told to '*know or discover themselves or reveal themselves to others*', (Lieblich et al, 1998), because of story delivers a much better and clear message than any other form of communication (Hawkins, 1993).

Often, 'narrative' and 'story' are used interchangeably. Nevertheless, they are different although they have same characteristics in chronological order (Labov and Waletzky, 1967) and thematic ordering of events (Czarniawska, 1998). Gathering from the literatures, the differences can be summarized as shown in the following. In the structural view, the story does not have a plot, which is just an indication for event, while narrative comes later to 'add plot' into story and 'coherence' to the story line (Boje, 2001). In the context view, the term 'story' is usually used to describe what the actor tells and the 'narrative' is the researcher's account (Pejlert, 1999). In the sequential view, the story is 'ante' to story and narrative is post-story (Boje, 2001).

#### ***4.10.6 Narrative Analysis in this Research***

The contribution of Schutze (1977) and Bauer and Gaskell (2000) to this research lie in the possible use of narrative analysis. The two circumstances they defined to show the relevance of narrative analysis in this research. Narrative analysis is appreciated when 1) the research investigates the specific events, especially 'hot' issues; 2) the researcher needs listen to different voice. In particular, as presented in introduction chapter, young employees, the targeted investigators, in this research is a very 'hot' topic which attracts the many scholars to pay their attention for this specific event. Simultaneously, to study this phenomenon, the author needs to listen to different voice. The stories respectively told by managers and young employees provide a crucial clue to study the youth's

changed value and construct the suitable management style, since the different stories constructed by different social group are effective to apprehend a dynamic phenomenon. Additionally, this research studies the young employees' changed value, and any change is caused by some factors. Narrative analysis provides interviewees an opportunity to tell their stories in order to help the author to understand the interdependency between the factors and the changes that underpin the complexity of the organisational environment.

In this research, stories have been identified as the accounts of experience of managers and young employees, which are indicated by some forms. They can be a descriptions of an event: e.g. *the young employee is fighting with managers*; they can be a feelings of an event, e.g. *the manager is very shock for the young employee's question*; *the young employee appreciates the manager giving a chance to try his idea*; they can be a self-reflection on what the event means, e.g. *managing young employee is headache*; From transformative view, these stories capture the actions, intentions, opinions and values of the interviewees, describe a phenomenon and pass messages by the participants, and also place themselves in their context and explain the interconnecting and relevant relationship. Thus, these stories are exemplars of concepts, principles, or theories, and as cases to represent a real situation or a problematic situation to be solved (Jonassen and Hernandez-Serrano, 2002). From the epistemological view, these stories create knowledge and a theory, because the theory is about the connections among phenomena, a story why acts, events structure, and thoughts occur (Sutton and Staw, 1995). However, without the author, these stories are not knowledge and just the stories. The author possesses the given stories, retells the stories in terms of their interpretation, puts the narrative into a specific context, which is labelled by Geertz



(1973) as '*thick description*', reconstructs the meaning, and consequently develops a theory.

#### **4.11 Using Software to Analyse Qualitative Data**

Recently, the computer software for assisting analysis qualitative data has been developed, because the software has three methodological merits. First, the software helps the researcher to save the time and assist the management of larger samples (Kelle and Laurie, 1995). Secondly, software makes the research process more systematic, explicit, transparent and rigorous, while systematizing procedures that previously had been unsystematic and enabling the researcher to codify exactly how to analysis the data (Conard and Reinartz, 1984). Therefore, the software adds trustworthiness of research that has suffered from the reputation of seducing the researcher into unsystematic, subjective or journalistic styles of inquiry (Bauer and Gaskell, 2000). Lastly, software leases the researcher from manual mechanical works and enhances the researcher's creativity by giving time to the researcher to 'play' the data and explore the relationship between different categories (Lee and Fielding, 1995).

Nvivo 7 (NuDist Vivo 7) is used in this research, because the author personally realised its function on speeding up analysis process and facilitating the diagrams of emerging theories and preparation of reports (Patton, 2002; Richard and Richard, 1994) in the training she attended. However, the aim for using Nvivo 7 just aids the author manipulating data more quickly and efficiently than doing manually, not analyse the qualitative data. The analysis of qualitative data involves creativity, intellectual discipline and analytical rigor, the software can not determines meaningful categorises

for coding and analysis or define salient themes or factors, and the analytic underpinnings of the procedures must be supplied by the analyst (Patton, 2002).

#### **4.12 Limitation of Research Strategy and Method**

Each research unavoidably faces to methodological limitations. Although the author has paid serious attention to the research design for this research, it still has three methodological weaknesses: generalization, sample size and bias of semi-structured interview.

Generalisation is whether the findings from a study based on a sample can be said to be of relevance beyond the sample and context of the research itself (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003). The case study is vulnerable in relation to the generalization, since it focuses on individual and unique circumstance. However, compare to other research strategy, the notable advantage of case study is that it provides 'thick description' (Schutt, 2004), which is seen a solution outweighing its limitations. Thus, although this research sets the boundary of the case as IT industry, with the thick description, there is no reason believed that the results could not be applied in other China industries.

The sample size this research selected is small and not random, which is only specific to the companies located in Beijing, China. Holt (1997) addresses the limited sample should not taken as representative of geographically diversified country, such as China. Although the majority of Chinese IT companies locate in Beijing, and as a capital city, Beijing appears its openness to accept Western ideology, the presentation of findings in this research may limit to other geographical regions in China.

Lastly, semi-structured interview has own disadvantage, such as more bias than structured interview. To handle this limitation, as an interpretivist, the author not only acknowledges her own influence in the process, but also works for the creditability of this research.

#### **4.13 Ethical Issue**

Ethical issue concerns about the moral principles that determine how the researcher acts in the research process. Although the ethical issue will not necessarily improve the research, but behaving unethically will certainly adversely affect the research. A higher ethical goal for a business and management research is to find away that the research can benefit the organization and individuals involved (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005) and the minimum one is that nobody is actually or potentially harmed by the result of the researcher's research (Cooper and Schindler, 2001). The benefit of the organisations and individuals involved in this research will discuss in the conclusion chapter, while the minimum ethical issue is now discussed in turn.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2001), the area of ethical consideration in this research has been identified by the author as: accessing organisation, maintaining privacy and being responsible for findings. Base on the literal ethical standard and other researchers' practical experience, the author takes following actions to ensure her research reach the ethical standard possibly.

- The first action was taken account into accessing. A written access letter has been send to all organisations before the assessing. The letter includes research aims, research topic, data collected method and author and institution's detailed contact information (See access letter in Appendix I).

- Later, the areas of privacies have been identified by both author and case organisations as those where individual and case organisations' rights and privacy could be harmed. During the negotiations with the company's management board, the author promises to protect the participants in two ways: 1) from their own research experience in China, Adler et al (1989) warned that the anonymity of individuals must be safeguarded, and the failure of preserve anonymity can harm not only the respondents and the particular research but future studies undertaken by the same or other researchers. Therefore, the confidentiality and anonymity must be applied throughout the research; 2) each participant is allow to review the transcription of their interviews.
- The author is also responsible for the findings. Becker (1972, p113) says that '*a good study will make someone angry*', because the organisation and managers often hope they will look good or will point the finger of guilt as someone else (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). Thus, the third ethical matter for the author is to report the findings of this research faithfully although someone's narration maybe not decent enough. However, as a doctoral researcher, the author manages and ensures the report will be presented academically and professionally.

#### **4.14 Chapter Summary**

This chapter states the philosophical grounding of this research which indicates the authors' perception of the world, social reality, and knowledge. Based on the constructionism epistemology, the interpretivism approach, qualitative methodology, and multiple case study strategies have been addressed concretely. A part from these elements of a research process, a description of main study and pilot study has been

given. In addition, qualitative interview and narrative analysis, the method of data collection and analysis have been presented in this chapter as they are the research instruments. The ethical issue of this research has been highlighted and some limitation has been mentioned.

This chapter builds upon the philosophical foundation for this research, while the next chapter firstly will illustrate the instruments of data collection for this research. The narrative analysis will be employed by this research to analyse the primary data. Hence, the second main concern of next chapter is the process of data analysis.

**CHAPTER 5 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROCESS**

**5.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter directed the philosophical orientation and methodological approach in this research. This chapter presents how the stated philosophy and methodology will be implemented in the practices. The detail in this chapter provides the process of data collection and data analysis, to show how the author received the participants' daily experience and interprets and re-constructs their stories. Later, the discussion of data trustworthiness explicates the data in which techniques have enhanced trustworthiness to meet the criteria, and consequently will ensure the value of the findings which will be presented in the next chapter. Figure 5-1 is the outline of this chapter. Figure 5-1 is a general picture of this chapter. It places the position of this chapter in the whole thesis, and also presents the topic of each section of this chapter.

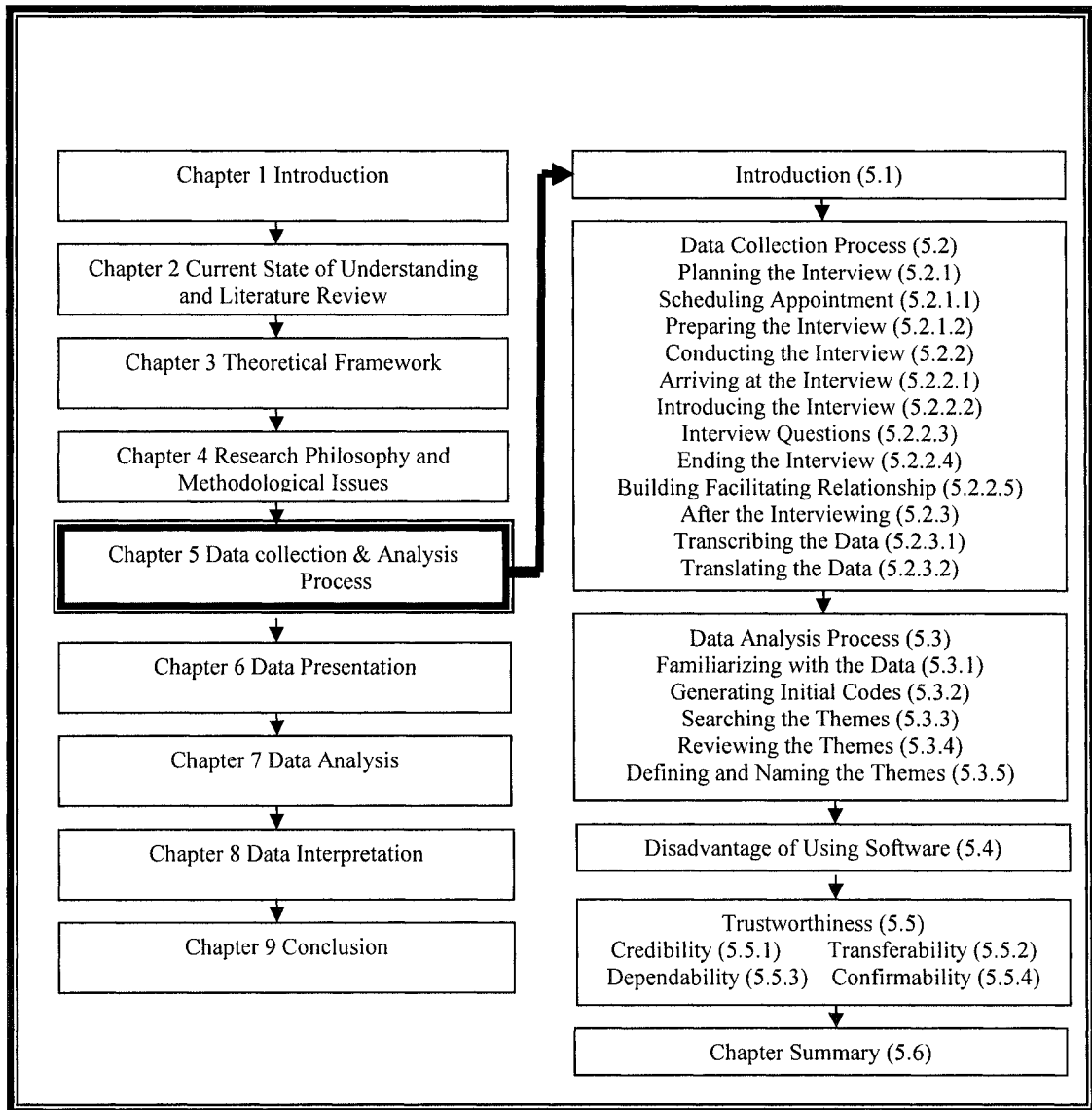


Figure 5-1 Outline of Chapter 5

Source: author

## 5.2 Data Collection Process

Interview is a skilled job and the collection process need to be systemically planned. In order to receive high quality data from the interview, a range of step must be taken in line with the suggestions and actions from some scholars (Legard et al, 2003; Flick, 2007; Rubin and Rubin, 2005; Arksey and Knight, 1999; Halai, 2007; Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005) adopted in their data collection process.

Over two months, in total of twenty-six interviews were conducted at five IT companies located in Beijing, China, which resulted in approximately 200 pages of transcription along with hand written notes and electric recordings (Silverman, 2000) in this research. As the interview is the only method used in this research, therefore, the discussion of data collection virtually encircles the interview process, which can be summarised as three phases: planning the interview, conducting the interview and after the interview. This section will portray three phases followed by a detailed description of each action.

### ***5.2.1 Phase One: Planning the Interview***

As the first stage in the data collection process, the activities in this stage include contacting the participants, arranging the interview, information searching and preparing facilitates for the interviews.

#### **5.2.1.1 Scheduling Appointments**

Arksey and Knight (1999) suggest that if a research is being conducted within an organisation, the accessing starts at the top and work down the hierarchy. Via the personal contacts within the organisation, the author obtained the agreement with the top manager of each case organisation that their middle department managers and staffs were free to be interviewed. The author at first wrote a letter (Appendix I) to set up the interview. In the letter, the author described the purpose of her research, the credential of conducting this research, the method to collect data, the confidentiality of the data, the potential use of the data, and highlighted how the outcome of the research benefits to the organisation. To follow up the letter, the author made a phone call to arrange an interview date, time and venue.



Since the managers had busy schedules, the author asked them to appoint an available time, and the interviews for young employees were conducted after works. The author understood that the interview would be conducted in an in-depth way, not structured, which took longer than a formatted interview. In the phone call, the author mentioned the length for the interviews to the interviewees in case some interviewees accidentally broke down the interview by an excuse of not enough time, as Easterby-Smith et al (2001) emphasises that the interview for the manager is time constrained and since the managers are busy people, the short interview is the most feasible. In the other side, the author considered that the interview time for the young employees is private, and she should politely let them know that in advanced. Therefore, with the respect of the interviewees and the intention of conducting a smooth interview, the author kindly reminded the interviewees that the interview would last a longer time.

The choice of venue for an interview in an in-depth way is often left to the interviewees (Legard et al, 2003). All managers suggested the interview could be conducted in their office or meeting room within the company. With the consideration of the confidentiality and interviewees' feeling, the interviews for the young employees took place in a private and comfortable room in a coffee.

In order to ensure the quality of interview, the interviews are not conducted closely, with two or three day's interval before the next interview. The author spent this time to expand the note and transcribed the recording, which enabled the author to reflect, review the interview question and made some correction for the next interview if necessary. For instance, the author found her speed of asking a question was a little fast from listening to the first recording, so she slowed down the speed from second

interviews. However, to ensure this research can be completed in accordance with the original schedule, sometimes, two interviews were conducted in one day.

### 5.2.1.2 Preparing the Interviews

The preparation included two steps, which are named by the author as intellectual knowledge preparation and physical equipment preparation. The former preparation refers to the actions which the author prepared as an interview guide, case company information and other related readings, and finally, the manual work for preparing the facilities.

Before the interview, the author reviewed the theories again, and designed an interview guide. The designed interview tried to make an effective connection with the literatures and reflect the research aims, and questions. According to Hartley (2004, p328), searching the organisation information consists of '*half a dozen orientation interview*', the general overview of the structure and functioning of the organisation which the researcher '*walk around*' (p328) the organisation to plan the interview. Hence, the author first searched for the overview of the Chinese IT industry, in order to get the initial understanding of research context. Particularly, the author read each case organisation's introduction carefully, which was believed to help the author to immerse herself in the organisation's practical situation, and further to facilitate her to phrase the interview questions. The author also read many Chinese version articles about the young generation. The objective of this reading was to offer the author a comprehensive understanding for her investigation. However, the above reading supported the author to obtain a broad context of the research question, which did not control her mind, so that the which the later interview principally was conducted in an open and flexible way.

During the physical equipment preparation, the author prepared an interview package which include an interviewee-named heavy-duty envelope. The package contained of all facilities which would be used in the interview. Some researchers have painful memories of an exceptional interview where nothing was reordered due to the technical defects, or most often, human error (Flick, 2007). Therefore, the author put in one full charged digital recorder and one spare battery in the package. The other terms included interview guide, notebook, pen and a Thanks card with the author's signature and contact address on it that she would give to the interviewee when the interview finished. The last and very important preparation was the equipment testing. If the equipment fails, the interview fails, because the researcher can hardly expects the interview to run through the whole discussion again (Denscombe, 2001). Therefore, the author tested the digital recorder before each interview and ensured it worked functionally.

### ***5.2.2 Phase Two: Conducting the Interview***

This section describes the routing of each interview step by step. It starts from the arriving at the interview, the activities in the interview including that how the author introduced herself, which interview questions have been delivered, how the author built up the rapport, and how the interview was professionally ended. The discussion of recording and taking notes are also given to state how they assist the author to conduct the interview.

#### **5.2.2.1 Arriving at the Interviews**

Without fail, the author arrived for each interview a few minutes earlier than the appointed time, because according to Legard et al (2003), the interview process

effectively begins the moment the researcher arrives on the participant's doorstep. The author would use these minutes to observe the company (interview for the manager), or to be familiar with the environment (interview for the young employee). More significantly, the author needed this time to relax and calm down herself, in order to move in a guest mode before meeting the interviewee. Before the introduction of the interview, the author had a free chatting with the interviewer, such as talking about weather, traffic, the company's location, et al. With the intention to establish the effective relationship, the author spent much time freely chatting to the young employees. The youths has been characterised by literatures and other articles as sensitive and wishing to be respected, hence, the author positioned herself as a friend of them, not a person asking them questions. To make a good start, the author tried to find an interesting topic to get closer to them, For example, some interviewees had experience of studying in Malaysia and the UK, where the author also stayed previously and currently, the conversation would started about some food or activities in such countries. The one most impressive example was that a girl talked about a problem with her boyfriend which last nearly 40 minutes. Although the time period exceeded the author's original schedule, the author did not break her and behaved tolerantly and carefully, since it was strongly believed that the interviewee would fully open herself to answer author's question after such conversation. It needs to be clarified that the research topic was not involved in the free chatting, and it came at the time of the introduction of the interview.

### **5.2.2.2 Introducing the Interview**

The researcher should starts to direct the interaction by introducing the research (Legard et al 2003). The author's background and the research she was conducting were

introduced at the beginning of each interview. Following this, the author explained the purpose and aims of the research, especially, the future practical contributions of the research, which were made explicit which in order to attract the interviewees' interests. The confidentiality issue was stated formally in the introduction, the interviewees were affirmed that what they said would just be presented in the author's thesis with anonymities which would not cause any harm for them in the future. The author kindly requested the interviewees' permissions for recording because the respondents are sensitive when their answers are recorded which may hesitate or even not answer some questions (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). Fortunately, each interviewee agreed the author to use the recorder in the interviews. An introduction was delivered to both manager and young employees with the aim of initiating a rapport. Then, according to some scholars' suggestions, the introduction moves respectively to establish the deeper rapport.

The author spoke a few words tactfully reassuring the managers that they were competent and what they said was of benefit to the author's research (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). For instance, the author mentioned that the other interviewee identified he/she as a suitable person by '*I have been told that you have a lot of things to say about managing young employees*', or referred to his /her status by '*I know the majority of your employees are 'post 80's'*'. Some interviewees in the manager's group did not have formal education, while they knew the author was doing a doctoral research in UK. To deal with this matter, the author followed the action which is recommended by Rubin and Rubin (2005). The author indicated her respect for people who work on the front line. She emphasised that the managers dealing with the real problems, not academics, have been the ones to come up with innovations and reforms and it was the job of the

academics to learn about the reforms and publicize those that seem to be working. This statement impressively set up the interviewee as an expert who has done something notable and worthy of study (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

One consideration for the young employees was whether they would like to share themselves. In order to reduce young employees' fear that their answers would be judged and increase their motivation to express themselves as much as they could, the author made a very clear statement in the introduction that this was not a test, which had no right answer or wrong answer, the author was really interested in their experiences and thoughts, and would like let the managers to hear their voice.

### **5.2.2.3 Interview Questions**

With the different aims, a several type of questions were asked by the author during the interview process. The questions include demographic questions (David and Sutton, 2004), introducing question, follow-up question, probing question (Kvale, 1996), supplementary question (Legard et al, 2003) and direct questions. The interview started with asking the interviewees' background, such as the interviewee's age, education background and work history. These demographic questions elicited the factual data about the interviewees and contributed to the participant's profile in the later. Moreover, these questions 'broke the ice' and eased the interviewee into the interviews. Followed by the demographic question were introducing questions. The managers were asked to describe the young employees in their department, and the young employees were asked to talk about themselves as well. This question helps the author to receive the draft pictures of the young employees' characteristic from their managers and their self reflections. Consequently, the probing question was given to interviewees to reflect

their answers. As a technique, story-telling provided the opportunity to the interviewees to put their answers into a story account. The major advantage of the story-telling is that it allows the interviewee greater latitude in answering questions (Minichiello et al, 2000) *'rather than having to mould his answer into a format which the question requires'* (Askham, 1982, p572). Based on Reissman' experience (1993), probes are often necessary to initiate narration, especially when the difficulties in eliciting narratives from the interviewees appeared. Hence, the author would ask the interviewees to give an example to explain their answers, e.g. *'can you give me an example of what individualism means to you'*, *'can you tell me more about hard work'* and *'you mentioned that you find a headache to these young employees, can you give me some examples for that?'* This helped the author to gain a comprehensive and deep understanding of the interviewees' questions. The probed story telling was used again and again in the interview, since it did not only provide the interviewees to explain their perceived answers deeply and amply, but also functionally revealed the young employees' value, the influence for the work behaviour and consequent expected management style. The author would lead the interview by the direct question if the interviewees' answer did not refer to the point which the author want to discovered. Based on the literatures, the direct question related to the research objective, the particular cultural value was asked to the both managers and young employees, such as *'how do you think the young employees respect elder/authority in your department'*, or *'what do you think about the loyalty to your manager?'*. When the interviewers required some time to think about the question and formulate their answers, the author did not fill up the pause with other question, and waited for them until they were ready to answer. However, if the author though that the interviewees still had not reached the point, the author would ask supplementary questions to help the interviewees to reflect

their response once the author determined that was not a contemplative silences (Legard et al, 2003).

Overall, the author tried to be an active listener with an open mind. She guided the conversation to cover the topics which she wanted, and strategically return the topic back if the interviewees veered far from the topic. She encouraged the interviewees talk as much as they could, opened her mind to rearrange or created new questions in accordance with the interviewees' answers. The interview question guide is presented in Appendix II.

#### **5.2.2.4 Ending the Interview**

The interview did not simply finish when the recorder was switched off, since the time after switched off was also important. The author expressed her thanks and gave the prepared card to the interviewee. The Thank card helped the author try to maintain the relationship and tried to keep the respondent informed about progress in the research (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). Also, the author talked about something to help the interviewee move out the interview mode (Legard, et al, 2003). Significantly, the free chatting after the interview sometimes sparked the final reflection, or even new information (Legard, et al, 2003). In this instance, the author did not switched on the recorder again, in stead of making notes to write down what the interviewee said.

#### **5.2.2.5 Building Facilitating Relationship**

The quality of data is depending on the quality of the relationship built up between the interviewer and interviewee (Arksey and Knight, 1999). Trust and rapport and personal



appearance (Arksey and Knight, 1999) are two passes to assist the relationship during the interview.

#### **5.2.2.5.1 Trust**

Essentially, the trust has been achieved by maintaining the author's frequent eye contact, smiles, nods and other reinforcements during the interview, which expressed the author's strong interest, attention and encouragement. Moreover, the author asked some follow-up questions to demonstrate that the author paid much attention for and wanted to know more about what the interviewee said. Although the author has noted that there was not a right or wrong answer, the author also continually conveyed it throughout the interview. The author affirmed the interviewee '*I am very interested about that, please go on*' when the interviewee said '*I do not know whether my point is right...*', '*Maybe people does not agree, but I think...*' or '*This is just my point, it is not typical...*'.

#### **5.2.2.5.2 Personal Appearance**

The researcher is advised of the need to adopt different kinds of dress and hair style in an attempt to establish rapport and gain acceptance (Warren, 1988), since in the sense, the interviewee may be assessing and making judgement about the interviewer's dress and personal appearance on the basis of what they can see (Arksey and Knight, 1999). The author made the preparation for different appearance to the respective groups, which in turn was acceptable by the interviewees. To look 'professional' and 'competent' (Collinson 1992), the author wore the suit, polished shoes and carrying a leather case when she came to the organisations to interview the manager. Meanwhile,

she became fashionable by wearing jeans, support shoes, bag and some stylish accessories for the interviews with young employees.

#### **5.2.2.6 Recording Interview**

The first benefit of using recordings is that the author can concentrate on the participant's narration catching the participant's emotion, watching the participant's body language, and focussing the dynamics of interview. It is possible and convenient to return again and again to re-listen the interview which is the second advantage for using the recorder in the interview. To record the interview, the author used a digital voice recorder. Compare to traditional tape recorder, the digital recorder provide a high acoustic quality and can record for many hours without interruption, and the recordings can directly transferred to a computer where they can be stored and played for future analysis (Flick, 2007).

#### **5.2.2.7 Taking the Notes**

Note-taking is accompanied to the electronic recording in this research. Taking extensive notes during the interview distracts and interrupts the free flow of conversation (Flick, 2007), thus, the author took a '*strategic and focused*' (Patton, p383) note. Strategically, the abbreviation and informal shorthand were used in the notes. For instance, '*YE*' referred to young employee and '*MGT*' instead of the full word of management. In the note, the author depicted the interviewee's body language which was observed by the author with the mapping number, in order to ensure the author could locate them in the right place in the future transcription. When the interviewee gave a few points at one time, the author wrote down them to ask one by one later. Also,

the author scribbled down some main points to keep track of what was being said if the interview was momentarily interrupted and then the interviewee asked the author, '*where were we?*' especially for the interview with managers for example if manager was interrupted by a phone call (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). The author did not forget her role when she took the notes, so she tried to make a frequent eye contact and acknowledged that she was listening carefully.

### ***5.2.3 Phase Three: After the Interviewing***

The period after an interview is a time for guaranteeing the quality of the data obtained will be useful, reliable and authentic (Patton, 2002). The first task when the author arrived to her home after each interview was to download the recordings into the laptop, and check if the interview was recorded. If the interview was unfortunately not recorded, the author would immediately expand a note for everything that could be remembered in as much detail as possible. Fortunately, this problem did not occur as each recording worked very well. After checking the record, the author immediately wrote a full note which was briefly sketched in the interview and put it in the named envelop, in order to prepare a personal file for each interviewee. The next task was transcribing the recording as soon as possible. The transcription is a time-consuming process, and the time for transcribing an interview depends on the quality of recording, the experience of the transcribers and the demand for detail and exactitude (Flick, 2007). Averagely, an experienced secretary spends five hours to type verbatim a one hour interview. Disregarding the quality of recorder which the author deemed was satisfactory, the author planed to do a full precise transcription personally, which is anticipated as a stressful job. Therefore, the author did not leave the transcription until all interviews has been conducted. In the other hand, the author would receive the preliminary

understanding of the data with the transcription, which ensures the author could reflect on the quality of interview question and this would be helpful for making some corrections.

### 5.2.3.1 Transcribing the Data

Although employing an experienced secretary for the transcription is common in the interviews and *'the interview researcher's road to hell starts paved with transcripts'* (Flick, 2007), the author still eventually decided to transcribe the tapes by herself, because of transcribing the data by researcher has undoubted advantages. Firstly, the researcher becomes familiar with the data; secondly the researcher is reminded of the tone of the interviews; thirdly, the transcription done by the research is *acceptable to the researcher, whereas it is always necessary to hunt out the mistakes and mistranscriptions when someone else does the transcription* (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p142), and lastly, the researcher will *learn much about the emotional aspects of the interview situation present or reawakened during transcription, and will already have started the analysis of the meaning of what was said* (Flick, 2007, p95).

The author transcribed the interviews in a full written version since *'every word that people use in telling their stories is a microcosm of their consciousness'* (Vygotsky, 1987, p236). It means the transcription in this research is precise which includes grammatical errors, digressions, profanities, exclamations, stalling words, silences (Rubin and Rubin, 2005), and events that interrupt the interviews, such as when the interviewee answered the mobile (Poland, 2002) and went to the toilet. All transcriptions were formatted which each line has been numbered, and a margin on the right part has been given for the author to make the notes and make code in the later.

### 5.2.3.2 Translating the Data

All data was collected in this research in Chinese and later would be reported into English, which means translating the data is a necessary step in the research process. For translating the data, some scholars acknowledge difficulties in achieving accuracy (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) or ask the questions (Rossman and Rallis, 1998) in capturing the meanings. Halai (2007) finds that the literatures, answers and suggestions on translating interview data in social research are sparse, it only has been mentioned by McDermott and Palchanes (1994) in reference to translating quantitative data, not qualitative data. With a wish to help the researcher who works with bilingual data to handle the unforeseen hurdles in their paths, Halai (2007) adds small account of literatures on translating interview data, which fundamentally maintains this research.

Halai (2007) concludes that language is context based, some words of meaning in a language can not easily be conveyed in another language, also, the cultural barrier is almost insurmountable which causes difficulty in understanding the context. Thus, the final translated data is named *transmuted*, because the text has been converted from one language to another, and been changed in the process, but the essence has been kept similarly.

The first rule Halai (2007, p352) recommended is *do not translate all interview data, but select and translate a number of key interviews*. It means the translation in this research is not the ‘*exact equivalence*’ which is impossible, but ‘*inexact equivalence*’. Nida (1964, p15) puts this vividly ‘*whoever, takes upon him/herself to translate contracts a debt, to discharge it, he/she must pay not with the same money, but the same sum*’. The criterion for the ‘*inexact equivalence*’ is to satisfy the author’s need to

convey the essential meanings from Chinese to English. The satisfactory means the translation *making sense, conveying spirit and manner of the original data and all expression are adequate* (Halai, 2007, p351). In this research, some Chinese proverbs and allusions were provided in the participants' answers. For this case, the author translated them into existing English idiomatic phrases, if none matched existing English idiomatic phrases, the short English sentence was given with the accurate meanings. The second recommendation is '*use translated word as direct quotes*' (Halai, 2007, p352). Therefore, all the quotations which will be used in the findings in this research are the translated content.

So far, it is clear that how the data has been collect from above section. The subsequent action after the data collection is the data analysis. Parallel to the above section, the next section will discuss the data analysis process.

### **5.3 Data Analysis Process**

This section is a step-by-step process of data analysis which will explicate how the findings are interpreted. As stated above, there is not a clear guidance for the researcher applying narrative analysis and Riessman (2003) points out that narrative analysis is a family of arrangements of approaches. Hence, Priest et al (2002) suggest the novice researcher is better advised to follow a set producer. The particular analytical approach adopted in this research largely relies on the conventions of thematic approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Bryman and Burgess, 1993) which manifests similar analytic step and different terms to the 'template analysis' (King, 2004). The thematic analysis emphasizes on the content of a text, 'what' is said more than 'how' it is said, the 'told' rather than the 'telling' (Riessman, 2003). Basically, as shown in Figure 5-2, thematic

analysis systematizes the extractions as three levels: basic theme, which is lowest-order premises evident in the text; organizing theme, which is categories of basic grouped together to summarize more abstract principles; and global themes, which is super-ordinate themes encapsulating the principle metaphors in the text as a whole (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The literatures of the thematic approach do not provide an exact guidance, which will be applied flexibly to fits the research question and data in this research particularly. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that the analysis process of qualitative data should be identified into three major phases: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. Practically, the analysis process in this research is a combination of three phases and five steps of thematic approach.

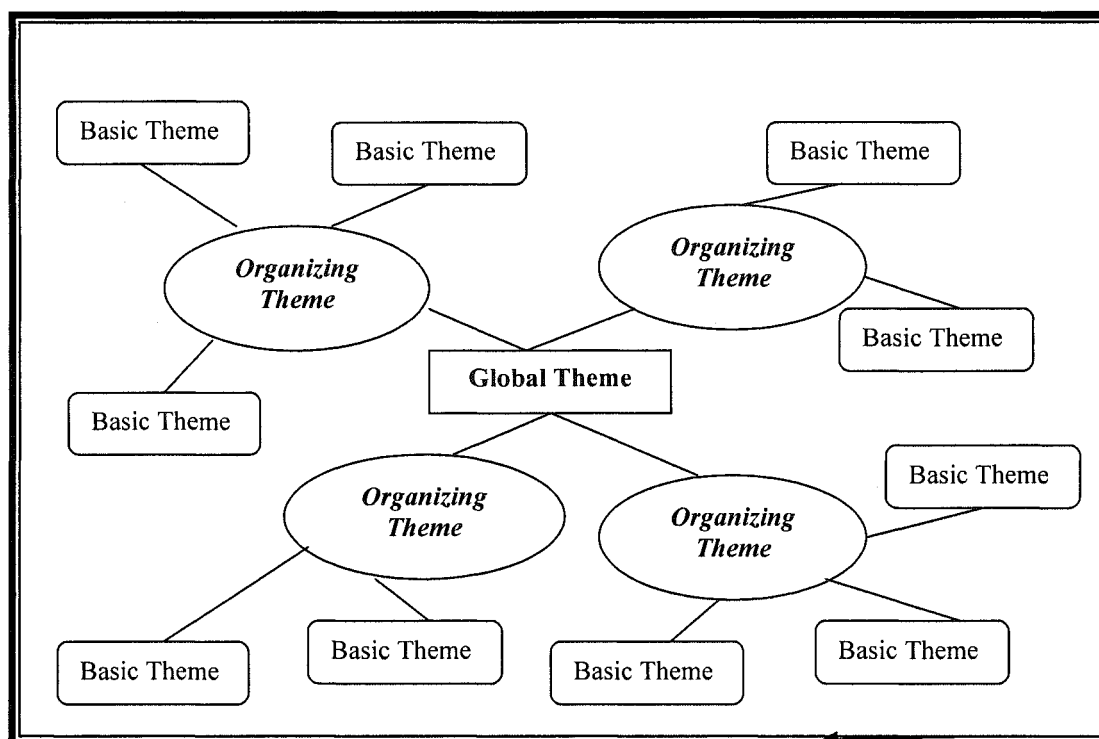


Figure 5-2 Structure of Thematic Network

Attride-Stirling, 2001, p388.

### **5.3.1 Step One: Familiarizing with the Data**

In fact, the data analysis process has started when the data has been transcribed, because as mentioned in previous chapter, the author could get the initial sense of the data during the transcription. After transcription, the author primarily became familiar with the data, and reading and re-reading is the way to ensure that. Despite the fact that reading and re-reading is very time consuming, it is very valuable for the analysis, since it is the '*bedrock of rest of analysis*' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p87). The meaning of the data is not obvious, in order to let the data speak for themselves, the author reads and re-reads the data several times in an *active way* (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p87) to searching the meaning, and immerses herself in the data with the depth and breadth of the content. In this first step, the author read the printed transcription, and during the reading, the author started to write down the notes in the margin of the transcription, which will be used in the subsequent step. One example of coded transcriptions is presented in the Appendix IV.

### **5.3.2 Step two: Generating Initial Codes**

The objective of this step is to identify the initial coding which from a priori theories, the emerged issues raised by the respondents themselves and analytic themes arising from the patterning of particular view or experience (Bryman and Burgess, 1993). Practically, the author identified the initial coding under the headings which appeared in the literatures and emerged from the earlier familiarisation step. In this step, the code of emerging from the familiarisation is identified by '*in vivo*' (Dunican, 2006, p192) term which is the languages the respondents used, and will be modified in the subsequent step. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), two principles have been followed in this step: 1) to make the coding as many as possible, because at the time, the author can not



determine that which data will be useful in the later, 2) one individual part of data extracted can be used in many coding as long as it fits into.

Nvivo 7 will be used in this step to assist the author to organise the data and make the initial code. In practice, the author imported all transcription in to Nvivo 7 and saved code as tree node which is a term of Nvivo 7. Each tree node was given a name and all of the data has been stored under different tree code.

### ***5.3.3 Step Three: Searching the Themes***

The aim of this step is to consider the potential theme and sort the initial code into it. After step two, all data had been initially coded, and a list of all initial coding is available. With the list of all initial coding, the author started to create the potential theme at a very broad level. To help the researcher sorting the initial code into the theme, a visual representation has been suggested by the Braun and Clarke (2006). The author used a theme map to present the relationship between the codes and themes. Nvivo 7 functionally provided a 'conceptual tree', which included the lists of all tree codes. Based on that, the author drew up a theme map manually since it offered the author a vivid impression for the potential theme and was easy to review all theme and their links. The author drew up several maps, and the one example of them is presented in the Appendix. During the sorting process, some codes did not seem to belong any theme, for this instance, the author created a theme named 'temporarily theme' to save these codes, since in this step, without looking all the extract, none of the code could be abandoned.

#### ***5.3.4 Step Four: Reviewing the Themes***

The following three possibilities occupied when the themes have been created in the last step: the theme could not be established (eg, only be supported by a few data); the theme can be combined (eg, several themes may form one theme) and the theme could be separated to two or more themes. Thus, by reviewing the theme, this step is to refine and refocus the themes created from the last step and set the structures of final themes. The reviewing process includes two levels: themes reviewing and data reviewing. The aim of themes reviewing is to make sure the themes appear in a coherence pattern. Practically, the author made the theme reviewing based on two criteria: whether the themes reflect the research question and whether the themes are in accordance with the literatures. Once the author was satisfied with the themes, the process moved to the second level: data reviewing. As with the theme reviewing, data reviewing checks whether the data present under each individual theme relates to the theme, which accurately reflects the meaning of the theme. There are two results of data reviewing: discarding some unnecessary data and adding some additional data which has been missed in the earlier step. Overall, if the author was dissatisfied about the theme or data, it required the author to return to review and refine the coding, so this step is an ongoing process.

#### ***5.3.5 Step Five: Defining and Naming the Themes***

Once the satisfactory themes have been established, the following job is to define the themes and offer a suitable title to each theme. To see whether each individual theme has a clear boundary and whether the author could define the boundary, practically, the author took the test offered by Braun and Clarke (2006), to write down a few sentences to describe the scope and content of each theme. It required the author to refine the

theme if she failed to define the each theme with a clear mind. After the definition, a name would be given to each theme. The name of each theme would be used in the final thesis, thus, it was required be concise, neat and impressive. During the naming process, the author tried to make each title reflects the literatures and was presented as impressive as possible, since the name was expected immediately to give the readers a sense of what the theme is talking about. At the end of this step, the author had a fully worked theme and was ready to move to the write-up step.

#### **5.4 Disadvantage of Using Software**

NVivo 7 is used in the data analysis process. As stated in last chapter, the use of NVivo 7 provides some advantage for the author, however, from the first hand experience, the author finds that while NVivo 7 is helpful for the researcher, it does have some limitations. At first, the transcripts have to be formatted as rich text format, since NVivo software does not recognise or handle other format, such as Microsoft Word, a very common format. Secondly, the researcher must attend the training and practice the skills before using this software. Pateman (1998) argues that this limitation even fails the original intention of making qualitative analysis easier, since it is time-consuming for the learning and becoming knowledgeable for this software. Lastly, compare to conceptualizing data by scrolling back and forth on computer screen, the author feels that manual printed transcripts with highlighted colour may be more effective for the researcher.

## 5.5 Trustworthiness

Positivists believe that the world is objective, they seek for general laws and facts of the world. Consequently, positivists apply four criteria to evaluate quantitative research: *internal validity* (the degree to which findings correctly map the phenomenon in question), *external validity* (the degree to which findings can be generalized to other settings similar to the one in which the study occurred), *reliability* (the extent to which findings can be reproduced by another inquirer), and *objectivity* (the extent to which findings are free from bias) (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

In contrast to quantitative researchers, qualitative researchers state that the world is essentially relativistic and can only be understood from the point of view of the individuals who are directly involved in the activities which are to be studied (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). The aim for any qualitative research is to '*engage in research that probes for deeper understanding rather than examining surface features*' (Johnson, 1995, p4). Therefore, from the philosophical stances, qualitative researchers reject above four criteria which are commonly accepted by quantitative researches, and argue for different criteria from qualitative perspective.

Trustworthiness has been suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1994) to evaluate the qualitative research, and by the use of techniques that provide truth through *credibility*, applicability through *transferability*, consistency through *dependability* and neutrality through *confirmability* (Erlandson et al, 1993). Guba and Lincoln (1994) agree these four criteria better reflect the underlying assumptions of qualitative researches. The application of trustworthiness in this research will be presented in the Table 5-1 accompanied with the details as shown in the following.

| Criterion     | Criteria Term   | Techniques in this Research | Application Outcomes                                |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Truth value   | Credibility     | Member check                | Test interpretations                                |
|               |                 | Triangulation               | Verify data   |
| Applicability | Transferability | Thick description           | Provide database for transferability judgments      |
| Consistency   | Dependability   | Dependability audit trail   | Allow auditor to determine trustworthiness of study |
| Neutrality    | Confirmability  | Confirmability audit trail  |   |

**Table 5-1 Qualitative Research Criterion**

Adapted from Guba and Lincoln, 1994

### 5.5.1 Credibility

Credibility is an *'act of conducting inquiry in such a manner as to ensure that participants were identified and described for the study to show that the inquiry is credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities'* (Marshall and Rossman, 1995, p143). Member checking and data triangulation have been adopted to ensure the credibility in this research.

#### 5.5.1.1 Member Checking

Member checking is *'single most critical technique for establishing credibility'* (Guba and Lincoln, 1989, p239) and it refers to that *'data, analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions are tested with members of those stake holding groups from whom the data are originally collected'* (Lincoln, 1985, p314). The purpose of member checking is to add the accuracy and richness (Leedy, 1997) of the data through the process of participants' viewing. In this research, referring interview transcription back is one of

the conditions in the agreement between the author and the case company, thus, the author sent back the transcription to the participants. Positively, the author received a confirmation from the participants, which ensure this research remains true of the data and increase the credibility.

### 5.5.1.2 Triangulation

Triangulation is defined by Creswell and Miller (2000) as '*a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to from themes or categories in a study*' (p 126). A primary aim of triangulation is to help the researcher to gather multiple perspectives to gain a comprehensive understanding of phenomena, and it be described as a typical strategy to improve the validity and reliability of qualitative researches or evaluation of findings (Golafashani, 2003).

Denzin (1970) emphasises that triangulation is multiple which can be embodied as: methodological triangulation, data triangulation, investigator triangulation and theoretical triangulation. Data triangulation is used in this research. It refers to *the 'use of different sources of data as distinct from using different methods in the production of data'* (Denzin, 1970, p301). The '*different sources of data*' can be collected in three ways: studying a same phenomenon at different time, in various locations and with different persons (Denzin, 1970). To explore the cultural value of today's Chinese young employees and identify the acceptable management style, two different sets of data are gathered by this research, with the perception of both managers and young employees. This is allowed the author to '*improve accuracy of their judgements by collecting different kinds of data bearing on the same phenomenon*' (Jick, 1984, p136).

### ***5.5.2 Transferability***

Transferability is the degree that findings of this research can be transferred or generalised to other settings, contexts or populations (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). It is very clear that this research does not expect to generalise its findings, however, it should provides readers with the possibility of transferring findings where appropriate, but when this research does not maintain the gained knowledge it may not relevance for other contexts or for the same contexts in another time frame (Erlandson et al, 1993).

As a strategy, ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973; Denzin, 1978) helps the author to make the findings of this research transferable, so that the readers can determine whether the findings are applicable in another context or situation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The thick description provides the information about the context on an act, the intentions and meanings that organize action, and its subsequent evolution (Denzin, 1978), and such detailed description brings the reader vicariously into the context being described (Erlandson et al, 1993). In this research, the author put the young employees in the context of the IT industry, depicted their cultural value, practical behaviour and expectation with words, which ensured the readers could create the sense in their mind from these description to be remarkably close to that which would be gained by direct experience (Erlandson et al, 1993).

### ***5.5.3 Dependability***

Tutty et al (1996) emphasize that although qualitative research is influenced by the unique events and relationships that unfold during the research, a reasonable degree of consistency is still desirable. Mestry (2004) defines the consistency as the degree to which the findings of the research will remain consistent should the research be

replicated within a similar context. To enhance the stability of findings in this research to over the time and over conditions (Polit and Hungler, 1995), a dependability audit trail is necessary which included a detailed description of how data was collected, decision made and themes derived (Merriam, 1998).

In doing so, the files presenting the phenomena being studied and presenting the procedures of the inquiry have been adopted (Erlandson et al, 1993). Specifically, from the interview guide, the theoretical gap indicate what context is being studied by this research. At the same time, a research diary recorded how the inquiry has been conducted. It noted the time and place of data collection, the researcher's personal feeling, introspection and emerging information from the participants. Functionally, these files elicit an information to the auditor that this research reports no facts without noting their source and making no assertions without supporting data (Erlandson et al, 1993).

#### **5.5.4 Confirmability**

Sandelowski (1993) describes the qualitative research as an art that requires versatility in order to create research procedures that can fit unique circumstances that exist when studying complex phenomenon, in this sense, the research process decision are created by the researcher, not prescribed from previous studies. Thus, the qualitative research is judged in terms of the degree to which its findings are the product of the focus of its research, and not of the biases of the researcher's self (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This is the concept of confirmability of qualitative research. The confirmability can be achieved by a *confirmability audit trail* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) which makes the process and decision openly to be critiqued by others (Lietz et al, 2008).



In this research, a confirmability audit trail including original interviewing recoding and analytic process was provided to track the each step the author made in moving from the raw interview transcripts to final interpretation. In addition, the other supplement documents were appended, such as an example of coded transcript and the theme map which is presented an Appendix. These recording and documents reveal how the findings are function solely of the participants and conditions of the research, not of the researcher, other biases, motivation and perspectives (De Vos, 1998). Moreover, the well established creditability and applicability has been regard as an indication for the achievement of conformability in this research.

## **5.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter mainly presents a comprehensive and detailed description for the process of data collection and analysis in this research. By following this chapter, the readers could go throughout the journey of data collection with the author and watch how the author makes the analytical movement from the raw data to the final report step by step. Also, this chapter highlights the techniques which to ensure the quality of findings in this research. With the application of these techniques, the findings in this research are approved to establishing rigor and trustworthiness and will be used in the next chapter.

After the analysis, the participants' stories become to the findings which serve to this research. The next section will present these findings and later contributes to the final conceptual discussion.

## **CHAPTER 6 DATA PRESENTATION**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The earlier chapter illustrates the method how the data was collected, the way how the data was analysed and the techniques how the trustworthiness was established. Continue with it, this chapter and further two chapters will present, analyse and interpret the data gathered from interviews. Initially, with the intention for providing the readers a better understanding of this research, this chapter provides a general demographic outline of the case companies and individual participants in the study. The first part of this chapter is the demographic characteristics of each case company and the second part is the demographic information of all individual participants. Also, the code number of each individual participant will be made and explained, which will be actually used in the later data analysis.

### **6.2 Case Companies' Profiles**

This section outlines the descriptive features of the case companies. The information is provided by the files of each participant company. The information of each case company is quantitative natured, however, the quantitative natured presentation in this chapter is merely to support the descriptive illustration of the information, and will not be used to make inferences in the data analysis, which the data analysis is surely qualitative natured.

### 6.2.1 Participating Institutions and Companies

Overall, 5 IT companies are involved in this research, and all of the 5 IT companies are located in Beijing. The distribution of participating institutions and companies is presented in Table 6-1.

| Location | Industry                          | Organisation Property                 | Number |
|----------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Beijing  | IT<br>(Information<br>Thchnology) | state owned technology<br>institution | 1      |
| Beijing  | IT<br>(Information<br>Thchnology) | joint venture company                 | 2      |
| Beijing  | IT<br>(Information<br>Thchnology) | prviate comapny                       | 2      |
| Total    |                                   |                                       | 5      |

**Table 6-1**Distribution of Participating Institutions and Companies

Source: author

Above Table 6-1 shows that the 5 investigated companies come from a same industry and a city. However, they differ in the company's property, which 1 company is state owned institution, 2 are joint venture companies and the rest 2 are Chinese private companies. As stated in early, the accessibility is the first consideration for the author to select the case organisation, these 5 companies responded positively to the author's request. The organisation property was not considered by the author, although the type of organisation does have a great influence in the application of management style, and it will be discussed in the limitation of this research.

### 6.2.2 Young Employees' Percentage and Average Age

The percentage and average age of young employees in each company is presented in Table 6-2, and the companies are alphabet identified in the Table.

|          | <b>Company</b>                     | <b>Percent of Young Employees</b> | <b>Young Employees' Average Age</b> |
|----------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>A</b> | state owned technology institution | > 60%                             | 28.7                                |
| <b>B</b> | joint venture company 1            | 80%                               | 25.3                                |
| <b>C</b> | joint venture computing 2          | > 50%                             | 25.6                                |
| <b>D</b> | private company 1                  | 100%                              | 24.4                                |
| <b>E</b> | private company 2                  | 0%                                | 27.5                                |

**Table 6-2 Percentage and Average Age of Young Employees**

Source: author

Table 6-2 outlines the percentage and average age of young employees in each company. In company D, all of the employees are youth, which they were born after 1980's. The percentage of young employees in company B is less than company D, which is about 80%. Company A has above 60% young employees, and company C has more than half young employees.

The young employees in company D are the youngest, which the average age of them is only 24.4 years old. The young employee average age of company B is 25.3 years old. The young employees in company A are the eldest in this research, which is 28.7 years averagely. The young employees' average age in company C is similar to company B,

which is 25.6 years old. The mean of young employees' average age in this research is 26 years old.

From Table 6-2, it is clear to see that company A, B, C and D are 'young' company, which the young employees is a major group in their employees' structure, and all of them are 26 years old on average. Chapter One has stated that the average age of employees in Beijing IT industry is 28.8 years old, the employees in this research averagely younger than this figure.

Although none of young employees work in company E currently, however, the company was full of young employees previously, and the average age of these former employees is 27.5 years old. In this sense, company E meets the criteria of the selection, and the previous chapter has highlighted the reason why company E has been selected from the methodological perspective.

### **6.3 Describing the Individual Participants**

This section outlines the demographic characteristic of the individual participants. As presented in Chapter Five, the demographic questions provide the information for the author to build up individual participant's profile. Same to the profile of case company, the presentation of individual participants in this section is quantitative natured. The rationale of the quantitative natured presentation in this section is to help the readers have a demographic picture of the participants, however, the quantitative natured presentation will not be used to in the data analysis, and the further analysis only focuses on the individual participants' narrations and stories, which is qualitative natured.

### 6.3.1 Demographic Characteristic of Individual Participants

Overall, 26 individuals has been interviewed in this research. The participant demographic characteristics are summarised in Table 6-3.

| No | Characteristic             | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|----|----------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| 1  | <b>Gender:</b>             |                        |            |
|    | Male                       | 16                     | 62%        |
|    | Female                     | 10                     | 38%        |
| 2  | <b>Age:</b>                |                        |            |
|    | < 30 years                 | 16                     | 62%        |
|    | 31-40 years                | 7                      | 27%        |
|    | > 40 years                 | 3                      | 11%        |
| 3  | <b>Education:</b>          |                        |            |
|    | College                    | 7                      | 27%        |
|    | Bachelor                   | 15                     | 58%        |
|    | Master                     | 4                      | 15%        |
| 4  | <b>Occupation:</b>         |                        |            |
|    | Department manager         | 10                     | 38%        |
|    | Private company owner      | 2                      | 8%         |
|    | Employees                  | 14                     | 54%        |
| 5  | <b>Working Experience:</b> |                        |            |
|    | < 5 years                  | 15                     | 58%        |
|    | 5-10years                  | 2                      | 8%         |
|    | >10years                   | 9                      | 34%        |

**Table 6-3 Demographic Characteristic of the Participants**

Source: author

Above Table 6-3 explains the demographic characteristic of the participants which are gender, age, education background, occupation and working experience. 16 of the participants are male (62%) whereas the rest 10 are female (38%). The age of participants is varies from 22 years old to 60 years old. 16 participants (62%) are younger than 30 years old, 3 participants (11%) are elder than 40 years, and the rest 7 (27%) participants are in their 30's-40's years. Most of the participants hold bachelor degree, which is 58% of participants, 27% are college degree and 15% are master

degree. Out of 26 participants, 10 of them are department managers, 2 are private company owners and the rest 14 are young employees. 58% of participants work less than five years, 8% of participants work less than ten years and the rest 34% of participant work more than 10 years.

Table 6-3 indicates that male participants are more than female participants in this research. Most of the participants (89%) are below 40 years old, and some participants (11%) are elder than 40 years old, who are believed in the department manager or private company owner positions. All of the participants are well educated, which 73% of them have bachelor or higher education, and the rest of participants (27%) complete their college course. In this research, the executive participants are light less than employee participants, which the ratio is 46% and 54%. Above half of participants (58%) have less 5 years working experience, this ration is light higher than the percentage of employee participants (54%), therefore, it is believed that some executive participants, except young employees, has less 5 years working experience. About one third of participants work more than 10 years and a handful of participants work more than 5 years and less than 10 years. The detailed participant profile is presented in Appendix

### ***6.3.2 Code of Individual Particiapnts***

In next analysis chapter, each particiapnt will be presented by a unique code. This section explians how the code has been made. In this research, each participant is offered an unique code number which includes company's identification, participants categories and a coherent number. As stated in last section, the companies are already placed with an alphabet identified (A,B,C,D & E). Obviously, there are three categories

for the participants: department managers, young employees and owner managers, which can be classed as DM, YE and OM. Individual are then numbered. For example, A-DM1 indicates the first department manager in company A; C-YE3 would be the third young employee in company C, and D-OM1 would be the owner manager in company D.

#### **6.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presents all information relating to the case companies and individual participants. These information provide an overall view of case companies and individual participants. Also, these information highlight the differences and similarities of case companies, and key characteristics of individual participants as well. Although the descriptive information through the display of quantitative natured, in this research no further inference have been made form these quantitative representativeness.

The next chapter will analyse the stories and narrations provided by the participants, and treat them as conceptual findings which will be contributed to the final conceptual discussion and creation of the proposed framework.



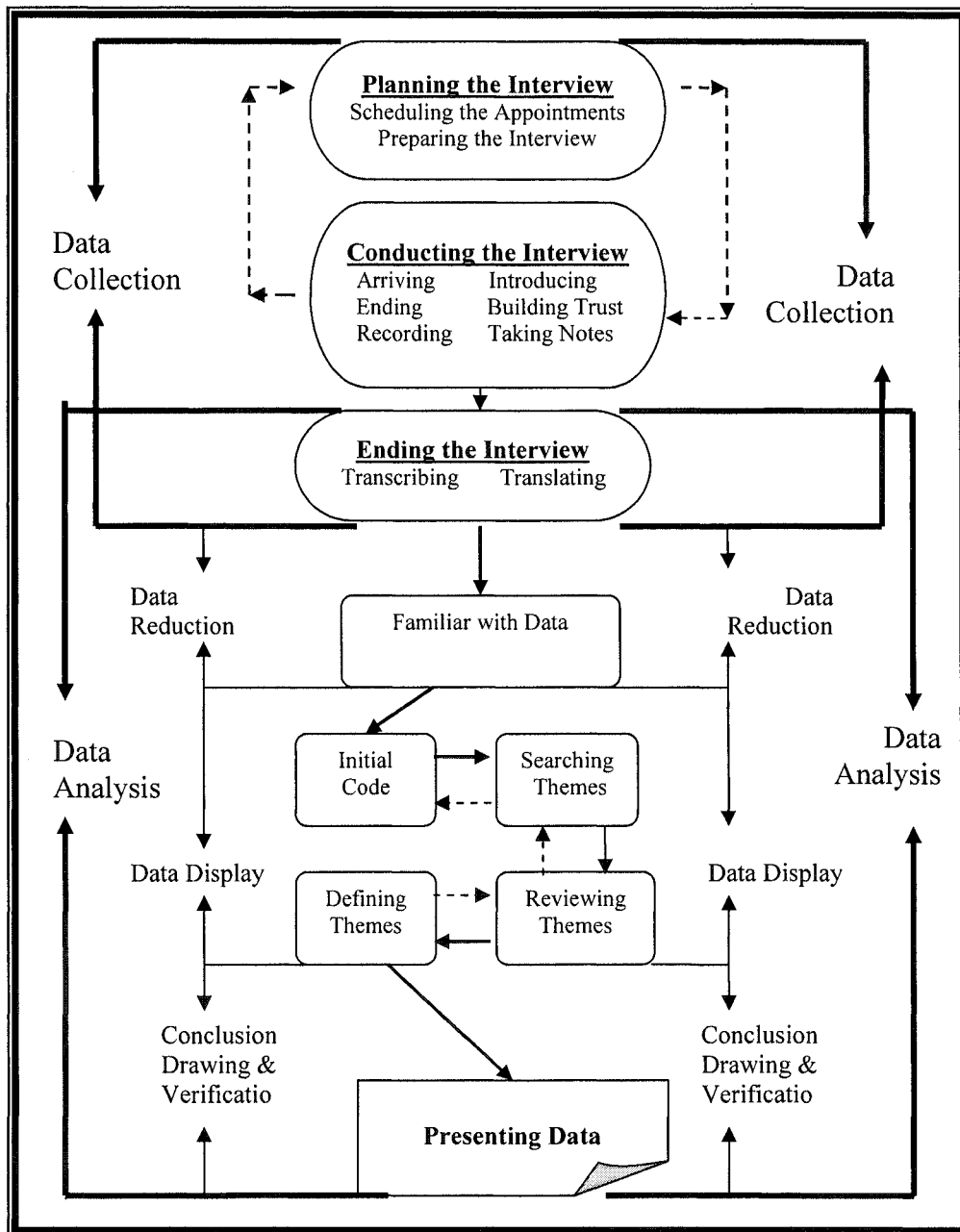
## **CHAPTER 7 DATA ANALYSIS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals with the findings collected through the interviews. The purpose of this chapter is to present the participants' perspectives for the research questions. The findings in this chapter are constituted by the stories and narrations the participants provided. The quotations used in the findings are translated, which convey the meanings from interviewee's original talking. All transcript quotations will be highlighted in italics and surrounded by single quotation mark. As stated in last chapter, each participant is indicated by a unique code number. The findings in this chapter will provide evidence for the data discussion and proposed framework which will be stated in the next chapter.

### **7.2 Themes of Data Analysis**

A detailed description of the data analysis process has been presented in preceding Chapter Five. This section explains how the analysis will be conducted to identify the themes by using an illustrative Figure 7-1. Moreover, this section presents five themes and an illustrative Table 7-1 to explain the link between the research question and themes.



**Figure 7-1 Process of Data Collection and Analysis**

Source: author

Figure 7-1 indicates that the data analysis in this research consists of three concurrent flows of activities: data reduction, data display and drawing a conclusion of the data. After reading and re-reading the twenty-six interview transcriptions, the author reduced some irrelevant data, which does not make sense to answer the research question. In the

data display, followed by the rest steps of thematic approach, the author generated the initial coding from the raw data, the initial coding is only the name and category of the phenomena which appeared in the data. Based on the initial coding, the author worked for the identification of the themes. Two criteria were applied in the identification of themes: whether the themes reflect the research question and whether the themes in accordance with the literature. As stated in Chapter One, the research question is: *what is an effective management style, in which management approaches is it constituted by?* As the result of answering the research question, this research aims to develop an effective management style and to detail the managerial approaches, in order to respond to the young Chinese employees' changed values and therefore to enhance the organisation management effectiveness. Four objectives have been set to achieve this aim. The four objectives consists of identifying young employees' values; picturing an expected manager in today's organisation; proposing managerial approaches and creating a management style based on the above recognition. Therefore, from the initial coding, the five final themes are emerged:

- Theme 1 *cultural values of young employees*
- Theme 2 *young employees' expectations of work*
- Theme 3 *the manager's role*
- Theme 4 *new management style*
- Theme 5 *approaches in the new management style*

After the identification, these five themes were reviewed and checked by the author. The author believed that above five themes echo to the research objectives, also, place themselves as the necessary elements to answer the research question. In addition, these themes correspond the structure of literature reviews, which the literature reviews also

cover the contents of young employees' value, manager role, Chinese and Western management style and its characteristics. The Table 7-1 explains how these five themes support this research to achieve its aim and objectives, and in turn to answer the research question.

| <b>Themes</b>   | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Function</b>   |
|---|--|---|
| Theme 1<br><i>cultural values of young employees</i>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List and summary the young employees' values which appeared in the data</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reach objective 1<br/><i>Understand young employees' values</i></li> <li>Assist to reach objective 2<br/><i>Further to identify an expected manager, based on young employees' values</i></li> <li>Assist to reach objective 3<br/><i>Further to identify effective managerial approaches, based on young employees' values</i></li> <li>Assist to reach objective 4<br/><i>Further to identify an effective management style, based on young employees' values</i></li> </ul> |
| Theme 2<br><i>young employees' expectations of work</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List and summary the young employees' expectations of work</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist to reach objective 3<br/><i>Further to identify effective managerial approaches, based on young employees' expectations</i></li> <li>Assist to reach objective 4<br/><i>Further to identify an effective management style, based on young employees' expectations</i></li> </ul>  |
| Theme 3<br><i>the manager's role</i>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List and summary the young employees' expectations of managers</li> <li>List and summary manager's self reflection for being a qualified manager</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reach objective 2<br/><i>Identify an expected manager, based on young employees' values and managers' experience</i></li> </ul>  |
| Theme 4<br><i>new management style</i>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present a new management style proposed by managers and young employees</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reach objective 4<br/><i>Identify an effective management style, based on young employees' values and managers' experience</i></li> </ul>  |
| Theme<br><i>approaches in the new management style</i>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List and summary the new managerial approaches proposed by managers and young employees</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reach objective 3<br/><i>Identify effective managerial approaches, based on young employees' values and managers' experience</i></li> </ul>  |

**Table 7-1 Summary of Themes**

Source: author

Above Table 7-1 reveals that the reviewing themes has been completed, hence, the later data analysis in this chapter and the data interpretation and discussion in next chapter will follow these five themes, which namely 'presenting data' in above Figure 7-1. It should be claimed that the data analysis in this research was not linear which the author straight moved to next step from the previous step. The data analysis in this research was a recursive and spiral one which the movement was forward and back as needed throughout the whole process.

### **7.2.1 Cultural Values of Young Employees**

The managers consistently comment this is an individualistic generation, even the managers in the same age group with the yougn employees, still gave the same comments to their peers. The following are managers' comments.

*'Individualism! They are too individualistic. In my generation, the principle is I have to be worthy for the company and the boss, but they don't. Much examples in my company to approve that: they consider self benefit, they leave company since they are unhappy, they reject hard working, et al, that's why I fired all 'post 80's', because they bring the trouble for the company, even the irreversible result'. (E-OM1)*

*'They are clever and having many idea, opinions, the only weakness is that they are too individualism. They think too much about themselves and less or even none for department and lack of long term orientation'. (B-DM4)*

*'Although my employees have the positive attitude at the time, I understand it is the very common characteristic for them. They consider too much self and personal gain and loss, the evidence is that they easily quiet the job as some personal reason, such as long distance, low salary and personal emotion, which this never happened in my generation'. (D-OM1)*

*'They only care about themselves, and never consider how their particular behavior would impact department and company. The most ridiculous thing I met is that one girl in my department does not come to work without any notice since she just broke the relationship with her boyfriend and she claimed her sad emotion could not maintain she continue to work.'* (B-DM1)

*'They are lack loyalty of company and duty. After gaining the knowledge or experience, they will leave the company to seek for better remuneration and job position. In my generation, I would appreciate my company, and contribute back to it. They are not. They do not realize they should HuiBao (reciprocity of knowledge they learned) us as they have been trained by us. They use what we taught to serve other company which could pay them much'.* (C-DM2)

*'They don't have group sense, since their interest and benefit can not be offended, for them, their personal interest and benefit is priority'.* (A-DM2)

*'They consider their salary too much. They will leave the company once the salary fails to catch up their expectation, even without an objective comparison about the whole industry and other colleagues in the same company. Conversely, the elder employees would stay in the company and try their best to achieve the expectation'.* (A-DM1)

*'The money is the driven for them to do anything. One of my employees asked extra salary since he came to other department took 2 days over for a sick staff. His reason was that he should receive the extra salary for the job not belongs to him. He did not realize that in those two days he left his work in my department. Extra money... ((Shake her head)), it is unreasonable'.* (C-DM3)

*'... I am afraid the sense of duty and responsibility never stay in their mind, which is the certain point differs to us and the elder generation. They only know money. In stance, one boy came to financial director and claimed that he should be paid for Sunday. I have forgotten what his argument was which sounds logically ((laughing)), but both financial director and me were very shock for his question. We never think about this issue in our life. I have to say that they are more clever than us, but in a dishonest practice'.* (C-DM1)

*'They emphasize own opinions, therefore, they try to present their opinions in each occasions, group discussion, department meeting, company decision making, even the whole company's meeting'. (B-DM2)*

*'They are not modest, they think they are right on anything and in every time, they don't want to listen to somebody. It is difficult for them to find one decision agreed by each one in the group discussion, since they insist own opinion and don't convince each other'. (B-DM3)*

However, like what A-DM1 mentioned: *'Individualism is not all for bad. We (managers) should view them objectively, since it appears advantaged side'*. C-DM3 pointed out that: *'these youths are very brave which they dear to express themselves, it is better than us'*. B-DM1 reinforced that *'they have a very new idea and thoughts which I could not reach when I was in their age. Most significantly, they don't hide their ideas and present them as much as they can. This differs to our generation and elder one, which bring the fresh to the organization'*. Although E-OM1 commented these young employees negatively, he still mentioned: *'they are bravely 'strive for self, while my generation and elder one have used been controlled and salved. Such character is the development of Chinese human right, and it may push our nations's moving'*.

In further, to detail their comments, the managers narrated some stories regarding the deatiled Confucianism and indiviudalism value, while the young employees also shared their opinion about these values. Their narrations reveal the influence of these value to young generation employees.

### 7.2.1.1 Sense of Self

The strong impression B-DM4 received from his young employees is that: *'they always start as 'I' when they want to say something, they never say 'our company or our department'*. Similarly, B-DM2 illustrated: *'...it is unquestioned that each individual is belonging to the unit he/she work for, and interacted with other memebers within the work unit. But, I am afraied they (young gengeration employee) do not think so'*. C-DM2 shared his perception: *'Each one in the department has relationship with others, in this sense, I am not an individual, I am the one element of the net'*.

However, the young employees in this research are found be independent of the work unit and emphasized the concept of self. C-YE5 talked about his understanding of work place: *'hhh... it is just a place where I earn the money. Yes, there is relationship between us when I am working here, but I am still myself...'*. B-YE4 argued: *'Well, I don't agree I belong to company. The reason they become my manager or colleagues is this job, without it, we are strangers for each other'*. B-YE1's statement is very direct: *'I agree the Western notion which I am myself, belong to any part'*.

### 7.2.1.2 Employer-employee Relationship

Loyal employer-employee relationship is one basic virtue in Chinese traditional Confucian value, influenced by the loyal employer-employee relationship, Chinese employees serve the company for their lifetime, and not leave the company even it does not operate well.

B-DM1 pointed out that his generation strongly believe *'Cong Yi Er Zhong'* (One employer through the end of life). C-DM2 described that the principle for their



generation was *'share weal or woe together with the company'* which they never left the company and tried to work hard to support the company in the dark time. Also they did not waver in their loyalties when they faced to some better payments and positions from other companies. A-DM1, who spend his whole career life in comapny A depicted:

*'Our generation had deep affection to the company, because the company gave us a rice bowl and trained us, otherwise, the knowledge we learned in the university won't be practiced, and most significantly, we could not feed ourselves and families. Driven by this affection, the only action we could take is to payback the company through our hard work. Leaving in the difficult time or catching benefit is unethical, which we never thought about'.*

Although some middle aged managers have shifted their jobs, the common reasons are the previous organizations was restructured , and they emphasized their appreciation to the company and expressed that they won't leave the company just as self development and benefit. Like what D-OM1 told the author:

*'(when he was an employee) I first consider the company's development and further, the company is a tree, and I am only a branch, which my personal development and benefit is dependent on the company. It is shame if I leave the company just for money or welfare, especially when the company in the time of depression'.*

However, two managers in the same age group with the young employees expressed their sentiments. C-DM3 made a direct statement: *the motivation for my work is to get better development and further. Why should I reject when they become to true?* B-DM3 explained that why she left last job:

*'The reason I left the last job was other new graduate instead of me to receive the promotion. I primary throught that I could be promoted since I had long working time and rich experience, but my former top manager appreciated the new graduate morn than me. I did not want to wait a next promotion with uncertain time, thus, I left the company and come here since they agreed to offer me the manger position'.*

The young employees expressed their opinions, which same to their young managers. C-YE4 straightly answered: *'if other company offers me better salary'* when the author asked him in which scenario he would leave the company. He explained:

*'The reason I chose this job is to gain the work experience, I lack for working experience in China since I studied and worked in Malaysia previously. Later, I will leave if other company offers me a good salary, unless it (current company) increases my salary, because now I am advantaged in both education and working experience. The good salary is the first factor I choose the company'*.

A-YE2 pointed out that salary is the only judgement for judging his value. Thus, he will leave the company if he can be offered a good pay from other company. He shared his understanding of the elder employees' loyalty:

*'For them (the elder employees) the job is iron rice bowl, they just want to hold the iron rice bowl as long as they can. For me, the job is a way to exemplify my value, and the only measure to judge my value is the money they paid...Once my ability is over the payment company provided, which the fish is bigger than the pond, it is inevitable I need jump to a bigger pond'*.

Except the salary, seeking a further development is the other factor to drive the youths to leave the company. B-YE2 told the author that he would leave the company when he felt bored. He supplied following statements when the author asked him to explain more: *'I will be bored when I feel my further development is blocked, in this condition, I will leave the company and seek for potential development'*. Although D-YE3 listed three elements leading her to leave the company, the core of her statement is still the personal development. She said:

*'Firstly, it is the time to move on when I am familiar to the work, secondly, ... I will lose my passion if I can not learn new knowledge and last, if other company provides a bigger and better space which enable me obtain greater achievement, I will leave the company without any consideration'*.

From his oversvation, one manager, B-DM2 denoted the young generation employees are still loyal, but '*conditional loyal*'. He explained: '*They will be loyal to the company, but the premise is that the company has a potential future and the manager really takes care and contributes to their improvement*'. One young employee, C-YE1, echoed to B-DM2's onion:

*'I will be loyal with some condition. At first, the organisation should have well system, clear orientation, and mature operation. Second, in particularly, the manager is one I trust who has ability, long term view, especially cares about my further development. To be honest, be loyal to one company is dangerous and blind. Chinese says 'the new lord, the new courtiers'. I can not put my future on one company, unless it cares and guarantees my development'.*

B-DM2 and C-YE1's statement revealed that the named '*conditional loyalty*' still connects to individual development, once the youths feel their developments are blocked, they will make the shift. In this sense, the '*conditional loyalty*' is just literal loyalty and differs to the Confucian based naturally.

It could not simply jump into the conclusion that the young employees lack of loyalty. From their narrations, the loyalty still remains in their minds. However, differ to the elders, they endow the new meaning to the loyalty, which is '*contract based loyalty*' or '*job based loyalty*'. They agree that the employee should be loyal, but for the contract, not for the company or the manager. Also, they mentioned that the good performance and protection for the company's information are the indication of loyalty.

A-YE1 asserts that his loyalty as:

*'I would like be loyal to my position. I am working in this company, it is my duty to protect its information, such as strategy, future development plan or our customer source. I can not tell other company these. It is my loyalty'.*

With his study and working experience in a Western country, B-YE1 constructed the meaning of loyalty based on Western assumption:

*'I accept Western concept of loyalty that I work for my contract ((speak English)). In other word, I do what stated in the contract, and I take the responsibilities which write down in the contract. The contract is one I should be loyal'.*

B-YE3 argued that:

*'...work means regulation and system. It means the manager follows the regulation to manage the employees, and the employee follows the regulation to complete the job. For me, the loyalty is following the regulation'.*

A-YE2 translated his loyalty as:

*'I will be loyal, but for my work not the company. It looks like the company pays me the salary, however, it is not true. My salary comes from my works, without my working, I will be paid nothing. In this sense, I only be loyal to my work, not the company. As my work is the object I should be loyal, my good performance is the best loyalty'.*

### **7.2.1.3 Respect Age/Authority**

C-DM2 described his young employees are *'very brave since they dare to challenge the authority'*. He firstly recalled:

*'I was humble for my manager when I was an employee, although I did not convince him sometimes. For example, I actually had a solution before I came to meet him, I still was very respectful by asking his question and listening to his comment'.*

He continually described:

*'These youths are different. They question their managers directly, no matter how big the figure is. For example, in our whole company meeting, a guy questioned our MD (Managing Director) in front all company who is above 50's old. This boy graduated from Tsinghua University (the top one university in China), he strongly believes his academic knowledge, therefore, he contradicted our MD as his decision did not concern about*

*technology. His department manager failed to break his talking ((laughing))'.*

According to *Wulun* (Five Cardinal Relations), the age and authority should be respected. Particularly, in the organisation, the seniors will receive the respecting from joiners, and the managers will receive the respecting from their subordinates. Like what C-DM2 described above, the youth's behaviour contradicts the traditional value, because in this story, the position of MD (Managing Director) is a sign of authority.

According to the Confucianism, both authority and age should be respected. Practically, today's young employees separate their respecting to elder and authority respectively. It appears that they are rooted by traditional Confucian value which they agree that the elder should be respected since it is the basic principle of China society.

C-YE1 thought '*respecting elder is a basic Chinese culture, a nature*', A-YE1 admitted '*it (respect elder) is one of virtues of China society, and should be conveyed generationally*'. B-YE2 emphasized '*respecting elder and caring younger that is what I have been taught in the nursing, it is unquestionable*'.

However, they are unwilling to power and authority, which they won't keep their questions or arguments as fearing the power and authority the manager had. B-YE1 denoted his understanding:

*'I understand that according to Chinese traditional value, manager is a sign for authority and power, especially in some China based company, the managers need their subordinators' devoir and unconditional following, for these, I do not care at all ((speak English)). As I claimed before that I work for my contract, I only respect my job, not a manager or his power. We (his manager and him) are same which both of us are working for the company. The only difference between us is that he should take*

*more responsibility and I take less, because he is in the manager's position. Well, I won't keep quiet caused by fearing his authority if I disagree with him. Authority for me is nothing. I will respect someone who enlighten and teach me, even he is a cleaner of my company. My respecting is only for someone's knowledge and insight, not position and power'.*

D-YE3 indicated that *'we should catch the core of the respecting when we talk about it, not a meaningless appearance'*. She explained:

*'...respecting? In most case, I think it listening, following and toadying. Is it a real respecting? You can not say I do not respect him (his manager) because I argue or question to him. In my opinion, my argument and question are more valuable than an utterly worthless following, because they (his question and argument) contribute to the job, which is a respecting'.*

Reflect to young employees' understanding of respecting, C-DM3, a young manager, commented it is *'true and sincere'*, and she regarded the youth's respecting as a *'gift'* and *'motivation'* for the manager. She shared her experience:

*'Following the traditions, it is difficult to identify other's respecting. Because people, just fear the power and authority generated by a particular position and therefore to show their respecting to a person who stands in the position. For me, I don't need such respecting. As I am one of the 'post 80's', I understand that we may respect a person who just plays game very well, but not power and authority, definitely not! In this sense, our respecting is true, sincere and not artificial. Therefore, for the manager, the youth's respecting is a gift which is an real acknowledgement for the manager's work, also it is a motivation to drive managers improve themselves to receive youths' respecting... We (the managers) should not complain they don't respect us, while we should think about how to win their respecting'.*

#### **7.2.1.4 Group Orientation**

D-YE3' answer was very impressive when she has been asked to talk about herself and group. She used a song's name to express her understanding of individual and group:

'Blue and White Porcela'<sup>1</sup>. The essence of her statement is that group and individual should support and dependent each other. She explained:

*'Me, my colleagues, are flower pattern, and my department is the empty china. The empty china will be prettier as our decoration, and we will achieve our value through the decoration. In this sense, we support each other'*.

D-YE3' statement express a new preception between individual and group, however, emphasizing individual's interest and opinions don't be accepted by Chinese traditions, and it be named selfish. This is exemplified in E-OM1's typical story:

*'Oh, they are very selfish. For example, last time I organized a 'hot pot'<sup>2</sup> for the company's social dinner. Some of them claimed that they hated 'hot pot' since it was not good for their health, and stoutly require me brought them to go to a restaurant where they preferred, otherwise, they won't go with us. Oh ((sigh)), if this case happened in the time when I was an employee, I would follow the company to go, I won't complain and let the company change the decision just for my tiny requirement'*.

With the comparison with own generation, A-DM2 gave the other story to indicate how young employees prioritized their interest over the group:

*'We (his generation) definitely would attend the company's social event although it took our private time, since we believed it was collective activity, and would be regret for the absent. Today, they (young employees) treat company's social events disassociate to them, which they only come when they are interested'*.

The two young employees, C-YE5 and D-YE1 conveyed themselves, which reflected to above two managers. C-YE5 expressed his sentiment straightly: *'((Thinking a while)) Honestly (0.3), group does not make sense to me, I only care about myself, and want to be existed by my way'*. He continued when the author asked him to talk about more *'care about myself'*:

*'With the aim of building up a good network, my department always organize some social events with other department of our partner company. They go out for dinner, Karaoke and playing*

*badminton. I EXTREMELY HATE that, absolutely. I always find an excuse to escape, because I am not interested about it at all'.*

Further, he gave the following statement when the author was interested the reason of his behavior:

*'I just concern about my interest and feeling. Personal interest and feeling is at first place, and the group's comes secondly. I do not want do some change for the company, or manager, or make some beauty words for your interview. No, I concern about my felling at any time'.*

D-YE1 also admitted that whether she attended the group's social activities has been driven by her interest: *'It depends on my emotion. I will come if the event is my cup of coffee, otherwise, I can't find a reason why I follow them to go someplace or do something where I disinterested'.*

#### **7.2.1.5 Guanxi (Interpersoanl Relationship) to the Manager**

*Guanxi* refers to interpersonal relaitonship, and it has been pervasived in the each aspect of Chinese life, however, the youth presented that they concern about the performance rather than the interpersonal relationship. B-YE4 noted: *'...I don't think Guanxi can help me, my work and performance survive me in the company, not Guanxi'.* Similarly, B-YE2 conveyed same opinion that *Guanxi* is useless, while work performance is essence. He mentioned:

*'Guanxi is useless. For example, if company will reward one employee, our performance must be lised before the final selection, and final winner must be the best one, I think the people will complain if the winner just has good Guanxi with the manager and with worse performance. Similarly, Guanxi won't save someone who makes big mistake, he/she still need to be punished'.*



B-YE1 expressed that he would like spend his energy to improve his work rather than building *Guanxi* with his manager. The reason he gave: *'I look down those people who are incompetent and only sever to relationship. My ability and knowledge is visible and actual is like a passport ensuing me to go anywhere'*.

For the young employees' idea, the managers expressed their appreciations. Although A-DM1 did not directly comment the elder employees, he emphasized that: *'...the young employees are more artless and simple. Compare to the elder employees, they are more performance focused, not the interpersonal relationship'*. C-DM1 also felt that *Guanxi* is not acceptable by his young subordinates and in C-DM1's opinion that it is the great improvement. He told the author:

*'For example, if some promotion chance is rising, they will come to see me and list their performances. I found that they only mention the performance, not other topics. In my generation, the people may talk about other unrelated issues which intent to increase the possibility to get the chance. I also found that they convince and accept the performance based result. Personally, I think it is a great improvement compare to my generation, which lead the promotion process is more explicit, fair and avoid implicit factors'*.

#### **7.2.1.6 Mianzi (Face)**

*Face (Mianzi)* is the most important concept in Chinese society, which in practically, giving face to the manager embodies as obeying the manager's order, avoid making question and negative comments, if the disagree has to be lodged, it should be given in a private way. The youths argue that the manager's face should be the performance of department. In this sense, the questions from employee functionally help the manager to receive the face.

B-YE3 put a rhetorical question: *'why should I give a face to him?'* She continually asserted that:

*'Isn't his face more important than the company's development? Actually, his brilliant face is the department's excellent performance. My argument only contributes to the department which offers him a brilliant face in the later, not lose his face'.*

B-YE4 illustrated that giving manager's face should *'depends on the situation'*. She explained that:

*'When we have a meeting with other company, we should maintain our manager's reputation and image, since he does not only present himself, but also our department or company. It is our duty to maintain it. However, within the department, especially when we talk about the work, face is not necessary. What's the meaning for the discussion if everyone hide own truth opinion and voice as concerning about manager's face'.*

The young employees also argue that giving face to manager is not only the employee's obligation, which they expect receiving a face from the manager as well. B-YE2 talked about his understanding of *'face'*:

*'We should respect others and consider other's personal feelings when we say something, which is a basic moral character. In this sense, the face should not only give to the manager, but everyone, colleagues, the business partners, and even the competitors, especially, our employees. We also should receive a face from the managers'.*

The concept of *'face'* still remains the young employee who come from stated owned and private company. A-YE2, who comes from a state owned company, showed that: *'I would give the face to my manager; his reputation is more important than everything, at lease mine'*. He mentioned:

*'My company is a state-owned which differs to joint venture, they (the joint venture) might ignore this, I have to concern about this because the traditional value still has much influence for state owned company. Thus, I won't argue to him in front people'.*

However, A-YE2 emphasized that '*...giving face does not mean I keep my comment and voice. I will let him (his manager) know my disagreement when he looks in a happy emotion, and with the consult manner and definitely be private*'. Similarly, D-YE2, who comes from a private company, pointed out his opinion that he would consider giving a face to the manger:

*'...I don't argue to him in front people, even when his criticism is not right at all. I know my argument hurts his status, I have to consider his face.*

At the same time, he also expected a face from his manager, and regarded it as the manager's managing skill. He paid a tribute to his boss:

*'My boss is very good, which he rarely criticize us in the public place, and tries to not too strictly if he has to. He always calls me into his office and points out my weakness privately. I appreciate it very much as he also considers my face. I heard some bosses only require the face from the employees, and ignore their feelings, which censures staffs in front the company. It is too bad. Actually, we also need a face and reputation, I don't think it is only a simple issue of face, it is the manager's managing skill and professional ethics'.*

#### **7.2.1.7 Value Driven Behaviour**

The managers recalled that when they were the employees, they had the consideration before their action, which ensured their behaviour in accordance with the normal standard and in conformance with the groups. A-DM2, who comes from a state owned company illustrated:

*'For example, the Employee Union offer some film tickets to each department in my company. When I was an employee, I never required the ticket initiatives although I desired to watch the movie sometimes. We would give the priority to the elder colleagues, it was the basic and ethical standard. Well, at the time, they (the young employees) don't care the elder colleagues and directly make the requirement when they desire to. ...not only for*

*ticket, for everything, you can see that their behaviour is only lead by their value'.*

The managers also stated that the duty and responsibility does not occupy in their employee life, but also remain in the lifetime. The distinct between them and their young subordinates is that the personal value and belief take a higher priority in the young employes' behaviour. The followings two impressive sorties provided by the managers.

E-OM1 commented his young subordinates: *'Their personal value drive their behaviour, even forward to a wrong direction and against to the normal standard'*. To make his statement more persuasively, he offered one story about one of his young employees.

*'It is unbelievable that one young girl shouted to me in front of the entire of the company, because I criticized her that she has been late for whole week. She could explain the reason to me calmly. But she took a violated action with the hostile attitude. These young employees look like a firecracker which it immediately blows up when it is be touched'.*

E-OM1 took the action back to this young girl which he fired her at end of the month. He explained that: *'It is no doubt that this girl would be fired without any consideration, otherwise I can not manage others in the future as she present a very bad example'*.

The other manager, B-DM4 was still in the emotion when he repeated his story, since one of his young subordinate's value-based behaviour brought the trouble to him and incriminated him be blamed by the top manager. He narrated:

*'There are many examples...I gave you one lively example. One customer ordered the products at half to six, and our official off time is six clock. I sent a boy deliver the products to the customer. He directly blamed the customer's late order when he arrived in. The customer was very angry and complained that at next day. We were very shock about this young guy's behaviour as customer is*

*our God, which support us be survived in a high competitive market. None of us dare to offend the customer, whilst, we have to lasso our customers by all kinds strategies. This young boy debated that 'He (the customer) engrosses my rest time, because it is after six clock when I arrive in him company. I have to cancel my plan of meeting with my friend as his later order' ((Sight and shake head)). Of course, I have been blamed by the top manager. It is not only the characteristic of him, but also is the common characteristic of these youths which their behaviour are driven by their value, and lack of duty'.*

### **7.2.2 Young Employees' Expectations of Work**

The youths' value also form their expectation to the deaired work. In short, five categories emerged from their narratives: happy work; reasonable work load; flexible working time; individual way of working and the opinion be recognized.

#### **7.2.2.1 Happy Work**

A 'happy' work is desired by the youths. B-YE3 said: *'The meaning of life is happy and enjoy. Work, of course, is one part of my life, thus, I won't accept an unhappy work'*. C-YE4 confirmed: *happiness is the basic factor of choosing a job, why should I come to work if I am unhappy?' B-YE4 emphasized the importance of happiness, because 'happiness is the source of hard working and good performance'. She noted that: without happiness, how can I performance effectively? Nobody wants to deal an unhappy matter'.*

A-YE1 claimed that the happiness was a motivation for his works:

*'...the happiness is motivation for working, since it strongly impacts my emotion and as a result to affect my effectiveness. I won't follow the elders which they come to work everyday although they are in the bad emotions. I won't continue this job when I am unhappy'.*

The other two young employees, C-YE3 and B-YE2 explained their perceptions of 'happiness'. C-YE3 gave an example, Google Corporation, to describe a happy work in her ambition:

*'Google Corporation is a great organization, it provides an excellent environment to its staffs, like free food, sport center, even the employee is allowed to bring their pets to the company. That is a job I wanted, because it is a happy work'.*

B-YE2 described his expected work environment:

*'I hope a designed office, for example, our office can be designed as a forest, and each table is a mushroom... If it is impossible, at least, I hope I can decorate my table which I could display some model of sports car I collected, therefore, I can watch or play them when I am tired for my works. I think I will be happy if I work in such company'.*

For the young employees' 'happiness' notion, managers expressed their disunderstandings, which they think today's young employees are lazy, enjoyable and not working hard. C-DM2 compared:

*'My generation only knew hard working without any enjoyment and entertainment. Today, they are more enjoyable. The common word they used is 'depressed', and the reason for them be depressed is less holiday or much works. For my generation, we only felt 'depressed' for less job. Once, I have worked for 3 days and 2 nights continually when I just started my job, I was not sad for that, in contra, working, dedication and achievement made me happy'.*

D-OM1 emphasized that *'although my staffs don't claim a happy work from me and appear a hard working attitude, I have to say that is the result of my strong order'*. He recalled:

*'I only thought about how to finish the job effectively when I was working. As a technological engineer (his previous job), once I have corrected and test the programme for one customer until middle night in their company without dinner. At that time, the only idea I had was that I must complete this programme; otherwise, they won't buy my company's produce. I did not think*

*about such work load effected my life... Happiness? We were taught working is happiness, they (young employees) just can not endure hard work and lazy. They are weak than us in this aspect’.*

A-DM1 did not understand why these youths claim happiness when they are working.

He asked: *‘Working itself is happy. They are happied as they have jobs, what do they require else?’*

Despite B-DM3 is also one of the yung generation, she also questioned the happiness for her peers:

*‘...I am afraid the happiness they (the young employees) mentioned is following their inclination instead of hard working. I don’t think they can endure any hard work, they may leave the job of they think it is too hard’.*

#### **7.2.2.2 Reasonable Workload**

The reasonable work load is an expectation for young employees. B-YE3 made a clear position that he won’t accept overtime work, although she will be paid, because she is *‘unhappy for occupied private time’*. A-YE1 answered: *‘The time from 9:00 to 5:00 belongs to company, and after 5:00 belongs to me. I don’t want any working disturb me’*. B-YE4 narrated:

*‘Oh, it really makes me unhappy when I need to do some overtime work. I don’t care the payment, I just want to go back and enjoy my life. It is lucky that overtime work in my company is alternative. Thus, I never do the overtime work, since I need my private life’*

A-YE2 conformed what B-YE3 stated:

*‘Oh, I HATE an obligatory overtime working, which it should be alternative. For example, I had made a visiting plan in last May Golden Week<sup>3</sup>. Suddenly, the holiday has been reduced to 2 days since my company received an urgent project. Oh, this made my mood was gloomy. The manager should ask the elder colleague come since they want to get much payment, while I only want my*

*holiday and my life. I do not care the extra payment as well as the 10 RMB fine for my late, at least I get more sleeping in the morning’.*

Practically, some young employee participants accept the overtime work, however, the motivation is their managers. C-DM4 mentioned that overtime work is not a problem in her company, her point has been approved by her young employees. However, they also told the author that it does not remote from their intentions. C-YE3, a young girl works in C-DM4’s company, said: ‘...well, yes, I do overtime work sometimes, because our manager does as well. It is not good I leave earlier every time. But, I don’t want to if I have a choice, I hope I can balance my life and working’.

D-YE3 who comes from a private company admitted C-YE3’s opinion:

*‘Our boss always stays in the company and continues his work after 6:00 (the legal time for finish work), thus, sometimes, I will stay longer if just a little work left, because he (her boss) is here. It is fair that he takes overlaod working because it is his company. For me, I do not want any overwork and wish to go back to do some thing I am interested’.*

### **7.2.2.3 Flexible Working Time**

The youths have other wish about working time, which they desire flexible working time. The outcome of flexible working time B-YE2 posed is ‘*increasing effectiveness*’.

Similarly, A-YE2 stated:

*‘The regular working time is not scientific enough, which reduces the effectiveness. For me, I use to get up late and start to work at 10:00am. I can concentrate my work from 10:00 to 2:00 or 3:00clock, then I need a rest. However, the working time in our company is from 9:00 to 5:00, which not fit to my physical clock. Therefore, I feel it is difficult to energy myself’.*

C-YE5 made his position: ‘

*‘I know the flexible working time is applied by some UK companies, I think it is good, and I prefer to it. I can arrange my*



*work and my time, which makes me feel that I am an owner of this job, not passively come to company and back to home’.*

C-YE1 explained why she desires a flexible working time:

*‘Actually, my emotion and condition affect the result of my work. I can’t ensure my emotion, mood and healthy in accordance with the company’s working time. Sometimes, I am in the bad emotion and moody when I am working, thus I can’t present a good performance. In contract, I will work in my best time if I have right to choose working time, consequently, it benefits to the company’.*

#### **7.2.2.4 Individual Way of Working**

With the assumption of being a manager, these youths expressed that they would give more space and freedom to their subordinates. In short, the space and freedom has been concluded by these youth as completing the work by own method, which can be understood as their expectations for the work. They explained the reason why they want to work in own way, and highlighted the possible effectiveness.

B-YE3 noted:

*‘If I were a manager, I will give my employees enough freedom which they can decide how they finish the job, as long as they can finish the job. It is unreasonable if each one follows one regulation or one produce, because each one has own characteristic and strength, which consequently lead different path to achieve the goal, of course, the accounting job is exclusive. It is good for increasing effectiveness if we were allowed to finish our jobs by our ways, because we know what is suitable for ourselves’.*

B-YE4 gave an example to illustrate the effectiveness for employees completing the job by their ways:

*‘For example, they tough me documenting when I started the job, later, I found it was slow and with some mistakes. Then, I abandoned their method and instead of mine. Now, the speed is quicker than previous and with 100% accuracy. From my case, I suggest the managers do not forcibly require us to follow his or some existed method, because those methods fit to them or other*

*colleagues, not me, and the person who finishes the job is me, not others'.*

D-YE2 expressed his expectation;

*'I hope he (his manager) just pay attention to my result, not the process. It means I can decide how I complete this task, or in which path I achieve the goal. I do not think one-regulation approach is scientific and reasonable for completing a job. Because the regulations they made is very general and ignore the specific of the individual. In a certain way, the condition for the individual following a general based regulation is that the individual needs to reduce or give up own specific, which consequently affect the effectiveness'*

For young employees' expectations, the managers gave their respondents. Those managers who have young employees indicated that with the consideration of company's benefit, they have practically opened their hands and gave the young employees more space to conduct their works as much as possible. They shared different experiences. D-OM1 described:

*'I try to not be a spoon-feed boss. I only give them a direction, then I leave them to complete the job by themselves. They can come to ask me if they think it is need, or they can ignore me and do what they want to do. I keep watching and giving them a few hints. Of course, I control the whole performance, and I would like stop and correct them if they are in a wrong direction. I agree it is a good practice for improving their skills. I always tell them that they not only are expected to find a problem, but also expected to find a solution. I understand that in today's environment, problem solving is the most important skill for either a company or an individual'.*

A-DM1 narrated:

*'Teach a man fish and he will eat for the rest of his life. The final goal for us is not only teaching them to complete a particular job, but also need help them to master some skills, and most importantly will be applied in the later and other cases. Thus, we give them the space as much as we can to practice them'.*

He introduced his approach: *'I will allocate an experienced and senior employee to assist them, the senior one just provides some necessary assistance when they need and reminds them when they are lost. They have enough authority to decide how to complete the tasks in an legal scale'*.

#### **7.2.2.5 Opinions be Recognized**

The young employees wish their manager listen to them when they offer an idea, and their idea could be recognized. For them, the more important is that their voice have been listened, not whether the opinions are accepted or not. The manager's attitude for dealing their opinions has great influence on their emotions, and in turn to affect their further attitudes. The youths have both happy and unhappy experience as shown as followings.

A-YE2 praised his manager *'very great'*. This is exemplified in his story as following:

*'Last time, I had a new idea for a problem which has a regulation solution. I understand that from manager's perspective, he expects the job be completed on time. It is not doubt that my new idea takes risk, which my department will lose the time or waste source, if it is fail. My manager behaved EXCELLENT in this case. He did not reject my new idea directly, and arranges two experienced colleagues helped me to do a pilot study for my new idea. He gave me a deadline to present my pilot study result, as an expert, he could estimate the result from my pilot study. He would accept my idea if the result appeared positively, otherwise, we would go back to repeat the existed regulation'*.

A-YE2 summarized emotionally:

*'He is great, excellent! At first, he protects the company's benefit. In the other hand, he does not kill my idea and gives me a chance to prove myself in a reasonable manner. In most time, the sense of work is that people repeat a certain process daily, I am excited I can create a new path, more significantly, my thought is recognised and listened by my manager, and even I have a chance to turn my idea into the ture. I appreciate him very much, at that time, the*

*result is not important for me at all, his belief and assistance is a treasure, more valuable than the result’.*

When the author asked his feeling if the thing happened in opposite way, he answered:

*‘I will be frustrated. In my opinion, the manager should appreciate an enthusiasm and cerebrated employee. Ignoring hurts the employee, and leads the employee become lazy for the work. For me, I won’t offer any idea and lose my passion to the work if I have been rejected for two times. I just mechanically repeat the work, until I find a better company since I do not have any motivation in this company’.*

Unlike A-YE2, C-YE3 had a ‘disappointed’ experience:

*‘I have proposed some suggestions, but they never has been considered. I have to do much number typing everyday, I think the repeating typing wastes time. I suggest my manager that I can write down a program, which saves time and increases effectiveness. My manager does not agree because he thinks the programme will lead mistake if it is not perfect enough. He adheres to his opinion that asks me to type in manually everyday. He even does not want to have a try and reject my idea’*

Although differ to A-YE2’s experience, C-YE3 shared the same sentiment: *‘I won’t post a suggestion any more. No matter what I suggest, he never listens to. Why do I post something again? It wastes my time’.*

B-YE2 also had an unexpected experience, which may effects his management style in the further:

*‘I have joined a project once. We need display different products in this project. I designed a displaying board as I have learned that from my Master course in UK. I spent my private time to collect data, draw a sketch and do some research which lasted two weeks. However, my manager only answer me one sentence when I handed in my board: ‘you do not need consider about this. I will ask our foreign partner do that if it is necessary’. I will remember his answer forever. I knew his behind meaning: your work is useless. I do not want to use. I do not believe your ability, but believe foreign partner’s’.*

He claimed: *'It is not simply my two weeks time has been rejected, it is my knowledge, my VALUE and HEART. I warned myself that once I became a manager, never repeat his behaviour, and listen to my staffs and give them a try'*.

For those youths' new idea, the managers explained their views. A-DM2 emphasized that *'a successful creation is stemmed from long and rich work experience, in this sense, I don't believe them have ability to promote our process, as they less work experience and only work a short time'*. B-DM2's story confirmed what A-DM2 concluded:

*'One boy came to see me and excitedly introduced his idea which I have through two years ago. The reason for this idea aborted is it has some unsolvable internal and external barriers. As an employee, he could not see these barriers, and I could not tell him detailed information as well. I knew he was disappointed for his idea not been accepted, but I can not help'*.

Although the managers stated the reason why sometimes the young staffs' ideas not be accepted, they emphasized that the manager primarily have to encourage their motivation and protect their enthusiasm. Like C-DM2 said: *'...it is a very good thing. It is an indication for their growth. We should encourage them as much as we can. At same time, we also need indicate the limitation of their idea to help them consider a problem comprehensively, which is a manager's role'*.

Above stories indicate that the manager's attention and recognition for young employees' initiative opinion direct impact the employees' attitude, and the manager's further supporting has more greater influence.

### 7.2.3 *The Manager's Role*

As demonstrated above, the Chinese young employees are more individualism and less Chinese traditions, which is believed dramatically shape their expectation of the managers and the relationship between them. From their experiences, the manager realized that successfully managing young employees is not easy, it requires the manager be qualified. B-DM4 felt that:

*'the managing will be easier if the manager is the one they (young employees) adored. They would like listen to the manager if they treat him as a hero or superman, which requires the manager is expert in the work, excellent leading ability and having charming trait'.*

A-DM2 commented:

*'...this is a potential generation, what they touched when they were in the teenage age are more modern than us, they are good at in English, computing, also their insight and view are update. As a result, it requires the managers must improve self, in order to be qualified'.*

The young manager, C-DM3 talked about her subordinates and her personal expectation:

*'...they (young employees) have a high expectation for the manager, they hope the manager is knowledgeable, competent and affable. Although, I am a department manager, it is also my expectation for the top manager, which he should have ability to be admired by me'.*

In the other side, the youths' statements approve the managers' self recognition is right.

A-YE2 emphasized: *'the manager play an important role for me, which he/she enlightens me not doing a job, even being a human. Therefore, I want be managed by an excellent manager, at least, the one I admired'.*

It appears that the young employees desire an admired manager. Thus, what type manager will be admired? The young employees indicated their expectations. At first,

the manager will be skilled and knowledgeable in the work. B-YE3 defined the expected manager: *'... the manager should be competent. I think it is the basic requirement for the manager. Without the skill and knowledge, no matter how friend he is, how nice his trait is, he is not a good manger.* B-YE4 emphasized: *'I expect a knowledgeable manager, while I can not accept an empty mind manager. I do not desire my manager is being expert in each aspect, at least he will be expert in one aspect which link to our work...'* A-YE2 explained why he wishes a knowledgeable manager:

*'as the manager, one of his jobs is making some order and decision, which require he has knowledge about out work, and the decision comes with the consideration of technological factor. Otherwise, his poor knowledge led him to make an unfeasible decision and bring the difficulties to the implement'*.

Alos, the young employees conveyed that they need an *'honest'* and *'nice characteristic'* manager. A-YE1 wished an *'honest manager'*, especially when the manager makes a report to top manager. He told the author:

*'I think my manager should be an example for other managers because he is honest when he reports our performance to his manager. Some managers would like use finesse for the employees which having a sweet tongue in front us and incriminate us in front the top manager. My manager would like take all the responsibilities if my department don't complete a task or has been questioned by the company. I admire him very much, he is a man'*.

D-YE1 also mentioned an *'honest manager'*, but her expectation is that the manager could honestly realize his promises, not only makes skin-deep commitment. She described:

*'My previous manager was not honest enough, he makes some promises when he wants we do something, after that, he his quiet about his promises. It is a craft that look like I promise a crying child he can get a candy if he stops, then I take the candy away when he stops. Do you think the child would believe me in next time? especially we are not a child. This is why I left this job'*.

To make their expectations of the manager more vividly, D-YE2 and B-YE2 mentioned two successful managers in current China as their idols. D-YE2 told the author:

*'I have to say my manager is ok, but not as excellent as I expected. In my opinion, YunMa<sup>4</sup> is the example for each manager, because he knows management, computing technology, he concerns about his company and employees, he has own life style and vivid characteristic, and he has very high IQ (Intelligence Quotient).'*

B-YE2 recommended *Chuanzhi Liu<sup>5</sup>* as the example of the manager he expected: *'each one knows him, he is the Godfather of Chinese IT industry. I read his biography, I admire him. He is good at managing, he is expert of IT, and he also enjoys his life'*.

Extend the youths' expectation, the managers supplied one point: the influence of manager's self example for the managing. C-DM4, a HR manager added *'expect the manager's ability and skill, the most important point is that we should be self-disciplined, which present a good example to the young employees'*. She exemplified that: *'*

*'True, the organisation culture is important for them, but the positive attitude is transferred by our managers and senior employees, and our behaviors exercise a great influence for them. For example, I understand it is difficult to require the young employs do overtime work, however it is not a problem in our company. I once picked up our customers in the Airport and sent them to hotel in the midnight for three times per week. Also, the other department managers leave their children and families in the weekend and come to work if we have some urgent tasks. We do what we should do, they (young employees) look at us and know what they should do in the same situation next time since they received an example from us. The influence of example is stronger than any word'*.

B-DM1 confirmed what Echo mentioned and gave one more story about his department:

*'It is impossible we ask them (young employees) to reach a stand which we can't. In the other word, I only make the criterion for them which I can reach. For example, my assistant needs go to a government agency to deal insurance business monthly, the*



*process is ordering a number first and then taking approximate 2 or 3 hours for waiting. Actually, it is fine if she arrives at the agency at 9:00 because it is the time for start working in the company, but it may wait until afternoon and the whole day only for dealing this business. Practically, she always arrives the agency at 7:00am and aims be served at 9:00, and then return the company in the afternoon to do other task. I never require her, because I understand it is not easy for a young girl, what she does just follow me. A few deals requires manager come personally, I always arrive the agency very early and return the company as early as I can, now, she is learning from me. Sometimes, we do not need require them, they will learn what we behave. Example is better then precept’.*

About the manager’s example, the young employees showed their reflections. C-YE4’s opinion confirmed what C-DM4 and B-DM1 stated:

*‘I dislike the manager who only makes the regulation for us, and he never follow the rules, The rule is not only for us, but also for everyone in the company. Although, he is a manager, he still is one part of the company, which means he should follow the regulation as well’.*

The meaning of the manager’s example also has been identified by the young employees. A-YE2 mentioned the significance of the example when he described what ‘a good manager’ should be:

*‘...the most importantly, he should present a good example fro us. We need an example or a direction when we are confused or lost. One of the manager’s roles is leading us in such difficult times, his personal behaviour is the most effective leading’.*

A-YE1’s answer provides an indication of the influencing of the manager’s example to the young employs. He answered ‘I will follow my manager and use his approach if I were a manager in the further’ when the author asked him to consider what he would do if he was a manager of the young employees.

Beyond the skills and personal example, the young employees wish their managers know '*managing skills*', and offered detail expectation for the managing skills. The detailed interpretation of '*managing skills*' will be present in the later of this chapter entitled '*Management Practice*'

#### 7.2.4 *New Management Style*

The managers agreed that the new management style is required to respond the youths' value. In summary, based on their own experiences, the managers shared the opinions which can be simply summarized as three '*Donts*': *don't continue previous 'father-son management'*; *don't discard Confucian value* but *don't fully apply Confucian value in today*'.

A-DM2 answered that such traditional '*father-son*' relationship has been disagreed by today's young employees: *'I had used what I received from my manager previously to them, however, I got stubborned. I want to say that what we used previously does not work for them, it only leads more conflict which put the management into a more difficult situation.'*

C-YE3, one of young employee, her answer could be the typical presentation for what the young employees look at traditional '*father-son management*'. She humorous answered: *'Oh, I have a father in my family, why do I need one more in the company?'* Although the manager appeared that give up the old management style, they emphasized the status of Confucian value in today's business and management. B-DM2 just came back from a '*heart trip*' before the interview, which he went to Confucian

Temple to pilgrimage. He emphasized that *'I respect the Confucian and the principles he created very much. The Confucian principles are treasure of our nation... I don't agree to give up Confucianism, even today is 21<sup>st</sup> century...as five thousand years ideology, Confucianism must has its strengths, and the life of five thousand years is the best rationalization'*

A-DM2 shared his understanding of Confucianism in today's management:

*'It is not wise if we abandon Confucian value. Our Chair Man Hu just represent 'Social Concept of Honour and Disgrace: Eight Dos and Don'ts' in 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, which rely on traditional Confucian value. Confucianism is not only for ruling a country but also for leading a company and managing the people'.*

C-DM1 used a real case happened in his company to indicate why traditions should be kept:

*'Previously, we implemented 360 degree in the performance appraisal. 360 degree is a very mature and effective appraisal tool in Western country, but it doesn't performance well in China, at least in my company, because there are too many differences between China and Western, culture, social background, legal system.... From this case, we should realize that simply copying Western management theory is unfeasible. In this sense, it means our traditional value should remain in the management; it needs some development to accord to today's external environment, but should not give up'.*

With the recognition of Confucian value in today's management, the managers also indicated that fully Confucian value based management is not acceptable. C-DM3, a young manager simply summarized: *'I don't have much sense about Confucian, I don't reject it as it is the important image for our country. But at least, we will have some new ideas, I mean suitable for today'*. With his reflection of his MBA study, C-DM2 mentioned: *'For the management, Confucian has its strength and weakness also. I*

*suggest our management should have fresh air. For example, Western management is more scientific and logical, it makes a system appearance of the management...It doesn't work if we fully follow Confucian'. B-DM2 stressed that: 'meger, only meger... some of Confucian value outdate, Western theories don't fully fit to us. So, we have to meger them and create a new one'.*

Although the managers in this research come from different type company, and mix genders and ages, the management style they recommended has the generality. Characteristically, the caring and benevolence should as the cornerstone of the management style, and most importantly, instead of strict controlling, respecting, guiding, advising and supporting play the major role in the management. Interestingly, most of the managers describe themselves as the elder brother/sister for their young employees.

B-DM1 gave a very impressive description for the proposed management style: *'I would like to say the work is like playing a game, we and them play together. We are their elder brothers and lead them to play'.*

The managers made their statements from operational and practical levels. B-DM2 directly answered:

*'...well, this is a lonely generation since they are the only child in the family, they do not have elder brother or sister. The parents could not take the elder brother or sister's role. In fact, the time they spend with us is more than family and parents. Hence, we (the managers) should act as their elder brother or sister, love them, care them, guide and help them'*

C-DM2 suggested:

*'I suggest the managers become a friend or elder brother with them, not a manager. Well, it might difficult for an elder manager, however, it is not principle, since I know some elder managers play the elder brother role very well. The essential point is the previous thought has no longer been suitable. They need guidance and advice, not centralized managing'.*

C-DM1 narrated emotionally:

*'I have nearly 12 years work experiences. Chinese say: wisdom come by suffering, experience must be bought. I want to share my success and failure to them, and wish they can learn a lesson from my experience, don't repeat the mistake I made. I treat them as my younger brother, which I hope they grow up without much pain'.*

B-DM3 pointed that

*'In most time, I take my role as their elder sister by teaching them and guiding them. One of my previous managers was terrible and treated us as his children, which he always blamed or even abused us, I hate that. Therefore, I would combine the role of friend, elder sister and manager together, and try to balance these three roles'.*

D-OM1, a private company owner, told the author he operated his company as a 'family', and he plays an 'elder brother' role in the 'family', not a 'father'. His 'elder brother' role received the expected feedback, which the 'young employees present a positive attitude in the work' which he is satisfied.

*'...I would make our company like a family, and I am the elder brother in this family. Thus, I treat them as my young brothers or sisters, I teach them specific skills, suggest a direction when they are confused or help them when they have either life or career problem, as long as they do not break company's principle'.*

He told a story to exemplify the feedback of his 'elder brother' role from his young subordinates:

*'They return me a very positive attitude. For example, it is difficult to get money from buyers, especially the opposing part is a private company as well. They would find all kinds of excuse to postpone*

*the payment, the usual excuse is that the accountant goes out for a meeting. In this case, my boys or girls will stay in the opposing part's company to wait for the accountant come back until 7 or 8 clock and then come back to my company and save the cheque in the coffer. The legal time for my company finished the work is 6 clock. I never require them to do this, what they do come from their hearts and they never ask the extra money for the waiting times. Do you think they will present same behaviour initiatively if I am a cold and hierarchical boss?'*

He also explained why he behave a 'elder brother': *'I have to... because they don't want to be lead by a big boss. Otherwise, they will present negative attitude, being lazy, not work hard, even leave the company, which is a deadly factor for private company'*.

### **7.2.5 Approaches in the New Management Style**

To deatil the proposed management style, the managers listed some elements which consitute to the new management style. It is also the perception of managerial skills mentioned by young employees and managers which presented above.

#### **7.2.5.1 Benevolence**

B-DM4 offered a very strong statement: *'our tradition should not discard. What is our tradition? Benevolence! China is a nation lays on benevolence and kindness, we can use the Western method, but it must combined with Eastern kindness'*.

B-DM2 agreed what Mark stated and specified the manager's kindness: *'I understand that the core of the managin is put ourself in their (yong employees) position, take care about them, caring is more effective than criticising'*. He exemplified :

*'for example, the living expense in Beijing is very high, as the fresh people, they may have some difficulties for living. We can not compete the state owned company which to provide good welfare for them, but we can try to use our social network to help them solve these problems. Beyond their life, we should consider their*

*improvement, ...believe me, they will appreciate what we do, and follow us'.*

As a HR manager, C-DM4 denoted that:

*'I agree the management should benevolence based, take care about them, because they are still young, ...care about their life, and further development, ...as the competition, the personal development is very important and they pay much attention to it, ...they will appreciate us if we care and think about their development'.*

A-DM1 confirmed that: *'they (young employees) may have less difficulties in their life, since people have good life quality now. I prefer move our benevolence to their career development...'* He illustrated:

*'it is unfair we just ask them work hard or criticize them leaving without any caring. I do recommend the company consider their future development and provide the chance to help them, such as helping them to continue higher education in part-time, or sent them to join the training. It also help our further development. since the people is the most important source, especially my company is typical technology based'.*

The young employees also expressed their wishes for managers caring about their further development. A-YE1 told: *'...well, they do not need consider my life, my parents and myself will do that. I hope they consider my development'.* D-YE3 answered: *'I never tell them what my father does, and whether I have a boyfriend or not. It is weird! But I do appreciate they ask my further development, and I would tell them each of my thoughts if they ask'.* D-YE1 shared her wish: *'soemtimes, my plan is not feasible since I do not have much work experience. I prefer my manager help me to make a developed plan, and most importantly, help me implement this plan, not only write down in the paper'.*

### 7.2.5.2 Supervision Style

Rooted by Chinese culture, the relationship between the managers and employees is high hierarchy. From the young employees' perspectives, they accept equal relationship, instead of the hierarchical one.

D-YE1 agreed that '*... the employee should be subordinated to the manager*', however, she hoped that '*the relationship should not played as 'cat and mouse', which the equality is the essential of the relationship and it infiltrate to the interaction between us*'.

The following stories provided by the young employees confirmed what D-YE1 mentioned, that the managers' daily behaviour is the pass for the young employees to experience and feel whether there is an equality or power distance between the managers and them.

B-YE1 experienced both foreign and Chinese managers. To present his feeling, he made a comparison of his foreign and Chinese managers about a simple behaviour:

*'I disliked one behaviour from my previous manager (Chinese manager) very much. He always called 'Lee, come here, I want to talk to you'. The point is that the person is him not me who intends to talk. He can come to my place. For him, calling out employee is the expression for the power and authority, but I am very busy at the time, I have to stop my work or break my mind to cater to his authorities. Later, I need more time to get my memory back. I really dislike that. Conversely, my current foreign manager always comes to my seat if he looks for me, although he has more authority than former one. You know, it gives me an impression that he (his current foreign manager) treats me as a person who is equal to him, and the previous manager just regards me as an object to indicate his powers and authorise'.*



The youths don't only getting the feeling from the manager's work related behavior, but also from the activities out the work. C-YE5 previously has worked in a British company in UK for one year, he recalled his experience and the manager:

*'I could not feel any hierarchy between us. He (his previous British manager) was learning Chinese when I worked in the company. In the free time, he would say: 'Ben, I just learned ...in last week. I was not good at speaking. Was my pronunciation right...?' He never putted himself as a manager, and I strongly felt we were equal. It is impossible in here. Also, he was a fan of Arsenal, we always talked about the matches and scold the football team members in the lunch time. One day ((laughing)), he was so excited and we argued each since I laught at. That would not hurt his status in my heart, instead of I would like follow him and try my best to complete the task he allocated to me, since I regard him as a friend. Why don't I present a good work to my friend or a manager whom I liked?'*

After a sigh, he continued:

*'Here, en, this is a big power distance. I never imagine he (his current Chinese manager) would do the same thing to me, such asking me about UK. No, I do not think so. It is too different to China. Chinese managers would like to show their status anytime and pose themselves in front of us'.*

B-YE4 illustrated her company's American partner:

*'It has been rewarded one of the 'Employee Welcomed' companies in last year. I know they have an annual meeting which the top manager sits in front of the meeting room and the employees fling the oranges at him ((laughing)). It is a good activity to build a harmonious and equal relationship between manager and employees. The manager should find some activity work for the relationship, none wants to follow a woebegone face manager and tired relationship'.*

From the managers' narrations, partiallyly they have made some efforts try to break their top status and build up an equal and free interpersonal relationship with the young subordinates. Based on their practical experience, some managers introduced their approaches as shown as followings.

B-DM2 promotes 'non-position calling' to his young employees, which he argues it is the basic action of build up equal relationship.

*'I ask them (young employees) call my name without my position, unless in a very formal business occasion. They even can give me a nick name after work. I don't want them put my position when they call me, which a big power distance is appeared'.*

Same as B-DM2, an 'post 80's' manager, B-DM3, takes the same action to her employees, which comes from her previous experience:

*'I feel uncomfortable if they call me 'Manager Pearl'. In fact, I never called my manager with her position previously which I just called her family name within the company. She told me when I came into the company that she preferred an informal calling. I felt it close to her and the interpersonal relationship between us was relax and loose. I understood the feeling when I was required to call somebody with his/her social position, thus, I continue this to my staffs'.*

However, it does not all managers accept 'non-position calling'. A-DM1, the eldest manager among the participants in this research, rejected this approach, because he is 'uncomfortable' if his young subordinates call his name:

*'I won't reply them if they call my name as I feel uncomfortable. That definitely is against to Chinese traditional culture. It is fine if they just call my name once or twice, but I don't answer them if that happens above three times. I am not a simple person pass by in the street, while I am their manager and I am elder. They, of course should respect me by calling me with my position or respectful address, not my name'.*

Similar to the C-YE5's previous British manager, C-DM1 agrees that the free chatting is effective for smooth the relationship between him and his young subordinates. During the free chatting, he changes his position as a 'listener' or 'student' which to learn some new aspect from the young employees:

*'I admit them either in working or an private life, they are knowledgeable in some aspect while I am blank. I do not know who the famous singer is, what the popular online game is, et al. I*

*am very interested to join their conversation in the lunch and listen to them. It is not bad to me since I update my information, the biggest advantage is shorting the distance and getting close to them. I found they accept a 'modern and not out-date' manager, and my interesting of their topic is an indication of modern'.*

C-YE2 echoed C-DM1' sentiment by sharing her happiness when she teaches her manager:

*'I had experience for breeding a dog. My manager sometimes asks me something about breeding in the lunch or after works, since he just brought a puppy. I am happy I have a chance to teach him ((smile)), but we separate work and privacy which we only talk about these in the lunch time or after working. I won't get some speciality in the work as my teaching. But, in my heart, he is more humanistic, more like a friend or neighbour, not a cold position symbol'.*

C-DM3 conforms that although her age is similar to her young employees, somehow a power distance still exists. Similar to C-DM1, she tries to close the young employees by some interested talking. Compare to other age managers, she believes that she has more advantage since she could *'easily find an interesting topic with them, cloth and beauty topic for girls, and game topic for boys'*. The outcome of *'free chatting'* she summarized is not only reducing the hierarchy, but also gaining employees characteristics which will be helpful in the further task allocating.

D-OM1 conveys that he pays attention to these out work interactions, because they *'enhance our (the managers) appetency and short the distance between us'*. He shared his experience:

*'As you know, they (the youths) have their special and generational languages which I won't use in my life. However, I found they laugh heartily when I copy their special language once. Thus, I use one or two their languages sometime purposely to smooth the atmosphere, which is effective'.*

### 7.2.5.3 Communication Style

The managers and young employees differ widely in the communication style. C-DM4 described her young employees were very 'lovely' and 'childish', because *'they could come to see me and express their angry or dissatisfaction for a manager by addressing the name. They never think about the art of conversation'*. In her eye, a *'mature person won't talk to people in this way, which we talk about something indirectly, and the people who listen to me will reach the real point behind my talking'*.

The *'strategic communication'* has been highlighted by the managers. B-DM2 introduced: *'I will make our conversation start at a free topic, then move to the core gradually'*. A-DM1 narrated: *'I rarely straightly go to the topic, especially when I want to point their weaknesses. Usually, I would like pick up a free topic and later talk the main concept'*.

However, the young employees don't favor this strategic communication and reject the indirect communication, they desire a direct communication since it simply conveys the information and without meaning guess.

A-YE2 described his manager as a *'lingual genius'*, because *'he always start his conversation from an interesting topic and tempts us to give the information he wants'*.

A-YE2 further sarcastically talked:

*'...maybe his communication style practices for me, since I learned saying after thinking and do not give any word to his mouth ((laughing)). One certain thing is that it is very tired talk to him, even more than work. Such indirect communication is more like an intelligen fighting and diplomatic negotiation, it is not comfortable at all'*.

B-YE3 asked: *'The goal of the communication is conveying message. If the people communicate to each other indirectly, how does the message be conveyed? And what's the meaning for the communication?'* She later supplied: *People even may have different understanding for an obvious figure as their perception; the indirect communication only makes the thing more complicated'.*

C-YE1 expressed her dissatisfaction to her HR director, and comment the indirect communication is *'unprofessional'*. She told a story to the author:

*'My female HR director would like ask my personal life in the beginning of each conversation, later I find that the motivation for her is not concerning about me, but is facilitating her further talking. It is too disingenuous. It is fine that she does not care about me, but not pretend care about me with her untruth idea. Her method makes me sick. I prefer a direct communication. She is a manager, none of work related topic she could not talk, which she definitely can put her topic on the table. She always says 'if...' or 'someone...', which waste time. I do not need any assumption. Why does not she say 'Grace, you...' instead of 'if' and 'someone'? Maybe, the elder people like an indirect talking, but I do not. Talking about work is very serious, which it should come from a formal and direct way, the prelude or indirection is not necessary, which I believe it is unprofessional'.*

A-YE1 shared his feeling about his manager's direct communication:

*'As I mentioned my manager was a solder previously, he still behave as a solder sometimes. Direct communication is one of his characters that is good, especially in the task allocating. Because I am clear about my role and duty. And I will tell him if some case I am incompetent, thus, he could make other arrangement which saves the time and ensures the quality of the completed task'.*

D-YE1 and B-YE1 proposed two particular ideas work for the communication if they were a manager in the further. Their ideas convey an informaiton that the public and explicit communication is welcoem by them. D-YE1 purposed *'talking coffee/tea time'* approach. She described:

*'If I were a manager, I will set half hour named 'talking coffee or tea time' daily. All people free to talk to anyone during this time, to colleagues, to other department people or to managers, for suggestions, discussion, arguments or even dissatisfaction...'*

Similar to D-YE1, B-YE1 wanted to build a *'public communicate channel'* in the company, which is *'each one is allow to say each issue related to the work, even you want to stop someone wear a Disney tie when he meets the customers'*.

#### **7.2.5.4 Decision Making Style**

Differ to the elder employees, the youths want to involve in the decision making. They agree that the decision finally will be made by the executive and managers, but they desire to present their opinion in the decision making.

C-YE4 made a clear statement that:

*'Each decision directly influences the company's development. As one part of the company, I have right to know each decision, the rationale why this decision has been made, not other one. Moreover, I must present my opinion for the decision which I disagreed. Maybe my opinion is not be appreciated by them, but I have to, it is my duty'*.

C-YE1's statement is similar to C-YE4's:

*'A decision does not only affect the company's development, but also mine. In this sense, the decision making has great impact for me. Thus, I hope a public decision making process, not done by some important peoples in their offices'*.

D-YE3 offered an explanation for why she wants to be involved in the decision making:

*'No mater what decision has been made, the basic point is that it will be implemented by us. Therefore, we need know the decision before it is being made and present our comments. It is funny we know nothing about this and just finally receive a new decision. Nobody wants to follow an unaccepted decision'*

As an owner of the private company, D-OM1 found that these youths want to be participated in the company's decision making. He illustrated that:

*'...they like give their comments or opinions for the company's new decision. Actually, they don't care whether their opinion have been adopted or not, they will be excited if I ask their comments before a decision making. Also, they won't be sad if the idea be rejected. They concern more about whether they are involved in the discussion and whether their voice be recognised'.*

B-DM2 has same experience:

*'They will come to see me and share their opinion for the decision either the company's or department's, they sometimes even claim that they have a better one ((laughing)). However, I never cut them down, since I think it is great. Compare to them, our elder employees are too quiet.'*

#### **7.2.5.5 Evaluation Style**

The managers admitted that in their generation, the evaluation was a job of their managers, which they never through about how the evaluation has been made. Today, the youths still agree that the making evaluation is the manager's task, but they make a claim for how the evaluation should be made. They expect that the evaluation only relays on their performance, not manager's personal feeling and favour.

B-YE4 indicated that if she was a manager, she would give the *'fair evaluation and appraisal to her employees'*, which she *'separate her personal favour and employees' performance'*. She explained:

*'Since the manager is human, it is not strange he/she like or dislike someone for some reasons. But the manager should forget the personal feeling and only focus on the employees' performance when the evaluation is made. It means that someone deserve to receive a good comment whom be disliked by the manager but with excellent performance'.*

Similarly, B-YE1 hoped *'his manager's personal impression won't involve in the appraisal'*. He illustrated:

*'We have an annual PA (performance appraisal) for each employee aims to affirm the achievement, point out the deficiency and list the further improvement. I think it is very good for review ourselves and make some improvement plan. However, I found one point that we have been branded by the manager. For example, if I got 20 marks in last year, at most I will receive 25 or 30 mark in this year. They have a steady impression for me, no matter how good my performance is, they won't give me 50 marks'.*

He told the author that *'it does not mean that I only want a high mark, the low mark is fine as long as it is veracious. The objective appraisal motivates me to performance better, but like what happened here, the appraisal is format that beats my enthusiasm, and I lose my passionate'.*

The one reason C-YE3 judged her manager is *'good'* is that *'his evaluation is based on his objective eye, not his personal feeling and favour'*. C-YE3 narrated: *'my manager always gives us a fair evaluation, even someone who had fought to him previously'*.

Moreover, the youths extend their expectation of the fairness of the manager's reporting. They would like their managers highlight their individual's contribution when they report to the top managers. For this expectation, B-DM1 recalled that in his generation, it was usual that the managers took the employees' contribution when the report is made. However, he summarized that today these youths don't accept this behaviour, which they prefer a *'fair and detailed report'*. Thus, B-DM1 said: *'I pay much attention to deal this matter, which I always faithfully report of their performance by addressing their names and detailed contributions'*. B-DM2 deals the reporting in the same way to B-DM1, however, he mentioned that his young subordinates changed him:



*'I found that they will claim individual contribution if a project operate successfully. It differs to my generation, which it was common that the manager in the front of reporting and we behind the manager. Now I realized that it is not correct. I should let others know my capability and value. I learn this from these youths and have changed my way. Previously, I only mentioned our department when I reported to the top manager, later, I realized that it is not fair for the one who contribute and they (young employees) dissatisfy this way. Now, I would like address an individual's performance and contribution, such as someone offers the original idea, or someone correct and polish the proposal'.*

He continually summarized: *'this approach received a positive feedback. They concern about whether their work or their value be recognized. If it is, in turn, it becomes a motivation for their further works'.*

#### **7.2.5.6 Classifying Young Employees**

One point the managers warned is that although these young employees in the same age group and present some common characteristics, it is still not scientific applying one approach to manage them. Thus, the managers in this research suggest a classifying management with the targeting to their characteristics.

C-DM2 narrated:

*'...I don't think 'post 80's' is an appropriate definition since the one who was born in 1981 definitely differ to one who was born in 1989. In the practice of management, I found we should classify these 'post 80's' employees, allocate different job, and use different approach as well'.*

C-DM4 explained why her company makes classification for those youths and shared their experiences:

*'The elder generation employees did not appear the diversity of personality, or they are used to hide that, thus a generalized management approach is reasonable. However, 'post 80's' is a*

*vivid generation with individual diversity, for this circumstance, one approach will not be acceptable. The classify management is implemented by our company, and it goes through the whole managing process. For example, based on their characteristics, the managers allocate different tasks, the manager use different manner for communication and criticizing et al'.*

### **7.3 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presents the statements, opinions and stories from both manager participants and young employee participants, and organize them as conceptual findings, which provide the clues for the discussion and creation for the framework in the later.

The next chapter will combine the information presented in chapter six and the findings appeared in this chapter, link the literatures and the conceptual framework stated in the earlier chapter, to make a conceptual discussion for this research.

## CHAPTER 8 DATA INTERPRETATION

### 8.1 Introduction

After the preceding Findings Chapter, this chapter is a discussion which is in line with the research question, aims and objectives stated in Chapter One, and makes a connection of literatures and theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter Two and Three and findings in above. Derived from the findings which were presented in the last chapter, three tentative summarization table or figure have been developed during the discussion and integrated to a conceptual framework which will be highlighted in the last of chapter. The first part of this chapter is a conceptual discussion, and the proposed conceptual framework will be presented and discussed in the second part.

### 8.2 Discussion of Findings

The discussion includes three segments: discussion of young employees' value; discussion of the expected manager and the discussion of new management style, which are accordance with the analytic themes presented in the ast chapter.

#### 8.2.1 *Discussion of Young Employees' Value*

The young Chinese employees' experiences confirm what the existing research demonstrated that their character is more individualistic in their values and thoughts, and their work related behaviour is driven by this attitude. Characteristically, their individualistic attitude is embodied as: practicality, self-centered, performance

orientation and anti Chinese traditions. Such value are created by several environmental factors which are not the focus of this research, however, in a certain way, these value affect young employees' behaviour in the workplace and their expectations for the work.

#### **8.2.1.1 Practicality**

The term practicalities can be interpreted by suggesting that the young employees largely driven by money, benefit and personal development. They don't believe in immaterialism which was pursued by previous Chinese generations and shift their belief into materialism. Obviously, they make a connection between the money and their skills, abilities, performance and practical contributions which they simply exchange into a particular amount of the money they can received. Following this assumption, they would not have a positive work attitude when they feel a low acquisition; also, the relationship is very weak between them and their organisations, which means they would leave the organization and hunt potential opportunity if they think their abilities are worth more.

#### **8.2.1.2 Self Centered**

China is a collectivistic society, and the notion of family has been at the forefront of its culture. Thus, group orientation reflects the notion of family and plays a major role in Chinese organizations to deal with the relationship between the individual and group. Chinese employees can't easily distance themselves from the organizations they worked and are more likely to be influenced by the norms of this organization. The individual

reviews themselves as a member and belonging to a particular group, and as a result, the group interest, benefit and orientation comes first and individuals come second.

The findings of this research demonstrate that young employees feel less sense of belonging and are disassociated with the group, and are more focused on personal orientation. The young employees' self-centered values have clear indications for their daily organizational life. First, they place extremely high emphasis on self emotion, self favour, and self interest in organisational activities. With the emphasis on self, the young employees place themselves out of the group and reject a link between themselves and the group. In this sense, they are reluctant to follow the group, and their self-based demands over the group. Secondly, the self-centered value also extends to their expectation of their work. Under Confucian, hard work without any negotiation and condition should be the basic requirement and primary virtue for Chinese employees. However, the young employees break this notion. With the specific request, they are more fastidious for workload, work-time and work environment. They always give priority to their personal life, and they would give up work if there is a conflict between their life and work. The third indication of their self-centered value is embodied in their weak relationship with their organisations. If the former practicality values primarily lead them to leave the company to pursue a better opportunity, the self-centeredness will increase the possibilities for their leaving, since the lesser sense of belonging leads them to review leaving a job as an acceptable option, even their lack of emotion could be a big factor to push them to make a decision to leave the organization.

### **8.2.1.3 Performance Oriented**

Chinese culture is oriented toward relationship, however, the importance of relationship has been abandoned by young employees, and they are oriented toward to the work performance. Such an orientation shift generates a different interaction between young employees and their managers. Unlike the elder generation of employees, they are more performance orientated and won't make the effort for building relationship with the managers, they agree that each work related matter should be dealt objectively, and the subjective personal connection should not exist in the organization. Hence, they dare to argue, even contradicts to their manager which has been reviewed as disadvantageous to the relationship, because they believe their performance is the only criteria and evidence to measure their works, and personal relationship are not relevant to performance at all.

### **8.2.1.4 Anti Chinese Traditions**

Anti Chinese traditions is the other feature of young Chinese employees, which can be understood from two layers: fully rejecting Chinese traditions and infusing fresh understanding for the existing Chinese traditions in order to make them accord to contemporary theme.

In the first layer, it is believed that the external social environment these young employees lived and grow in is unlike the elder's. As the result of China's 'opening door' policy, the Western ideology infuses into China and in some way goes halves with Chinese traditions. Living and growing in a such modern and developed society, they don't personally understand some existing Chinese traditions, and in turn to regard these traditions as irrelevant and reject them. The long term and loyal employer-employee relationship is dead. Confucian emphasizes the principle of family, and the work unit is

an extent of family. Accentuated by the principle of family, the employees place their affections for the family to the organizations as well, hence the relationship between employer and employee is like a family link. Moreover, in the planning economy system, the organization not only provides a particular job to the employees, but also ties in the welfare in the employees' whole live. Therefore, the lifelong loyal employer-employee relationship is exhibited. Today, as the result of the market economy and increasing competition sense, the workplace is more mobile, and shifting jobs is very common. In this sense, the significance of the organization for the young employees is much lower. Therefore, the relationship between them and their employer tends to be established by the contract and they are loyal to the contract and regulation, which typically exhibits the individual culture.

From the second layer, the typical Chinese traditions have been dished up in a new form. The young employees accept the Chinese traditions at least or at most, but the traditions are tasteless so they bring a new interpretation for these traditions in accordance with their perceptions. In this sense, it is not difficult to understand that why they orally obey Chinese traditions but defy them by their behavior. The sense of *Face* still retains in their minds, however, they believe that question or argument is a way to help the manager receive the *Face*, which is not promoted by Chinese traditions, since the question or argument is reviewed as confrontation, a sign of challenge and hostility, and precisely makes the manager loose *Face*. As the basic Confucian virtue, respecting also has been accepted by them, but with a changed object. Today, the authority has lost its powerful position to these youths, as these youths challenge the authority and power, which they won't offer their respect to, whilst, they show their respecting to the elder's age, knowledge and competencies.

Although as stated above, the young employees' cultural value and in particular behavior has been separately discussed, in fact, they are not independent, but are interrelated each other, and their particular behaviour is the result for such interrelated value. The young employees' values have been illuminated in the following Table 8-1.

| <b>Young Employees' Cultural Value</b> |  |                                |                      |
|--|--|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Employer-employee Relationship         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Money/Benefit driven</li> <li>• Personal development driven</li> </ul>  | <b>Practicality</b>            | <b>Individualism</b> |
| Respect Age/Authority                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract based loyalty</li> <li>• Respect age</li> <li>• Respect knowledge and ability</li> <li>• Challenge authority</li> </ul>              | <b>Anti Chinese Traditions</b> |                      |
| Mianzi                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanged <i>Mianzi</i></li> <li>• Reject Mianzi</li> </ul>   | <b>Performance Centred</b>     |                      |
| Guanxi                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance over relationship</li> </ul>  |                                |                      |
| Group Orientation                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interest prevail over collective interest</li> </ul>   |                                |                      |
| Self                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent to group</li> <li>• Personal emotion/Happiness driven</li> <li>• Reject overtime work</li> <li>• Flexible working time</li> </ul> | <b>Self Centred</b>            |                      |
| Behaviour                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self value driven behaviour</li> </ul>  |                                |                      |

**Table 8-1 Summarisation of Young Employees' Values**

Source: author

### **8.2.2 Discussion of the Expected Manager**

The manager is a leading factor in the management style since the manager is the executive person who implements the management style and delivers the management practices. This section will highlight the image of a qualified manager in today's environment full of young employees.



Given the influence of their values, Chinese young employees give great prospects to their managers. Also, from the manager perspective, they realise the pressure from their young employees, because this is a potential new generation. They have a well educated background, specific skills, more open minds, broad insights and creative thinking. In order to make the management runs successfully and effectively, it requires an eligible manager. From both young employees and managers self construction, an eligible manager is raised who is knowledgeable and skilled in their speciality, good managerial skills, having good personal traits and morality, and most importantly, is self disciplined. Among the above features, the concept of managerial skills will be illumined in section 8.2.3, while the rest are discussed as below.

As usual, the department managers are responsible for managerial activities, such as the running of operations, offering productive arrangement and making decision. In Chinese organisations, some managers are ‘managing based managers’ which they lack the knowledge and specialism, and their role is just being a manager. Their weaknesses on the specific knowledge lead their management to be ineffectively and impracticality, since their lack of knowledge makes them ignorant the operation, and cause their management to deviate from the real situation and ignore the best practice. Influenced by Confucian values, the elder generation of Chinese employees use less initiative and are more passive, which means they would follow such managers without any demurral, or reluctance to share their dissidence. As revealed above, the young employees would question or criticise such decisions or arrangement, and as a result they would behave uncooperatively for their disagreed decision or ordering. On the other hand, the knowledgeable manager can easily receive the young subordinates’ trust. One characteristic for these young employees is that instead of respecting intangible

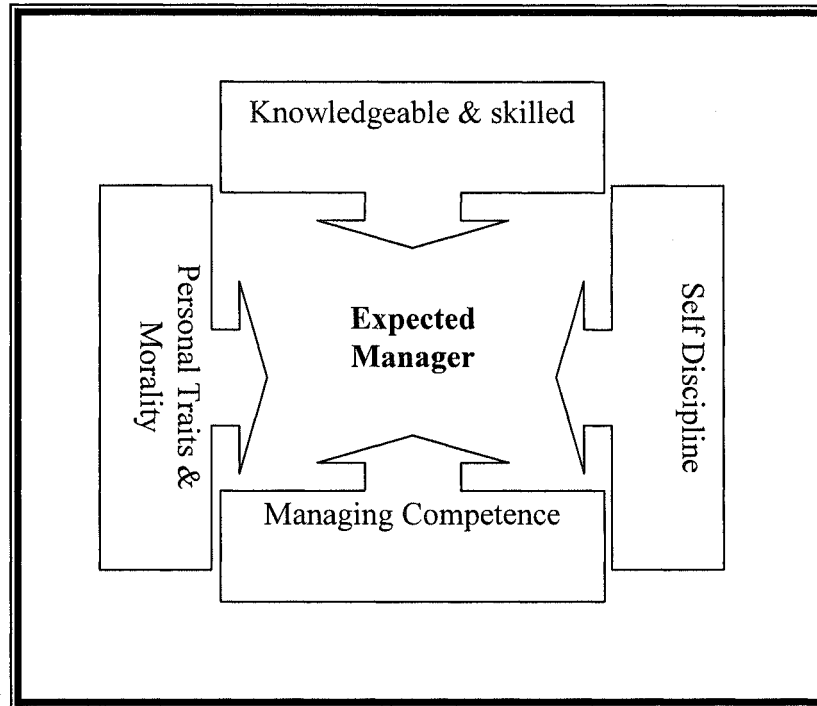
authority and power, the youths rather respect tangible knowledge or a particular skill. Hence, the manager's knowledge and skill can help them build upon prestige and a bright image in front of their young subordinates, which in turn facilitate their management. a

The importance of a manager's morality and personal traits parallels the knowledge and managerial ability. Being honest is the emerged value for identifying an expected manager. The manager is expected to be honest and trustworthy in his/ her behaviour including in his/her manner and personal characteristic. Honest is one highlighted value under Individualism, and it stands in position of avoiding confrontation in order to maintain harmony, and states that each one should speak one's own mind. The term of honesty here does not reflect what is stated in individualism, and is closely associated with the Confucian virtues, where the manger is expected to guileless and sincere. A friendly manager who is informal outside the workplace is more welcomed by the young employees. As the result of them rejecting authority, the manager who has a clear-cut sense of authority and puts themselves above the masses is unacceptable. In stead of that, the youths wish their managers behave like a friend outside work, sharing their interests with each other or talking on any topic. For the manager, it is a good chance to gain more understanding of the young subordinates, and also an effective way to support the equal supervision style.

Self-discipline is a typical virtue of Confucianism. The principle of Confucians is only after gradual self improvement, can a person then run a country or a family, and this principle also works in the organisation. The self-disciplined manager will consummate the self before he/she makes the requirement of the employee, and he/she won't ask for

the tasks from the employees that he/she does not carry out. The manager's such self discipline does not only make further orders more acceptable by young employees, but also significantly presents a positive example for the young employees. Most young employees are fresh to the work place, and they need an example to lead them, so the manager's personal behaviour mostly has an impact for these people's attitude and behaviour. The power of the manager's example is more effective than homiletics managing. The expectation for manager's morality and self-discipline indicate that the belief of young employees and their managers in some ways is still governed by Confucianism, as *Confucian Analects* says: '*If you set your mind toward morality, your people will be moral. The character of the ruler is like the wind, and that of the people, grass. The grass bends when the wind blows upon it*' (Tsang, 2007), which means the good manager set self as a model, so that the subordinates can acquire their values and imitate their behaviour

It is clear to see that the eligible manager in today's workplace is one who is multiple skilled and almighty, and is more like a hero. In this sense, it reveals that the Individualism value has a great impact on young employees' thought on their managers, since the heroism surely is one feature of individualisms. The four expectations have been presented in the following Figure 8-1. It is a summary of the discussion in this section, and will be integrated into the final framework.



**Figure 8-1 Expectations for the Manager**

Source: author

### 8.2.3 Discussion of New Management Style

Young Chinese employees break the traditional appearance of Chinese employees and draws up a new profile. On the dark side, their values puzzle the managerial executives, since the previous management theories become ineffective and the managers are perplexed and unprepared to deal with this matter. On the bright side, such cultural differences certainly are pronounced in the development of management theory, which it is believed that the irrelevant and inappropriate management theory will be replaced by new thought which responds to the changeable cultural values and reflects to contemporary theme.

One emerging point from this research is that the education and work experience in Western countries in a certain way affects individual's value. As a result, the employees

more accept Western management based approaches. Evidentially, the respondents in this research who experienced Western managers indicate a freer and smoother interaction between them and their foreign managers. It is believed that the youths appreciate more and are and ready to accept the Western featured management approaches.

In summary, illustrated through the findings, a new, practice based management style, 'Elder-brother Management' is emerged to respond to Chinese generational value change in today's changing environment which characteristically combines the essence of Confucian value and scientific Western management methods. It will be unfolded in the following sections.

#### **8.2.3.1 Benevolence**

Although time has moved on to the modern millennium, benevolence, one of the Confucian virtues, still remains in Chinese thoughts. The managers are suggested to consider the particular problems and difficulties in their young subordinates' lives, and try to help them to find make a solution. Chinese employee would like receive a reciprocal relationship from their managers with the emphasizing on themselves. Today, the concept of manager's concerning has changed. Compare to the elder employees, the young employees desire 'personal development based concern' rather than 'welfare concern', and the managers should take much care to focus on the young employees' further development. The managers only give better consideration for the youths' further development, but also make a feasible plans for them, and most importantly, make an effort to implement of the plan.

### 8.2.3.2 Equal and Learning Supervision Style

Influenced by Confucianism, the supervision style between Chinese manager and employees present its top-to-down controlling appearance. This typical Confucian value based relationship is ineffective for managing young employees in today, since the sense of respecting authority and power has been fade out to them, and the use of power and authority only increase their disfavor, cause them an uncooperative attitude and in turn to lead an ineffective performance. Hence, reflect to the young employees' value assumptions, an equal, assistant and learning relationship is necessary need to build upon.

The managers primarily are suggested to make the effort on reducing the power distance with the young employees. Smooth the daily interaction and being informal outside the work are the two effective ways for managers to achieve that. The daily interaction is a direct path for young employees to experience how the manager utilizes the authority, therefore, it requires the managers pay attention to their daily behaviour and avoid hurt their young subordinates' feeling. At the same time, being informal and friendly outside work effectively short the power distance and birth a lively and vivid manager.

Learning is a respond for the change. As living in a modern environment, today's young employees are more strength in some aspects, it is believed that they also could make some offer to their managers, especially for those managers who lack some particular skill or knowledge. Learning from other is one principle of Confucianism, as Confucian says: *there is always I can learn from someone*. However, for Chinese managers, especially the elder one need to break their traditional insight that the employees only are receivers,

and realize that in today's environment, the young employees also could benefit to the managers.

It clear to see that such new supervision style highly indicate the feature of Western management theory, it break the traditional top-to-down pattern, and move to a more equal and cooperative direction. The birth of this new relation is given by the young employees' value, it is also can be prospected as the further trend of Chinese manager-employee relationship.

#### **8.2.3.3 Open Decision Making**

'One man show' and 'top to down' decision making has been accepted by elder Chinese, since they are less initiative and would like passively follow the decision from the upper level manager. In contra, the young employees reject such authority centralized decision making and desire to explicit their debate and consensus about the decision. Echo to young generation employees' initiatives, an open decision making style should be adopted in the organisation. The character of open decision making style is that the decision is not made by one or two top person; it is open to each employee which they can debate, question, argue, suggest or improve the decision. Although the final decision still made by the top executive or manager, the decision should be explicit for employees with its rationale, procedure and further implements.

#### **8.2.3.4 Direct Communication**

The traditional Chinese communication style is forsaken by these young employees. As a direct and artless generation, the young employees only receive and read the explicit

information what presented in the conversation, never try to catch the behind points, even they do not think a conversation should has implicit meanings. Thus, an direct communication manner should take into account when the managers talk to young subordinates, since the traditional indirect communication will be misunderstood by the young subordinates, and the manager in often need to interpreter their indirect saying again.

Affected by individualism, these youths never hide their opinions and ideas. Therefore, an open communication approach is demanded, which allow these young employees to suggest, comment, discuss and question each issue with anyone within the organization. To adopt this approach, an open, friendly and free organisation atmosphere is needed, in order to motivate the young subordinates express their idea and ensure their communication which will be accepted in an appreciated way and be dealt cooperatively.

### **8.2.3.5 Performance Based Evaluation**

The performance evaluation in Chinese context differs to the Western culture. In China, performance evaluation more likely extends beyond actual performance result to some personal factors. In this sense, it believed influenced by culture, in China organizations, much non-work related factor is involved in the performance process, the manager makes a comprehensive consideration when the evaluation is made, which including the employee's age, the years served the organization, hard work attitude or even good interpersonal relationship with the manager. Such factors could remedy the unsuccessful performances, and helps employees to receive the positive evaluation. The performance process in China organisation can be reviewed as the consequent result of Confucian



harmony and benevolence, since the manager want to manifest their caring through the uncritical performance and to enhance the harmony within the organisation.

Obviously, such Chinese tradition based performance is unacceptable by young employees. Impacted by their value, they prefer that the performance is directed toward a particular individual in his/her natural outcome rather than other factors. It suggested that some Western scientific appraisal method should take account when evaluating young employees, since apparently those methods are numeric and objective, which meets the criteria of the young employees' expected performance.

#### **8.2.3.6 Flexible Staff Management**

Management in 21<sup>st</sup> century should focus on the diversity in the work place, hence, the uniform management approaches is unsuitable, especially for managing young employees. The young employees advocate individual and self, and their self centered value lead them difficultly to melt their diversities and accept the high generalized management approaches. Hence, in this sense, the management is the management of individuals, which should indicate its individuality and with a flexible appearance. The flexibility could go throughout each managing activity, such as selecting different communication manner, adopting different methods encouraging young employees. Additionally, reflect to young employees' traits, the flexibility could include the working time and location, which the young employees may decide their preferred working time or location with some conditions. Essentially, such flexible management approaches should not deviate from the organisation's value and direction, which building upon the organisation's basic principle, according to the organisation's mission and objective. It considers the young employees' diversities in their characteristics and

practical abilities, and makes targeted adjustment within the reasonable scopes, in order to meet the organisation's and a particular task's demand, and in turn to increase the productivity and performance.

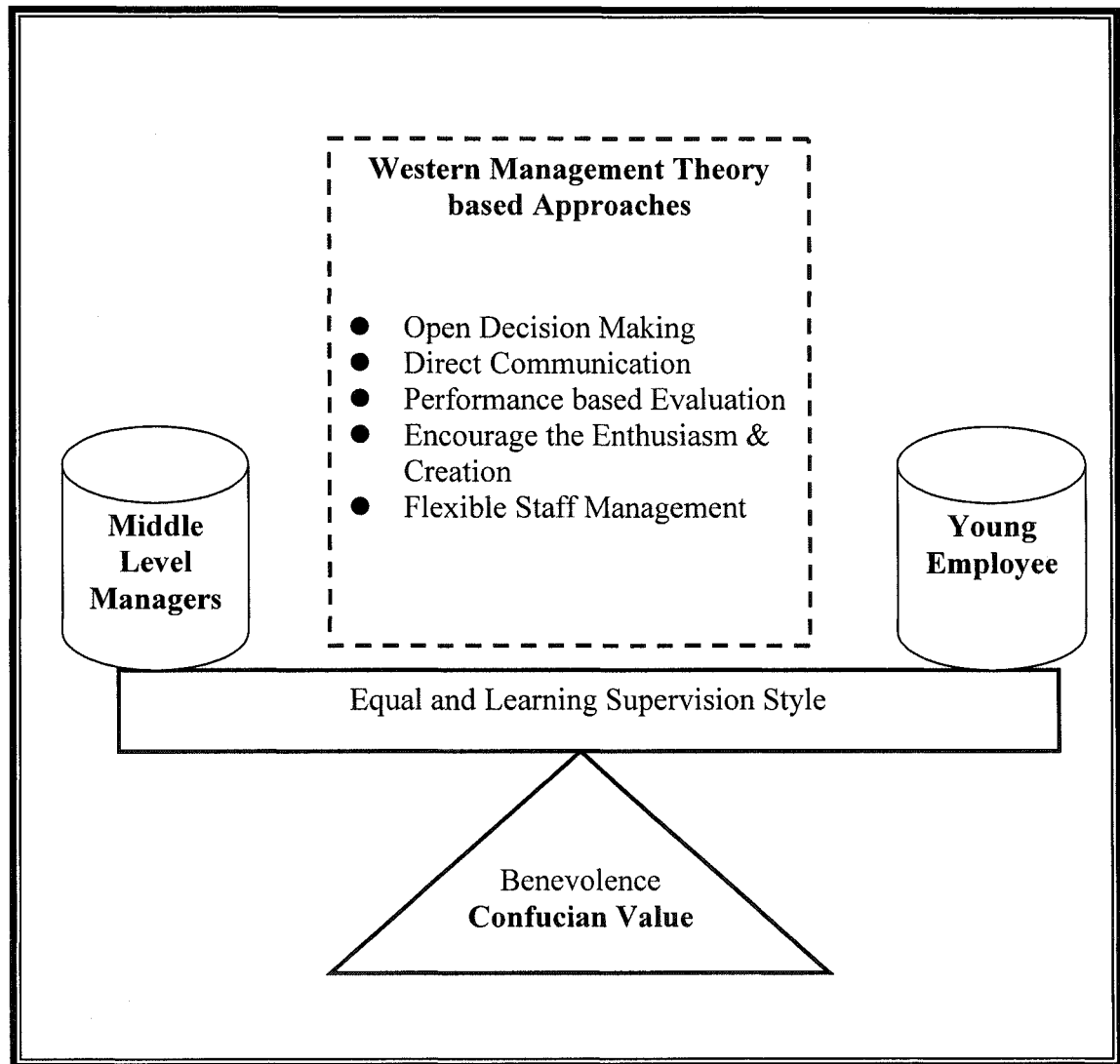
### **8.2.3.7 Encourage the Young Employees' Enthusiasm and Creation**

This feature is created by the young generation employees' expectation for the work, which awakes the managers for their management style. The elder generation of Chinese employees would like follow some existing procedure or regulation to complete their task, in this sense, they are more 'doing' oriented. Dramatically, the young generation of employees tined to be active or 'thinking' oriented which they not just simply follow a particular regulation, but also think about it, question it and further want to develop it. As the result, they want to use own way to complete a particular task; they also offer some more advantage method to replace the existing one with the motivation of increasing the effectiveness.

As the less experience, their creations may not perfect, or even unfeasible, however, their enthusiasm should be protected. How to deal young employees such proactive participation is very vital, since the manager's reply is not simply as what it is, it indicates the trust of managers, and directly influences the young employees' self-confidence, feeling, and later attitude and behaviour. For young employees, the manager's attention to their opinions conveys one information that their personal value has been respected and recognized, such respecting and recognition are even more important than whether their ideas are acceptable or not. In contrast, the ignoring or flatly refuse only makes them feel frustrated and be hurt, which cause them lose the interesting and enthusiasm for the job, and lead unexpected attitude. In a depth

understanding, the young employees' unsuccessful creations also can be reviewed optimistically. It makes the young employee realize their skill weakness, and most valuably, the manager should catch such chance to help them to learn from the lesson and gain improvement, which contributes to their future work.

The above concept is depicted in the following Figure 8-2. From the figure, it can see that both Confucian value and specific Western management theory based practices structure the new management style, also the relation between the middles level manager and young employees is be given.



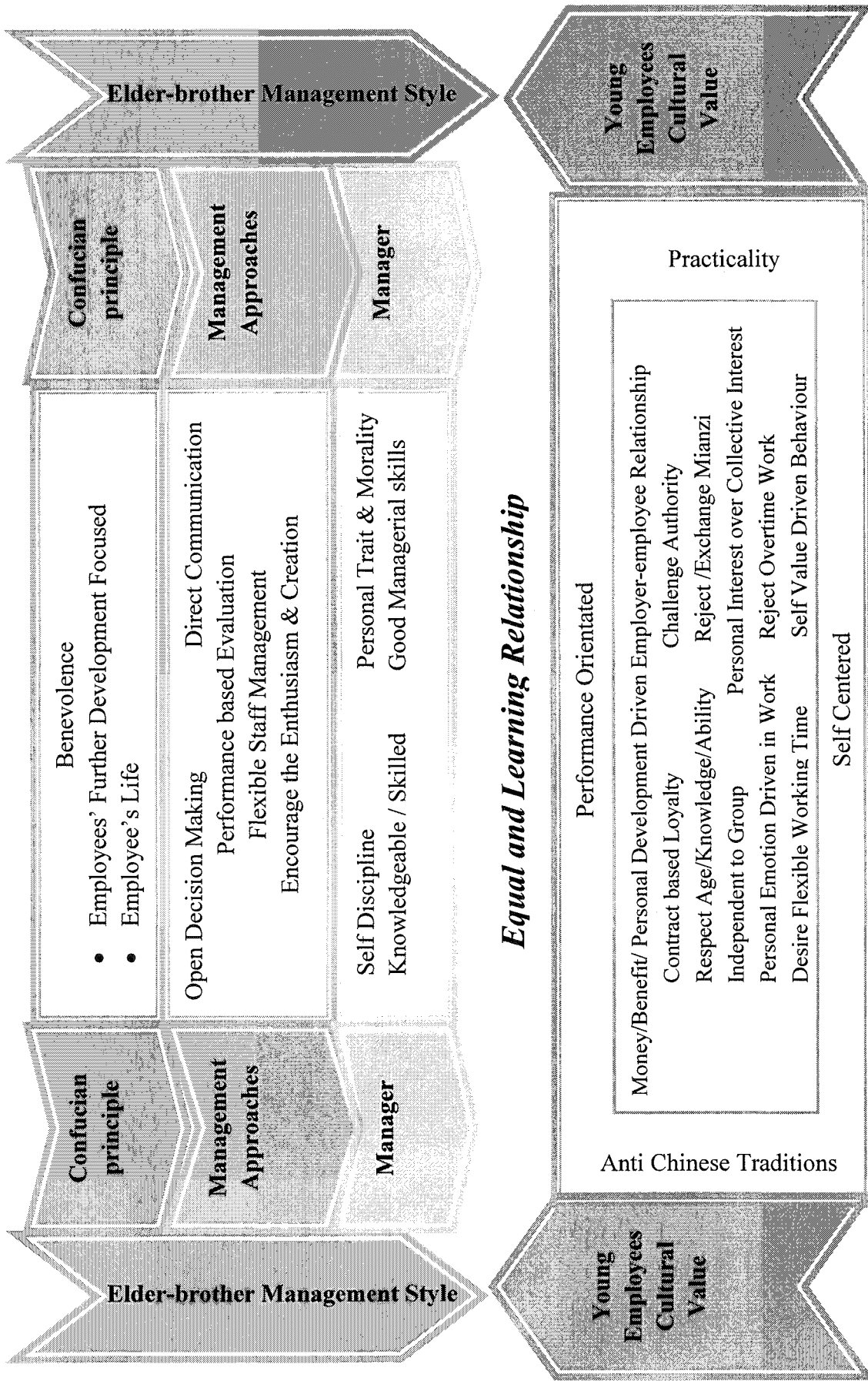
**Figure 8-2 Elder-brother Management Style**

Source: author

### 8.3 The Proposed Framework

Illustrated through the above discussions, this research contributes a new, practice based framework: 'Framework for Managing Chinese Young Generation Employees', to respond Chinese generational value change in today's changing environment. This framework includes two major concepts: the 'Elder-brother' management style and young generation employees' value. Visually, the 'Elder-brother' management style are

rooted by the framework with the underlying Confucian value, Western management theory based approaches and identification of the manager. As the button of the framework, the young generation employees' values are listed with the detailed identification. The framework will be unfolded in the following Figure 8-3 with the further explanation.



**Figure 8-3 Framework of Managing Young Generation Employee**

Source: author

Literally, from Confucianism Five Cardinal principle, both father and elder brother indicate the hierarchy based upon position, which it seem there is no significant difference between traditional Chinese 'Father-son' management and this creative 'Elder-brother' management. Remarkably, the proposed 'Elder-Brother Management Style' in this research breaks the traditional perception of elder brother from the Confucian assumption, but understand it from a physical perspective, which elder brother is just a few years elder, but still in the same range with the younger. In a vivid saying, the traditional Chinese 'Father-son' management manifests a vertical and up to down relationship, then, the 'Elder-brother' management signals a horizontal and equal relationship with the emphasising on respecting each other, guiding and directing, not controlling.

Essentially, the benevolence, humaneness and concerning still are the basic foundations for this new 'Elder-brother' management style, at the same time, as the functional tool, the Western scientific management approaches have been adopted. Although Confucian value still are the root of this management style, it has to play in an innovative way to help Chinese managers effectively in changing environment, which the application of it should accord to the contemporary theme. In the other hand, Western management approaches functionally strengthens flexibility and innovation for the Chinese management. The nature of Western management is too physical and statistic, since it does not consider the human factors, while Confucian based Eastern management emotionally considers much about human factors, and ignores the science. Therefore, this 'Elder-brother' management style leverages the both human and scientific elements, which the Confucian value has been regarded as an enlightening wisdom for Chinese managers deal their daily work from a humanistic perspective, at the mean time, the

young employees more accepted Western scientific management approaches helps Chinese manager become wiser, and in turn to enhance the effectiveness of their management. Characteristically, this management style combines two different management assumptions which is more suitable for the young generation employees who are in the value verge stage, moreover, it absorbs each management theory's strength, and remedying other's weakness, which is more effective and powerful for the management effectiveness. The manager is the unavoidable factor in this management style, the profile of expected manager is raised followed by the identification of the supervision style between the manager and young employees, in order to functionally facilitate the implement of this management style.

The potential user of this framework is the managers who is managing Chinese young generation employees, certainly, the Chinese young generation employees is the target objective of this framework. Therefore, it is necessary for this framework present a profile of Chinese young generation employees by identifying their value, in order to let their managers get better understanding of them, and adapt more effective and suitable management. The Chinese young generation employees' value present in the button of this framework and corresponds the above management style, which manifests the principle proposition that the nature of management is value specific, and the management style displayed in this framework just respond to below specific Chinese young generation employees' value.



#### **8.4 Applicable Issues and Limitations of the Proposed Framework**

Last section has presented and explained the proposed framework in this research. It is necessary to discuss some applicable issues and limitations of this proposed framework, since none of the frameworks is perfect, and each framework unavoidably has some limitations when it is implemented in the practice.

Firstly, one applicable issue should accompany this framework when it is put in practice. The main proposition of this framework is not that the manager only focuses on smoothing the relationship with the young employees and ignores their own responsibility, as managing employees is always the primary. Compared to the traditional Chinese management approach, the approaches in this framework indicate a more equal, free, and loose appearance, however, such characteristics should not build upon the managers' abdications. The rationale for advocating this framework is the wish to smooth the interaction between the managers and young employees, and in turn to enhance the management effectiveness. It is noticeable that the managers should not blindly cater for or please the young employees and neglect the management, since managing employees and getting the achievement and accomplishment through the employees is the primary responsibility for the manager.

Secondly, three limitations can not be ignored when managers apply this framework in their organisations. The main limitations are: manager's age, gender and the type of organisation.

The manager's age has a significant impact on management style. The managers in this research cover three generations, born and living in the different stages of China's

history. The explicit appearance of the findings is that there is a big cultural gap between the elder managers and their young subordinates, and the elders are likely to find it more difficult to change their inherent managing manner. Compared to older managers, the managers in their middle age show more understanding, tolerance, and acceptance. They give their young subordinates an objective judgements and positively watch the changed values of the young employees. Most significantly, these mangers are willing to open themselves to acquire the emerged Chinese traditions and Western scientific management methods, consequently, make a hopeful prospect for the development of the Chinese management. The proposed framework does not concretely highlight the impact of the managers' age in the management, the concept of the manager is general. In this sense, the management approaches presented in this framework are limited in the application for all managers, the different aged managers should make a judgment based on own values and traits.

The second limitation of this framework is that it does not consider the manager's gender. As approved by many studies, the managers' gender will lead different management behaviour. However, the impact of manager's gender in the management is not a researchable interest for this research, therefore, the role of the manager identified in this framework is nonsexual. In this sense, the male and female manager could have different reflection of applying this framework, they might find some actions or approaches are ineffective, also, they might find some new thoughts which is not presented in this framework.

The type of organisation is also expected to have a great influence for applying this framework. As the young generation employee is the major source of labour in

employee market, it is believed that the each type of organisation faces the challenge of managing them. This research proposes a framework, however, it is believed that its implementation and significance depends on the organisation's type, since different types of organisation create unique organisation culture, and the organisation's culture fundamentally and functionally influence the management style and approaches in practices. Through the lens of this research, the different types of organisation reveal the managerial diversities. The management of Joint Venture companies combines the host country and expatriate partner's culture, the Chinese managers are impacted by the cultural combination, hence, their managerial behaviour certainly displays some Western management features, which is more suitable for young employees. On the other hand, the traditional values have more impact in Chinese state owned organisations, which make its management more heavy. The management in China's private companies is centred on the owner, thus, the management indicates the owner's personal values. As stated in the literature chapter, the influence of national culture is the foci of this research, hence, the proposed framework lacks the consideration of the organisation's type which can be reviewed as the third limitation of this research, and will be highlighted in the next chapter with the further research agenda.

### **8.5 Chapter Summary**

The motivation for this research has its roots in a lack of management theory that fits to manage young employees in today's changing environment. This chapter illuminates how this theoretical limitation has been consummated by presenting an original framework from the primary findings.

As a conceptual discussion, this chapter also displays a clear link between the findings and the developed framework, which could to reveal the readers how the framework has been integrated from scattered findings, and it also provides an evidence for the readers to convince the developed framework. This developed framework is believed to make the contribution to both management theory and practice, in the mean time, it is not perfect in some ways. Such significant contributions and further developments will be highlighted in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 9      CONCLUSION**

### **9.1 Introduction**

With the discussion of findings and a proposed conceptual framework presented in preceding chapter, the whole process of this research has been manifested, and now moves to the ending. Obviously, this chapter has three clear sections addressing contributions to knowledge, contributions to practice and personal reflections. This research not only contributes to the management theory, but also makes the efforts to the management practices. Hence, the knowledgeable and practical contributions will be respectively highlighted in the first two sections. The last section of this chapter is the author's reflection of this research voyage. It encompasses a re-evaluation of thesis objectives, limitations of this research and further research. In addition, the author will use first sense to recall what she gained and experienced during this research, and how this research significantly progresses her as an independent researcher.

### **9.2 Contributions to Knowledge**

This research contributes a theoretical knowledge for other researchers and professionals. The identification of the theoretical contribution starts with the comparison between this research and other contemporary studies. As stated in the introduction chapter, China is experiencing much significant events during recent thirty years, which is believed to result evolved and dynamic value. With the thirty year's economic development, the real situation in China is Chinese traditional Confucianism and Western Individualism jointly shapes the people's value, especially for the young

generation. By reviewing the current literatures, in a certain extent, several other studies are analogous with this research. David, Allen Ralston, a professor and chair in University of Oklahoma is a key author in the subject to study about Chinese generational value shift and the implication in management (1994; 1996; 1999; 2004; 2006; 2007; 2008). These researches include the comparison of generational value between Chinese and other countries, the longitudinal value study in China, and the specific focus the value in different regions, generations and ownerships in China. Also, Yu and Miller (2003) have investigated the individualism of Taiwan young generation. Moreover, Bih-shiaw et al (2007) examine what is Chinese employees' current work value, and ranks the influence of Confucianism and individualism for Chinese employees. These studies absolutely should be respectful, since they broaden the readers' horizons and particularly provide the foundations for this research, however, the less effort have been made concretely to explore the meaning of young employees' value for Chinese managers and in a context of Chinese organisation. In a vivid saying, above commensurate studies are horizontal while this research is vertical one, which they build up a basement and direct the orientation for this research, and this research goes deeply to explore the meaning behind the phenomena they concluded, thus to make this phenomena more comprehensively and stereoscopically.

In addition, the management theories lack to respond to the Chinese generational value change, although this issue has been suggested as further research direction in many scholars' studies. As a proactive study, this research fills this void and contributes to the knowledge by three ways.

- **Profiling Chinese young generation employees value**

First of all, this is a national culture study by drawing upon a contemporary profile of Chinese young generation employees' value. This contribution is significant as it discovers the young employees' value and how their behaviour has been impacted by the value. The usages of the findings are believed in twofold. It can be the start point for other management studies with the specific attention to the young generation employee, since culture value is the primary consideration for management studies. Also, it can be employed by other researchers who want to conduct the comparative study on young generation employees' value with other industry or nations.

- **Developing a new and practice based framework**

Second, this research is an initial step in the development of mapping a uniquely Chinese management style. With the specific focusing on young generation employees, this research develops to the management body of knowledge by providing a practice based framework consist of rooted Confucian value, innovative supervision styles and scientific management approaches. It is unquestioned fills up the theoretical gap in current Chinese management style and lays a foundation for developing current Chinese management style.

- **Extending existing Confucianism knowledge**

Lastly, this research well conceptualises the Confucian virtues and reinforces their implications in the management. The effort this research made is to reintroduce the Confucian value and extend the existing knowledge of Confucian value by providing a deep insight into Confucianism value in today's

Chinese environment and focusing this value as a basic feature governing management practice in China. It identifies the status of Confucian in 21<sup>st</sup> century, which provides a cornerstone for other scholars who take Confucian as the conceptual background of Chinese management and business practices. Additionally, with the increasing research interesting on China, Confucian value also has been focused on Western scholars as well. This research offers elementary knowledge of Confucian to them, helps them to understand the Chinese philosophy and further to contribute their researches.

### **9.3 Contributions to Practice**

Rather than the development of a body of knowledge, DBA has its main goal that should be significant in the marketplace (Evans, 2002), which means along with the contribution on knowledge, the DBA research requires to make its contribution to the management practice in the real situation. This section will illumine the three contributions this research offered to the managers in both Chinese and global themes

- **Guiding Chinese managers manage Chinese young employees**

As a context-specific research, it first offers China local managers a practice based guidance to manage their young subordinates in today's changing environment. This research constructs a platform for a meaningful generational culture value dialogue. By reading this research, the managers in China IT industry would get a deep understanding of their young employees, and at mean time to understand their particular behaviour. Drafting by young employees' expectations and practitioners' first hand experience, and refining by the author,



the further management approaches and developed framework act as an instruction which functionally assistants the managers to deal day-to-day practices in the work place with the suggested solutions. Although, this research pay specific attention to the China IT industry, there is no reason believe that the proposed framework could not be applied effectively by other managers in China other industries.

As stated in the literature chapter, although this is an indigenous research, it is still obligated making the contribution to global management knowledge, which smoothes the expatriate managers' management in China by understanding Chinese culture and employees, and at the same time assist Chinese manager's future economic expanding as well.

- **Facilitating expatriate managers in China**

This research provides substantial support for expatriate managers to understand Chinese employees. With the trend of globalization, managers must to be confronted with greater challenges in understanding and applying the appropriate managing behaviour in the different countries and cultures which operate. The Western management theories may take their application less appropriate for Chinese employees. Young generation employee is a major resource in the current and future China employee market, with the deep understanding of cultural context of this group employee, this research not only illumines traditional Confucian value, but also identifies Chinese-style

individualism, which certainly facilitates expatriate managers in the adaptation of their management skills and practices to the Chinese environment.

- **Sustaining Chinese managers in global management**

The other feature of globalisation is that Chinese domestic organisations, such as Legend and Haier, start to expand business cooperation with Western countries. It is believed that before long the Chinese managers will face to manager the Western employees, which requires Chinese managers are familiar with the Western management philosophy, style and practices. Through the description of young generation employees' more individualistic characteristic and Western management approaches, this research contributes Chinese managers to savvy Western culture and to acquire the knowledge of Western management, which provides proactive information for their future management.

## **9.4 Personnel Reflections**

This section first re-evaluates the objectives of this these, then the limitations and further research will be addressed. In the ending, the author will recall this research journey back and summary the achievement she gained from this research.

### ***9.4.1 Re-evaluation of Thesis Objectives***

The main objective of this research is to develop a practice based framework which serves to Chinese and Western managers adopting suitable management style in managing Chinese young generation employees in a current environment, in order to increase the organisational management effectiveness. This main objective has been

dealt and achieved by four objectives individually, which established in the commencement of this thesis.

- ***Objective One: To identify Chinese young employees' cultural value***

The aim of first objective was to develop a deep understanding of Chinese young generation employees' value. As stated in Chapter Two, the Western individualism is the increasing value in Chinese society, especially Chinese young generation employees have been identified by many scholars that are more individualism and less Confucianism. Chapter Three provides a detailed theoretical framework to respectively identify the individual attitude and behaviour under Individualism and Confucianism, and significantly, this theoretical framework is applied in the organisation management context.

Throughout the participants' narrations and author's re-construction, a set of 15 detailed value heading four major value table (Table 8-1) was established to present Chinese young generation employees' values. This is a reification table of Chinese young generation employees' value by extensively explaining and interpreting the 'more individualism and less Confucianism'.

- ***Objective Two: To picture a expected and accepted manager, from Chinese young employees' expectations influenced by their value and managers' self reflection responding to the young generation employees' value, whom is qualified for managing the young generation employees***

The achievement of this objective has been done by depicting an eligible manager in chapter eight. In chapter three, the role of a manager is given to identify an excellent

manager in today's environment. As one major part of chapter Eight, the section 8.2.3 is the description of the expected manager from the perspective of both young generation employees and managers. Through the lens of description, the Figure 8-1 provides the image of such manager, it characteristically generalize four expectations which covers manager's personal traits, knowledge and managerial ability.

- ***Objective Three: To introduce the effective management approaches, from Chinese young employees' expectations influenced by their value and managers' practical experience reflecting to the young employee's value and behaviour***

Chapter three makes a boundary for the management style by identifying four management practices. The section 7.2.5 and 8.2.3 primarily introduces these management approaches which reflect to what has been discussed in chapter three. These two sections extend the scope of management style by addressing the further management approaches which created from the first hand experience of managers and young employees. Entitled the manager participants offered new name, the Figure 8-2 is a practice based management style which covers Chinese tradition value and suggested Western management approaches, which serves as a functional instruction for managers manage the Chinese young generation employees in a real situation.

- ***Objective Four: To develop a practice based conceptual framework based upon the recognition of the previous research work, with which managers both in China and in the West can identify the essential ingredients in making strategic choices of managing young Chinese employees***

To achieve this final objective, this thesis proposes a practice based framework in section 8-3. The main findings of previous objectives are brought together within this

framework, and the reality of this framework consists on participants' assumptions, perceptions and beliefs, and the author's self reflection and reconstruction.

Conceptually, this framework integrates the Chinese young generation employees' value, the expected image of manager, the new supervision style and detailed Western management theory based approaches. Figure 8-3 depicts above concepts in a visual presentation, which reveals the relations between above concepts and the flows of this framework. This framework provides a comprehensive understanding for the issue of managing Chinese young generation employees, which benefits both Chinese and Western manager in their managing.

#### ***9.4.2 Limitations***

As highlighted above, this research is significant for literature on management, and practice as well, however, as an in-depth study into a very tiny aspect of the field, this research does have some limitations and needs to be considered when drawing upon a conclusion. Except the methodological limitation which has been addressed in the chapter four, this research also faces to following limitations:

First, this research is limited by a broad-brush in organisations without specifically taking account in organisation types. Today, a variable type of organisation is in China: state-owned enterprises, foreign investment joint venture and private companies. Although the management practice in these organisations generally character, it still appears diversities in light on the different organisations influenced by each unique structure and organisation culture. It is acknowledged that further research should classify the types of organization and focus on one specific type.

Second, according to Holt (1997), the limited sample should not be taken as representative of geographically diversified country, especially the study for China. The sustained lack in this research is to select the IT companies located in Beijing, and also uses convenience sampling to answer the research question, it limits the regional factor in the study. The different regions in China have uneven economic development, as the result, based on their living environment, the individual from various regions does not hold the same cultural value. Therefore, cautions should be exercised when applying the results of this research to other regions in China.

#### **9.4.3 Further Research**

The limitations clearly suggest the further research direction. The further research suggestions are given as follows:

- To nurture the deeper understanding for managing young generation employees in different type organisations, the further researches could narrow down to one specific type of organisation to study how the organisation characteristic and culture affect the management of young generation employees.
- Since this research conducts the investigation in Beijing IT industry, it suggests the further investigation could move to IT industry in other regions in China.
- Based on this research, the young generation employees' value and relevant management approaches in other industry could be the further directions for other researches.

From the emerged findings, several conceptual suggestions also are given:

- This research clears that young generation employees' value will change their expectations for the managers. Consequently, the further researches could

consider what the role is for today's manager and how the organisations develop the manager training, in order to improve the manager's managerial skills.

- As the result of young generation employees value change, several management approaches have been highlighted in this research. The other researchers could take these standpoints as the hypothesis to conduct quantitative researches to make the examination cross the industry or regions.

#### ***9.4.4 Review of the DBA Journey***

Self reflection is reflecting upon the researcher's role and the development in the research, therefore, in stead of the third person which is applied by this thesis, the first person will be adopted in this section.

I have started this DBA research four years ago. Four years is not a short time, it is much to say about it, I would like to condense this four years journey into three parts: difficulties and struggling, gains and achievement, and future and development.

##### **9.4.4.1 Difficulties and Struggling**

At first, I should appreciate this DBA programme, since it organise a taught course titled Personal and Professional Development in the beginning stage, with a clear aim to analyse the candidate's skills for conducting a doctoral research, and therefore making a development plan, in order to make the final goal become to true. After the self analysis, I realized that the knowledge of methodology and the language barrier would be the two major blocks on the way toward to competition.

I have merely practiced research methodology and method before I started the DBA. Although given the purpose of my research, qualitative methodology and methods were the choice for better understanding the situation and context, in fact, I only had lean knowledge of it. Quantitative and qualitative for me, just two similarly spelled words and somehow describes quantity while other one indicates the quality of something. In addition, my non-English speaking background was the other barrier which holds my movement back, since conducting a doctoral research in a UK institution requires me to express myself in English all the time: working with the supervisor, communicating to peers, presenting in public, and the most obviously, all of my work would be presented in a English written thesis.

Expect above academic difficulties, the suffering also came from the life. The previous four yeas experience of living in Malaysia is a gift for my life, which practices me not fear living in a new culture. Even that, life in UK is not easy for a single overseas female. Parting from family, homesick... the most dark time was 2007 when I went back China to collect data, I received a diagnosis from a Chinese hospital that I got a disease and was suggested to consider taking a surgery.

No pain, no gain. Accompany these sufferings is the harvest which I matured my traits, acquired the knowledge and most significantly, a bright future is in prospect. In the next section, I will summary what I have obtained from this DBA, which includes the improvement of academic knowledge and personality.



#### **9.4.4.2 Gains and Achievements**

Firstly, I become more knowledgeable in the area of national culture and management, with the specific interesting in Confucianism, individualism and the management practices in the organisation. As stated in the first chapter, the research problem in this research was stemmed from a theoretical gap. Also, as Perry (1998) and Phillip and Pugh (1994) suggested, the literature for DBA should cover the usual parent theory and background theories and the focus about the specific research problem. As an outcome of such extensive and critical review of extant literature, I gained a comprehensive knowledge of national culture and management and the depth insight of the culture's implication in management practices in China context.

Secondly, I am more confidence about the knowledge of research methodology, more competent in the application of qualitative research method, and using computerized analysis program to analyse qualitative data. Consciously, I attended the relevant trainings of research philosophy and method, such as the Epistemology Summer School in Turkey, with the clear intention of conquering the weakness found during the self analysis and developing the knowledge of research philosophy. The great outcome of these trainings is offering me the fundamental knowledge of research philosophy and methodology from theoretical perspective. Moreover, such theoretical knowledge has been practiced during the process of data collection and analysis. In the data collection and analysis, I have applied the strategy and technique received from the trainings, in the other hand, the real situations reinforced and brought the new practical understanding to the theoretical knowledge. Eventually, above theoretical knowledge in the research methodology and practical experience in the application of methodology and method will serve to my further research.

Thirdly, the other associated achievement of this DBA study is that I have developed logic and critical thinking and this has been applied in the each aspect of this research: literature reviewing, methodology and method selection, findings presentation and making a conclusion. In the mean time, through the thesis writing, I also learned that how logically and critically present my research.

Finally, my communication skill has been dramatically improved. Although the journey of conducting a doctoral research is lonely, the candidates should not be lonely in the studying, which requires the candidates communicate their researches as much as possible, in both oral and written manner. I have practiced my oral communication skill by attending some academic activities, such as the conference and research poster competition. These activities taught me how to survive in a full academic people environment, which I learned how to present, and most meaningful, defend my research in a professional way.

Knowledge does lose its value if without practice, hence, I always try to put what I have learned from DBA into practice. I participated as a member of CAMOT (Chinese Association for Management of Technology) and attended the relevant activities, in order to practice my academic knowledge. The great achievement is that my paper entitled 'Managing young employees in today's environment' has been accepted by CAMOT International Conference, with the main theme addressing the challenges and opportunities for management innovation in 21<sup>st</sup> China.

Of course, the completion of this research is an important achievement, however, I would like appreciate the learning process much since it is more valuable and

significant. Dr. Richard Lihua, my principle supervisor stated in our first meeting: *it is undoubted that the person does conquer any adversity in the rest of his life who has completed a doctoral research.* Excluding above academic gains, my traits and personality have been nurtured during this research process as well. As a Buddhist, my firmness belief supports me to fight each dark time in this four-years journey. Fed by the belief, perseverance contributes me to face all setbacks in the studying and pushes me toward to the ending. Even perseverance sounds a key factor for each success, here, from personal experience, I do agree with what Hussey and Hussey (1997) stated that perseverance is the most important and basic ability for doing a doctoral study, and it is also believed that perseverance will benefit to rest of my life in the certain way.

#### **9.4.4.3 Future and Development**

It is unquestioned that my gains will contribute me to meet the needs of both modern organisations and academic institutions, in turn to facilitate my career development. Being a management consultant is always one of my career goals. This DBA study develops me becoming an expert in the some subject of management, and also being qualified in the information literacy, oral and written communication, critical thinking and problem solving, which are the essence of a management consultant. Additionally, I am passionate for conducting a research and would like to continue a post-doctoral research or act as a research assistant in the future. The research skills obtained from this DBA study ensured me more competent to conduct a research independently, which enables my wish become true.

I would like end this reflection with the only ‘negative result’ of this DBA study, well, if it is negative. After the completion of this research, I think that everything in life is

researchable and I research anything in my life, no matter making a cake, planting a flower or scheduling a trip.

The completion in this section provides me a chance to look back this DBA research, the memory of struggle and the improvement clears me how far I have come, and drives me further along the path doing a qualitative research. The most significant achievement I received from this DBA research is that I identify myself from a DBA candidate to an independent qualitative researcher, although is still fledgling. However, this is not a final destination, since I get the new insights in each time when I return and reflect this journey, which is like what Watt (2007, p98) experienced for conducting a qualitative research: *'becoming a qualitative researcher is, indeed, a never-ending process'*.

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**Appendix I Access Letter**

Jiawei Li  
jiawei.li@unn.ac.uk

28 Jul 2006  
(Name of Company)

Dear XXX,

I am a DBA (Doctor of Business Administration) candidate at the Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University, UK, under Dr. Richard-Lihua's supervision. My research area is to explore the Chinese young generation employees' (born after 80's) value and expect to seek the suitable management style.

As the result of developing economy, Chinese people's value has been changed, especial the young generation. The aim of this research is to ensure the organization internal harmony between managers and young employees, and enhance the management effectiveness.

I am now seeking to undertake fieldwork within the company. I hope to conduct a face-to-face interview with middle level department managers and young staffs in your company to obtain their experiences about daily work related interaction between the managers and young generation employees. I, also, require some general documents of your company, such as company profile. It would be very grateful if you allow me to gain access to your company. To protect participants, I would like to promise you that any data collected will definite be confidential and anonymous, and the participants would be able to review the transcription from their interviews.

My school and supervisor would like to corroborate this letter and other related issues. Please do not hesitate to contact them if you have any questions.

The contact details are:

Dr. Richard Li-hua  
Tel: 0044- 0191 243 XXXX  
E-mail: xxx@unn.ac.uk

Mark Scott (Research Office Administrator)  
Tel: 0044- 0191 227 XXXX  
E-mail: xxx@unn.ac.uk

Your help will be appreciated!

Yours Sincerely,  
Jiawei Li

## Appendix II Interview Questions Guide---English Version

### Interview Questions

| For Managers Questions                                 |  | For Young Employees Questions  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | Questions  | Aim  | Questions  |
| <b>Introduction</b>                                    | I am conducting a research of young employees. I would like you talk about the young employee in your department and how do you manager them.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce this research</li> <li>• Identify interview's theme</li> </ul>                            | I am conducting a research of young employees. I would like to listen to some stories about you, your work and manager. What you say is only presented in my thesis, and you will be anonymous in my thesis.   |
| <b>Warm up<br/>Break ice</b>                           | Q 1: How long have you worked in this company?<br>Q 2: Which year were you born?<br>Q 3: What is your position?<br>Q 4: How many employees in your department?<br>How many are young employee? (Post 80's)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get information of participants, in order to build up the participants' profile.</li> </ul>         | Q 1: How long have you worked in this company?<br>Q 2: Which year were you born?<br>Q 3: What is your education background?<br>Q 4: What is your current job?<br>Q 5: Could you introduce your department manager?<br>Age? If you know. Gender.  |
| <b>Question of<br/>Cultural<br/>Value</b>              | Q 5: Can you describe these young employees in their works?<br>Q 6 What is the difference between them and elder generation?<br>Q 7: Do you think the traditional value still influences them? Why?<br>Q 8: How the young employees deal themselves and company/department?<br>Q 9: How the young employees review the age and authority?<br>Q 10: How the young employees offer Mianzi?<br>Q 11: How the young employees maintain the Guanxi? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify young generation's cultural value</li> </ul>  | Q 6: Can you talk about yourself in the work?<br>Q 7: How do you think about the elder generation employees? Why?<br>Q 8: Can you tell some difference between you and them?<br>Q 9: How do you think about yourself and department?<br>Q 10: How do you think about loyalty?<br>Q 11: How do you think about respecting age/authority?<br>Q 11: How do you look at you and your department?<br>Q 12: How do you think about Mianzi?<br>Q 13: How do you think about Guanxi? |
| <b>Question of<br/>expected<br/>managing<br/>style</b> | Q 12: How do you identify your role with the young subordinates?<br>Q 13: How do you adapt your managing behaviour? Why?<br>Q 14: How do you think the young employees feedback?<br>Q 15: Could you offer the suggestions to other managers?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify manager managing style.</li> <li>• To seek the suitable management practices</li> </ul> | Q 15: Can you tell me what type manager whom is you expected?<br>Q 16: If you are a manager of your department, how do you manage the young employees?<br>Q 17: Can you explain the difference between your style and your current manager's?<br>Q 18: Is there some thing you want to let managers know?  |
| <b>Ending</b>  | Q 16: Is anything else you want to talk about of today's topic?  |  | Q 19: Is anything else you want to talk about of today's topic?  |

Appendix III Interview Questions Guide---Chinese Version

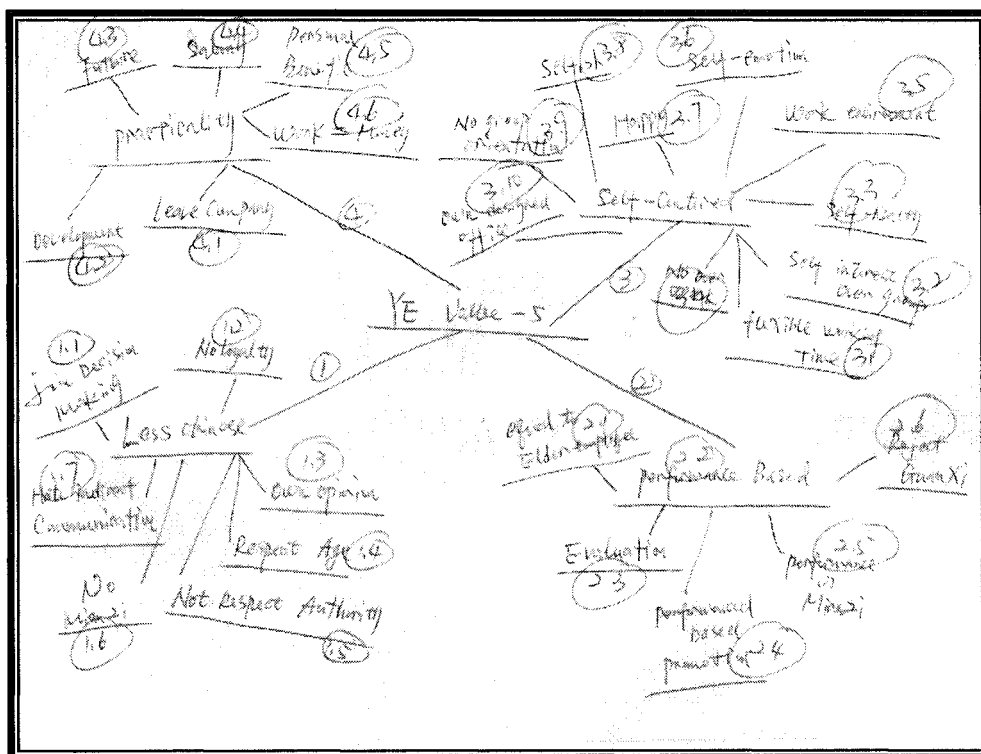
|             | 采访管理者  | 问题目标  | 采访年轻员工  |
|-------------|--|---|---|
| <p>采访介绍</p> | <p>我目前正在做一个关于有效地管理年轻员工的课题。我希望您能分享一下您的感受和管理经验。</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 介绍作者的研究课题</li> <li>● 介绍本采访的主题</li> </ul> | <p>我目前正在做一个关于有效地管理年轻员工的课题。我希望能聆听一下您的感受和对管理方法，管理者的希望。</p>  |
| <p>热身问题</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 您在公司工作多长时间？</li> <li>2. 您属于哪年代的生人？</li> <li>3. 您现在的职位？</li> <li>4. 您的部门有多少位员工？其中，多少是年轻员工（生于80年后）？</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 获取被访者的信息</li> </ul>                      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 您在公司工作多长时间？</li> <li>2. 您是哪一年出生的？</li> <li>3. 您的教育背景？</li> <li>4. 您目前的工作职位？</li> <li>5. 请介绍一下您的部门经理？年龄？性别？</li> </ol> |
|             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. 请描述一下您的部门中的青年员工工作表现。</li> <li>6. 请描述一下青年员工和老一代员工的工作表现差异。</li> <li>7. 您认为传统文化对当年年轻员工还有影响吗？为什么？</li> </ol>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 探讨年轻员工的价格<br/>    值观</li> </ul>          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. 请描述一下工作中的您自己的情况。</li> <li>7. 您如何看待部门中的其他老一代员工？</li> <li>8. 请谈一下您和他们之间的差异。</li> </ol>                                  |

|                               |  |  |   |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <p>年轻员工<br/>的价值观</p>          | <p>8. 您认为当年轻员工如何处理个人与集体的关系？<br/>9. 您认为当年轻员工如何看待传统文化中的‘领导权利’？<br/>10. 您认为当年轻员工如何看待传统文化中的‘面子’？<br/>11. 您认为当年轻员工如何看待传统文化中的‘领导权利’？</p> |  | <p>9. 您是怎么看待您自己和部门之间的关系？<br/>10. 您如何理解对公司的忠诚度？<br/>11. 您如何看待传统文化中的‘领导权利’？<br/>12. 您如何理解传统文化中的‘面子’？<br/>13. 您如何理解传统文化中的‘关系’？</p> |
| <p>有效的管<br/>理风格和<br/>实践方法</p> | <p>12. 面对年轻员工，您是如何定位您自己？<br/>13. 面对年轻员工，您是如何调整您的管理方式？<br/>14. 您认为年轻员工对此有什么反映？<br/>15. 您有什么建议想和其他管理者分享交流吗？</p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 明确适合年轻员工的管理风格</li> <li>● 明确有效管理年轻员工的实践方法</li> </ul> | <p>14. 您希望您的部门有一位什么样的部门经理？<br/>15. 假设您是部门经理，您将如何管理年轻员工？<br/>16. 您认为自己的管理风格和当前管理风格的有什么不同？<br/>17. 您有什么希望您的经理了解的吗？</p>            |
| <p>结束采访</p>                   | <p>16. 就这个话题，您有其他补充吗？</p>  |  | <p>18. 就这个话题，您有其他补充吗？</p>   |

Appendix IV Example of Transcription

149 the priceless experiences for your own business once the opportunity is  
150 matured. Otherwise, you will blind in the future.  
151 J. Any differences between you and them when you worked?  
152 Oliver: Yes, I agree that my employees work hard and are responsible. In the (John)  
153 other hand, I have to say that they are still ~~work hard~~ <sup>in these sides</sup> ~~in these sides~~ <sup>managers</sup>  
154 When I were an employee, I and my colleagues only thought about  
155 how to finish the task effectively, without other thinking. For example  
156 I was a ~~beginner of engineer~~ <sup>at that time</sup>, I have corrected ~~problem~~ <sup>problem</sup>  
157 for one of our customers until midnight in their company. The ~~only~~ <sup>step</sup>  
158 idea that comes to my mind is to solve this problem, otherwise, I can't  
159 pay for company's product. I did not think about my time and ~~pay~~  
160 at all. In the early, I have told a story about my employees waiting for  
161 the receivable payment until 8 clock, I would like comment that is a  
162 ~~result of my management~~ <sup>positive mind</sup>. But in my generation, it was spontaneous  
163 and each one would do that. Take my company as a case, a theory can  
164 be proved that these young employees can be trained and taught. They  
165 will reach what the manager expected if the management is reasonable.  
166 J. Could you suggest some reasonable managing behaviour?  
167 Oliver: ~~It depends on the different company and different stage.~~ <sup>For the big organization</sup>  
168 company, or a well-developed private company, the systematic <sup>of private</sup>  
169 regulation is a key and plus emotional MGT. Compare to other  
170 generation, these YEs more adventurous, plus they are inexperienced,  
171 some reasonable restriction is necessary. ~~Emotional MGT plays a~~ <sup>disposition for</sup>  
172 predominant role in an underway private company, because of it  
173 unquestionably lays on the employees in the early stage. One boss or  
174 manager's energy certainly is limited, the employees' will multiple the  
175 boss's energy and drive the company's development. No matter which  
176 stage the company is in, understanding them and a soft style will be  
177 expected by them. ~~At this time, with a sense that they are the core staff~~ <sup>of</sup>  
178 the company and ~~the company has come to a stage~~ <sup>Secondly,</sup>  
179 ~~listen to their voice by the decision-making.~~ <sup>The manager must</sup>  
180 welcome them to express their idea in the company's ~~decision-making~~  
181 In fact, their idea is accepted or rejected does not bother them much,  
182 they expect to be regarded by the company. Thirdly, the managing  
183 combine with ~~their idea~~ <sup>is accepted by them more than a cold</sup>  
184 management. Thirdly, the manager will ~~look at their improvement~~ <sup>of</sup>  
185 ~~possibility.~~ <sup>Most of them are look like a blank paper when they join in</sup>  
186 the company since they are inexperienced and unskilled. Their future  
187 work attitude or style ~~in many cases are questions for current managers~~ <sup>because of</sup>  
188 As a manager, we should regard their advancement as an outcome of  
189 our teaching and training. We should happy for their progress and  
190 provide more opportunities for them. At last, they unquestionably will  
191 become the mainstream in the company. If there is a big gap between  
192 them and the manager and a change is necessary, I am afraid the  
193 changed one is the manager. The manager ~~should find out their~~ <sup>best practice</sup>  
194 ~~and therefore to adjust themselves.~~ <sup>It is quite impossible to ask them</sup>  
195 accord to the manager since they ~~will make a decision to leave~~ <sup>well,</sup> it  
196 will be perfect that the employees work hard and a minimal conflict  
197 between them and the manager, such as my company.  
198 <sup>Result of</sup>  
<sup>unsuccessful</sup>  
<sup>MGT.</sup>

Appendix V Example of Theme Map





## Appendix VI Individual Participant Profile

| Participant | Age   | Education   | Participant Profile  |
|-------------|-------|---|--|
| A           | A-DM1 | 60<br>Bachelor –China university  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● He joined this institution after he graduated 30 years ago</li> <li>● He has spent his whole life for this job</li> <li>● He is leading technology department</li> <li>● The majority of employees in his department are the young employees</li> </ul>   |
|             | A-DM2 | 37<br>Bachelor degree in Business Administration  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● He only has one job so far. He has worked 15 years for this institution, and worked in the technology, sales and product department previously</li> <li>● Significantly, he is the winner of China National Labour Rewarding</li> <li>● Currently, he is the manager of product department</li> </ul>   |
|             | A-YE1 | 27<br>Bachelor --China Univeristy<br>Current part-time MBA  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● He has wokred in this institution for three years, and this is the only job he had after he graduated from university</li> <li>● His department manager previously worked in the army, and is above 50's years old</li> </ul>   |
|             | A-YE2 | 26<br>MA in Computing Science   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This is his first job</li> <li>● He has worked one year in technology department</li> </ul>   |
| B           | B-DM1 | 34<br>Bachelor<br>Current part-time MBA   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● He has 15 years working experience and served for three jobs</li> <li>● He acted as a sales man in a state owned pharmaceutical company for 7 years after he received a diploma</li> <li>● Later, he moved to a multinational company to charge company's sales in Northern China</li> <li>● He is the manager of sales department. The about 80% of his staffs are youth who were born after 1980's</li> </ul> |
|             | B-DM2 | 33<br>BA in Computing Science<br>Current part-time EMBA (Executive Master of Business Administration) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Three years working experience in this company</li> <li>● Previously, he has worked in other multinational IT companies</li> <li>● He is the manager of marketing department. All of the employees in his department are 'post 80's'</li> </ul>   |
|             | B-DM3 | 28<br>College Graduate  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● She graduated from the college in 2001, from then to 2003, she worked as an account assistant in an account firm</li> <li>● She has worked in a joint venture company from 2003 to 2005</li> <li>● She came to this company in 2005 with the promotion of being a financial</li> </ul>  |

|          |              |    |  |   |
|----------|--------------|----|--|---|
|          |              |    |  | department manager. 7 'post 80's' work in her department  |
|          | <b>B-DM4</b> | 36 | Bachelor   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 10 years of working experience in the state owned company</li> <li>● He joined this company 4 years ago</li> <li>● He is the manager of retail department, and also the eldest one in the department. All of his subordinators are 'post 80's'</li> </ul>  |
|          | <b>B-YE1</b> | 28 | Twinning programme---<br>China university one and half year and three years in Holland, subject to International Business and Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One and half year of working experience in a Holland company</li> <li>● Three years working experience in this company</li> <li>● He just shifted to information department from other department one month ago before the interview</li> <li>● During the three years, he had four department managers. The first three are Chinese who are an above 30's female and two males above 30' and 40's. His current department manager is a American above 40's</li> </ul> |
|          | <b>B-YE2</b> | 26 | MA in Overseas---<br>UK  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This is his first job</li> <li>● He has worked in this company for two years</li> </ul>  |
|          | <b>B-YE3</b> | 24 | College Graduate   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● She had three jobs until now</li> <li>● She has worked in this company for 2 years</li> <li>● Her department manager is a 35 years male</li> </ul>   |
|          | <b>B-YE4</b> | 26 | College Graduate   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is her second job</li> <li>● Her first job in a Japanese company</li> <li>● She is an order entry cleck in the Sales department</li> </ul>  |
| <b>C</b> | <b>C-DM1</b> | 33 | Bachelor --China Univeristy  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Three years working experience in a stated owned company</li> <li>● Five years working experience in a government bank</li> <li>● Three years working experience for this job</li> <li>● The manager of service department</li> <li>● At the moment, there are 6 young employees in his department</li> </ul>  |
|          | <b>C-DM2</b> | 44 | MBA from Oversea University  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Previous working experience in other famous multinational IT company</li> <li>● Currently, he leads above 20 young employees in in-country sales department</li> </ul>   |
|          | <b>C-DM3</b> | 28 | Diploma in Business  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● She had four jobs during five years</li> <li>● She acted as the assistant of MD (Managing Director) in her first two jobs</li> <li>● She became to a public relations manager from her third job</li> <li>● Each of above jobs lasts one year period</li> <li>● She serves for this company for two years</li> <li>● The manager of marketing department</li> <li>● Her followers are aged similar to her.</li> </ul>  |
|          | <b>C-DM4</b> | 41 | Bachelor --China Univeristy  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● She was a graduate of HRM (Human Resource Management) in Renmin University of China, which is a top university</li> </ul>  |

|              |              |                                      |  |   |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
|              |              |                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in China subject to HRM</li> <li>● She moved to this company 4 years ago and currently is a HR manager for the company</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>C-YE1</b> | 26           | Bachelor --China Univeristy          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is her first job</li> <li>● she works in customer service department</li> </ul>  |   |
| <b>C-YE2</b> | 22           | College Graduate                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is her second job</li> <li>● Her first job was in Lexus where she only worked for two months</li> <li>● She has worked in this company for one year</li> <li>● Her manager is a 38 years old male</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>C-YE3</b> | 27           |                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● She was dealing with her resign when the interview conducted. She claimed that there was no any problem between the company and her, the reason for her resign was she wanted to find a more interesting job</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>C-YE4</b> | 27           | Bachelor –Inti University, Malaysia  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● His first job was a computing programmer in a Malaysia computing company</li> <li>● With one year working experience in above Malaysia company, he joined this company two years ago</li> <li>● In the Malaysia company, his department manager is a 35 years old Malay-Chinese and his current department manager is above 40 years</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>C-YE5</b> | 25           | Bachelor – Birmingham Univeristy, UK | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One year working experience in a UK company</li> <li>● He came back to China and joined in this company one year ago</li> <li>● His department manager is 46 years old and has worked in a state owned company previously</li> </ul>  |   |
| <b>D</b>     | <b>D-OM1</b> | 37                                   | BA in Computing Science  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● He was a computing engineer in a joint venture company before he established this company with his partner in 2000</li> <li>● He deals with the company's technology, sales and employees management</li> </ul>  |
|              | <b>D-YE1</b> | 28                                   | Bachelor –Help University, Malaysia  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● She started her first job after she came back from Malaysia, and left it after two months.</li> <li>● After near seven months unemployment, she joined in this company and she has worked for two year until now</li> </ul>  |
|              | <b>D-YE2</b> | 25                                   | College Graduate   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● He joined this company one and half years ago</li> <li>● He has served other two private companies previously.</li> <li>● He wishes to operate own company in the later, thus, he would like gain more knowledge of priavte company and regards his working as investment before his dream become to ture</li> </ul> |
|              | <b>D-YE3</b> | 24                                   | Bachelor --China Univeristy  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● She has experienced three jobs during two years</li> <li>● This is the third one and also the longest one, which takes 9 months period so far</li> </ul>   |

|   |       |    |                                |  |
|---|-------|----|--------------------------------|--|
| E | E-OM1 | 35 | Bachelor --China<br>Univeristy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● He established this company five years ago, when he was 30 years old</li><li>● He had employed about 20 'post 80's' previously, and later he fired all of them. At the time, there is no 'post 80's' work in his company</li><li>● He does not plan to employ 'post 80's' in the further</li></ul> |
|---|-------|----|--------------------------------|--|

## Appendix VII Notes

1. **Blue and White Porcela** is a song of Jay Chou. Jay Chou is a Tainwanness musician, singer who has won the World Music Award.His music has gained recognition throughout Asia, most notably in China, Japan, Hong Kong, Malayisa, Sngapore, Vietnam and inoverseas Asian communities ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jay\\_chou](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jay_chou)).
2. **Hot pot** is Chinese food. It refers to several Chinese varieties of steamboat stew ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hot\\_pot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hot_pot)).
3. **May Golden Week** is the name given to 7 days Labor holidays in mainland China ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden\\_Week](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Week))
4. **Jack Ma (Chinese: YunMa)** is founder and chief operating officer of Alibaba Group. Alibaba Group is a E-commerce company, specializing in global trading. It was founded in 1999, and operates five E-commerce sub-companies which operate different aspects of trading. In 2008, alibab.com which attractes at least 23 million visitors of which 65 percent hail from China (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ma-Yun>).
5. **Chuanzhi Liu** is a head founder of the large computer international company Lenovo, whose English name as originally Legend in China ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liu\\_Chuanzhi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liu_Chuanzhi)).