

**Examination of Influences of Cultural Dimensions on Three  
Components of Career Commitment in Dutch and Chinese  
Cultures**

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

There is no doubt that the issue of career commitment has drawn great attention from both scholars and managers in the last two decades. This could be explained partially by the fact that organizational commitment is considered as a predictor of turnover and work-related behaviors, such as performance, absenteeism, and organizational citizenship (Meyer & Allen, 1991). To correctly and effectively use commitment to predict and produce desired behaviors, it is important to first understand the nature of commitment, and the variables serving as antecedents of commitment. Moreover, with increasing globalization in the modern societies, many companies attempt to expand their business overseas to different markets in different cultures, and it is a common phenomena that these international companies recruit local employees from the local labor markets. Arguably, without the knowledge about the antecedent variables of career commitment, predicting and generating desired behaviors could be even more difficult concerning a cross-culture workforce. Thus, it is reasonable to state that for both theoretical and practical purposes, the study of the antecedents of career commitment on the cultural level is necessarily important, and it suggests that this current research should be derived from both theoretical relevant and practical relevant bases.

### 1.1. Theoretical Relevant Base

To date, more and more studies and researches have focused on commitment relevant to various objectives in different cultures. Lee, Allen, Meyer, and Rhee (2001) in their study with Korean samples have reported that Meyer and Allen (1991)'s three-component model of commitment could be adequately generalized and operated in Asian culture, and valid and reliable measurement for sample groups outside the North America could be developed based on the items imported from North America. They also pointed out that to properly perform researches regarding cross-culture comparison, a careful attention needs to be paid on the revision of measurement to avoid translation- and expression-based differences. Moreover, Myer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky (2002) in their meta-analysis of the three-component model stated that besides translation- and expression-based differences, culture-based differences also exist in the correlations between antecedents and components of commitment, components of commitment and outcomes, and correlations among three components. They also noted that revising items based on relevant culture-based differences might receive a distinguishable conceptualization of the three-component construct of commitment. Wasti (2002) in her research also supported the generalizability of the three-component model by testing the three components and their antecedents and outcomes in the Turkish context. Furthermore, she also added and tested culture-specific variables as antecedents of affective and calculative commitment, such as loyalty norms, ingroup approval and so on, and she concluded that values of collectivism as one dimension of culture have influences on the construct of commitment. However, the studies mentioned above only examine cultural influences on commitment towards organizations. According to Myer and Herscovitch (2001), this three-component model could be generalized into other domains,

such as career commitment. Moreover, since career commitment concerning employee's attitude towards one's entire career life rather than a relatively more specific target as organization, arguably, the influences of cultural values might be more significantly traced in the domain of career commitment compared to organizational commitment. Hence, it is meaningful to choose the focus of career commitment in this study to further examine the three-component model of workplace commitment under the influences of cultural dimensions.

## 1.2. Practical Relevant Base

Recently, the notion of competitive advantages is intensively discussed and pursued by companies using various strategies. Many companies (e.g. 3M and Dow Chemical) believe that the competitive advantage of the company is mainly derived from company's human resources, the people<sup>1</sup>. A more specific question is that how to make employees contribute to and enhance the competitive advantages of the company. As mentioned above, workplace commitment is considered as the predictor and contributor to particular desired behaviors. Hence, many companies in pursuit of competitive advantage have paid a lot attention on how to foster employees' commitment. According to Beer, Spector, and Lawrence (1984), commitment is one of the short-term outcomes of HRM policies and practices, and commitment could influence the determination and formation of HRM policies and practices. Thus, for companies, to conduct effective HRM policies and practices that generate employee commitment, they need to understand the predictors or antecedents of various forms of commitment.

Moreover, as noted earlier, globalization and international business allow companies to recruit employees from different cultures. It is not a secret that effective management strategies or HRM policies and practices for one culture (e.g. European culture) might not be or be less suitable for another culture (e.g. Asian culture or American culture)<sup>2</sup>. With different cultural and/or organizational values and norms in the workforce, proper and effective HRM policies and practices can not be made without understanding the different sets of cultural values and the influences of cultural values on commitment. In this study, the focus is on career commitment, which means individual's attitude towards one's vocation, including a profession (Blau 1988). Hence, for practical concerns, the choice of this focus of career commitment in this study might provide companies a broader and more employee-centered view of commitment, and also help companies develop HR policies and practices that allow employees to achieve their personal career goals and at the same time combine their personal career goals with companies' business goals. To sum up, for companies, especially for international companies, it is necessary and important to gain the knowledge about how career commitment can be predicted and how cultural values contribute to the function of antecedents of commitment so that they could adjust their management strategies and HRM policies and practices to best foster commitment in employees and to achieve desired goals.

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<sup>1</sup> Enabling People Success at Dow Chemicals

<sup>2</sup> Computer & Management Trainings Profile

### 1.3. Research Question

Based on the theoretical and practical relevancy, two main issues are raised: the present research aims at testing the influences of conceptualized cultural values as antecedents on the three components of career commitment in Dutch and Chinese cultures, and attempt to explain the different results in career commitment by cultural differences. The formal research question is stated below:

**Do cultural values and norms, conceptualized as five cultural dimensions, influence affective, calculative, and normative career commitment in Dutch and Chinese cultures?**

To help understand the research question better and to find out the answers to the research question at the end of the research, a number of sub-questions are developed, and they are presented as following:

1. What is commitment?
2. What are the components of commitment?
3. What are the antecedents of the different components of commitment?
4. What are the consequences of commitment?
5. What is career commitment?
6. What are the five dimensions of culture values?
7. What are the aspects of Dutch and Chinese cultures based on the five cultural dimensions?
8. How could different cultural values, namely Dutch and Chinese cultures, influence each form of career commitment?

### 1.4. Arrangement of the Paper

For a preview of the structure of this paper, theories of commitment, including definition, components, antecedents and consequences, and conceptualization of five cultural dimensions will be presented in the Theoretical Chapter. In the methodology chapter, the descriptions of the sample groups and data collection procedures, variables and corresponding measurements, and the process of data analysis are presented in section 3.1 to section 3.5. The results of data analysis and the discussion about the results will be illustrated in the discussion chapter. At last, the conclusion will be made to answer the research question.

## **Chapter Two: Literatures and Theories**

This chapter focuses on an explanation of the dependent and independent variables of the present research: respectively (career) commitment and cultural dimensions. For the theories concerning career commitment, first, the discussion of definition and targets of commitment is presented in section 2.1 and 2.2. Second, the conceptualizations of three components of commitment, namely affective, calculative, and normative commitment are demonstrated in the section 2.3.1, followed by the discussion of identified antecedents of the three components of commitment in section 2.3.2. Third, the consequences of commitment and several outcome variables are demonstrated in section 2.4. Finally, in section 2.5, the definition of career commitment is presented. For the discussion about the five cultural dimensions, the definitions and implications of the five cultural dimensions are discussed in section 2.6, and in section 2.7, the aspects of Dutch and Chinese cultures based on the five cultural dimensions are presented. In section 2.8, several critiques on Hofstede's conceptualizations of five cultural dimensions are illustrated. Furthermore, to combine the parts of antecedents of commitment and the five cultural dimensions, a number of hypotheses are made to indicate the possibilities of how cultural values as potential antecedents influence different components of career commitment.

### 2.1. The Definition of Commitment

By reviewing a list of definitions of commitment provided by various sources, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) noted that although these definitions differed in the agreement about dimensionality (unidimensional vs. multidimensional) or forms, and targets of commitment (organization, occupation, union, etc.), a “*core essence*” should exist among different forms or dimensions of commitment. To find out what is this “core essence”, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) summarized two similarities based on the definitions which they believed conceptualizing commitment “in general”: (a) commitment is a stabilizing force and (b) commitment gives directions to behavior. Furthermore, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) argued that commitment with the “core essence” should be identified as a distinguished construct from other constructs, in other words, the construct of commitment was more than a motive to engage in certain behaviors or a positive attitudes towards certain targets. To sum up, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) proposed the definition of commitment as: “Commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets”, and “commitment is distinguishable from exchange-based forms of motivation and from target-relevant attitudes, and can influence behavior even in the absence of extrinsic motivation or positive attitudes” (p. 301).

### 2.2. Objectives of Commitment

According to Meyer and Herscovitch (2001)'s definition, commitment is a binding force between individuals and one or more targets to which the individual committed. To fully

present the definition of commitment, it is necessary to understand to what targets the commitment is directed. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) noticed that based on previous literature, the targets of commitment could be organization, occupation, goal, union, job, and so on, which fell into two categories: a course of action (intended outcome of behavior, e.g. goal) or an entity (e.g. organization and union etc.). They believed that the targets as behaviors and as entities in the context of commitment direction were closely, albeit might not be explicitly, associated. They argued that when referring commitment to an entity, the behavioral outcomes were usually considered; and when referring commitment to certain behaviors, the entity context was usually relevant. Thus, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) suggested that the targets of commitment could be both explicit and implicit, and in order to measure and predict behavioral outcomes more accurately, commitment should be viewed as being directed at both entity and course of action. For this research, the main focus is placed on career commitment as a more specified objective of commitment, and the details of career commitment will be explained in section 2.5.

### 2.3. Definitions and Antecedents of Three Components of Commitment

Based on previous literature, the disagreement about the conceptualization of commitment also concerns the discussion of the dimensionality or forms of commitment construct. The various conceptualizations of the dimensionality of commitment, believed by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), mainly differ in the nature of the “*mind-set*” that characterizes commitment. They pointed out that among those conceptualizations which viewed commitment as a multidimensional construct, differences in the various dimensions (forms or components) were also made by the different nature of the mind-set underlying the commitment constructs. Agreed with other authors, Meyer and colleagues (e.g. Allen and Meyer 1990; Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer et al. 1993; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001) believed that commitment was a multidimensional construct, and the mind-set characterizing commitment construct mainly reflected three motives: the affective attachment to the targets, perceived costs of terminating the relation with the targets and perceived availability of alternatives, and the feeling of obligation to remain binding with the targets. They labeled these three motives or bases: affective commitment, continuance commitment (the use of terms of continuance commitment or calculative commitment will be discussed in the next section, and before that the term of continuance commitment will be temporarily used), and normative commitment. Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment should better be considered as components rather than types of commitment, because these three components reflected distinguishable, but not mutually exclusive, nature of mind-set or psychological states underlying commitment construct. This three-component conceptualization of commitment was supported by many researches (Allen & Meyer 1996; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnysky 2002). Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) concluded that “(t)he mind-set accompanying commitment can take varying forms including desire, perceived cost, or obligation to continue a course of action. These mind-sets reflect distinguishable components of the underlying commitment construct” (p. 308). Details about the three distinguishable mind-sets and the different antecedents of the three components of commitment will be

discussed in the next section.

### *2.3.1. Definitions of Three Components of Commitment*

As discussed in the previous section, Meyer and colleagues believed commitment was a three-dimension or three-component construct, and Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested that individual might experience all three components of commitment to varying degree. Although the definitions of the three components of commitment offered by Meyer and colleagues (1990; 1991) were developed in the organizational context, according to Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), the conclusions could be generalized to other workplace commitment.

Firstly, Allen and Meyer (1990) stated that affective commitment reflected individual's desire to maintain relations with the targets to which one committed, and individuals who experienced strong affective commitment remained within the entity or course of action, because they wanted to. Thus, Allen and Meyer (1990) defined affective commitment as "affective or emotional attachment to the organization such that the strongly committed individual identifies with, is involved in, and enjoys the membership in, the organization" (p.2).

Secondly, Meyer and Allen (1991; Allen and Meyer 1990) labeled the second component of commitment as continuance commitment, and defined it as: the investments/costs perceived by the individual associated with terminating the relations with entity or a course of action, and the perceived availability of feasible alternatives.

According to Meyer and Allen (1991), some authors used the term "calculative" to describe this kind of commitment associated with the perception of costs and benefits. To clarify the uses of terms, it is necessary to view Becker (1960)'s side-bet theory. Becker (1960) viewed commitment as an explanatory variable of "consistent lines of activity" (p.33), and he noted that this kind of commitment was achieved by making a "side bet" (p. 35). According to Becker (1960), the side-bet could be things perceived valuable, in economic or psychological sense, by the individual, such as potential pension, time, reputation, and ease of performance etc. He suggested that individual engaged in the consistent lines of activity, because the side bets that they made both consciously and subconsciously were too "expensive" to lose when one discontinued the activity. Moreover, Becker (1960) pointed out that to achieve the commitment, individual needed to take prior actions that made the side-bet/investments, and then needed to recognize it. Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that compared to their definition that emphasized commitment as a psychological state (i.e. recognition of the costs and alternatives), Becker's side-bet theory emphasized the continuation of consistent lines of behaviors, and it considered the behaviors (i.e. prior actions that made the side-bet) as the initiation of the commitment. Thus, according to Meyer and Allen (1991)'s definition presented above, calculative commitment could be considered as a better word to reflect individual's perception of/attitude toward the costs/investments and availability of alternatives.



Furthermore, according to McGee and Ford (1987)'s examination of the calculative component, calculative commitment included two dimensions: (a) perceived costs/investments or personal sacrifices associated with leaving the organization, and (b) low availability of alternatives perceived. Becker (1960) in his side-bet theory suggested that when the costs associated with leaving the current position were perceived too expensive, individual might not perceive any other alternatives feasible. In other words, the individual's perception of the costs might influence one's perception of the availability of alternatives. This finding was proved by Meyer et al. (2002) by using the meta-analysis, which reported a high correlation between the subscale of costs and subscale of lack of alternatives. They also reported the correlations between the subscales and both affective commitment scale and normative commitment scale were opposite in sign. To sum up, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) assumed that these two dimensions were two bases for the same commitment mind-set, and suggested further research to make the issue resolved.

Finally, Meyer and Allen (1991) defined normative commitment as perceived feeling of obligation to remain with the relations with the entity or course of actions. Meyer and colleagues (Meyer and Allen 1991; Allen and Meyer 1990; Meyer et al. 1993; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001) pointed out that the feeling of obligation might be derived from two bases: internalized normative pressure and the need to reciprocate. Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested that normative commitment characterized the mind-set which reflected individual's personal norms (e.g. moral obligation) and their need to pay back certain benefits or investment the organization made beforehand (e.g. training).

### *2.3.2. Antecedents of the Three Components of Commitment*

Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) believed that since the three components of commitment reflected three distinguishable mind-set characterized commitment construct, the three components would involve different variables that serve the functions of antecedents to each form of commitment.

Firstly, according to Allen and Meyer (1990), the mind-set characterized affective commitment reflected individual's desire to engage certain actions of relevance to certain targets. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) pointed out that the psychological state of desire was produced through three channels: involvement, shared value, and identification. Thus, they proposed that any personal or situational variable, which increased individual's involvement, recognition of shared value, and identification with the targets, could function as potential antecedents of affective commitment. Among those variables that identified as antecedents of affective commitment, Meyer and Allen (1991) categorized them into three groups: personal characteristics (e.g. age, gender, individual-environment relation etc.), organizational characteristics (e.g. decentralization of decision making process and supervisory support etc.), and positive work experiences. They also suggested that the positive work experience was the most influential predictor of affective commitment compared to personal and organizational characteristics. Meyer and Allen further argued that within the category of positive work experiences, variables could be divided into those contributed to develop individual's need of

feeling comfortable and those contributed to develop individual's work competences. They labeled the two sub-groups of work experiences: comfort and competence. Variables identified by Meyer and Allen (1991) in the "comfort" category included: confirmation of pre-entry expectation, equity in reward distribution, organizational support, supervisory consideration and so on; while variables in the "competence" category included: accomplishment, autonomy, opportunity for advancement and so on. The results of Meyer and Allen (1991)'s analysis of those variables within the category of work experiences suggested that a common set of relevant needs and values might exist influencing individual's perception of positive work experiences, and then influencing one's affective commitment.

Secondly, according to the definition of calculative commitment presented in the last section, Meyer and colleagues (Meyer and Allen 1991; Allen and Meyer 1990; Meyer et al. 1993; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001) identified the recognition of costs/investments and availability of alternatives as the antecedent variables of calculative commitment. However, McGee and Ford (1987) pointed out that "high personal sacrifice" and "low alternatives" are two distinct dimensions of calculative commitment, rather than antecedents. Regarding the issue of antecedents of calculative commitment, Becker (1960) proposed several potential variables, from which the side bets were derived and accumulated or the perceived availability of alternatives was lowered. He believed that side bets (e.g. reputation of being stable) could be made because of "the existence of generalized cultural expectations" (e.g. a culture values loyalty and responsibility) (p. 36), which might bring negative results for violating them. Side bets (e.g. pension) could also be made by the operation of bureaucratic arrangement (e.g. rules governing the pension fund). Moreover, side bets (e.g. ease of performance) could be made through the process of individual adjustment to social positions. Becker argued that individual might be so comfortable and accustomed to the requirement of one's current social position that one could not deal and fit with other positions as feasible alternatives. Thus, according to Becker and Meyer et al, it is reasonable to hypothesize that individual's perception of availability of alternatives and costs associated with terminating a course of action could be influenced by general values as potential antecedent variables on the macro level (e.g. culture).

Finally, as discussed earlier, Meyer and Allen (1991) noted that normative commitment was generated from the internalization of normative pressure through socialization and the need to reciprocate the benefits or investments offered beforehand (e.g. the costs of pre-employment training). They argued that both the internalization of norms and the "rewards in advance" created a feeling of obligation which helps create normative commitment (p. 72). Thus, they identified the antecedents of normative commitment as socializations (e.g. cultural, familial, and organizational socialization) and pre-paid investments. However, Meyer and colleagues (Meyer and Allen 1991; Allen and Meyer 1990; Meyer et al. 1993; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001) did not include and test systematical variables of values or norms as antecedents in their three-component framework of commitment.

#### 2.4. The Outcomes of the Three Components of Commitment

For the purpose of this research is to test the influences of cultural dimensions as potential antecedents on the three components of commitment, the outcomes of commitment is not the main focus, and they will be discussed briefly in this paragraph.

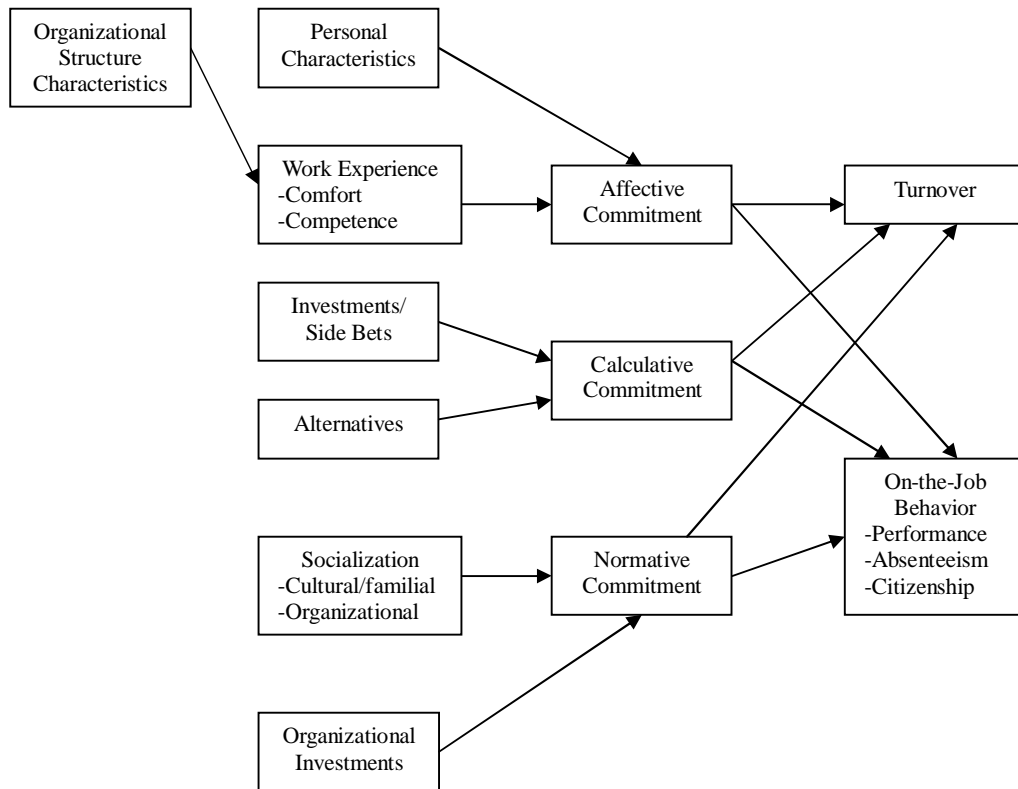
Although turnover has been studied most widely by the behavioral scientists as a correlated consequence of commitment, Meyer and Allen (1991) demonstrated that turnover/turnover intention and on-the-job behavior were both important outcomes of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) argued that since affective, calculative, and normative commitment reflected three different mind-sets, they would have distinguishable implications on the outcome behaviors. According to Meyer and Allen (1991) who considered commitment as a binding force between individuals and relevant targets, turnover or turnover intention is the outcome that implied by all three components of commitment, and the differences in terms of outcome behaviors among affective, calculative, and normative commitment would be reflected by the variety of on-the-job behavior. On-the-job behavior, suggested by Meyer and colleagues (Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer et al 2002), includes absenteeism, job performance, and citizenship.

Meyer et al. (2002) reported that all three components correlated negatively with turnover, turnover intention, and withdraw cognition, and for both turnover/turnover intention and on-the-job behavior, affective commitment showed a stronger correlation with outcome variables than normative and calculative commitment. They also found that absenteeism strongly and positively correlated with affective commitment, while negatively and moderately correlated with normative and calculative commitment; and both job performance and organizational citizenship behavior correlated positively with affective and normative commitment, while had a negative and near zero correlation with calculative commitment (Meyer et al. 2002). Moreover, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) suggested that since the three components of commitment would have independent influences on a particular behavior, the consequential effect of one single form of commitment on outcome behaviors would be moderated by other forms.

#### 2.5. Conceptualization of Career Commitment

A commonly used conceptualization and measurement of career commitment was developed by Blau in his series studies on target groups as registered nurses, insurance/newspaper employees, and bank tellers, which distinguished in different professional levels of their vocations (1985; 1988; 1989). By reviewing previous literature, Blau (1985; 1988; 1989) suggested that there was some extent of ambiguity and redundancy in the conceptualization and measurement of career commitment with other related constructs, such as job involvement and organizational commitment. In order to avoid the overlap with other constructs mentioned above, Blau (1985) defined career commitment as “one’s attitude towards one’s profession or vocation” (p. 278), and later he revised the definition to “one’s

attitude towards one's vocation, including a profession", by arguing that profession was one type of vocations (Blau 1988, p. 295). In his studies, Blau reported that career commitment could be reliably and distinguishably, albeit with a moderate correlation, operated and measured from job involvement and organizational commitment, and proved the reliability and discriminant validity of his 7-item measure of career commitment.



**Figure 1.** Meyer and Allen (1991: 68)'s Three-component Model of Commitment

However, based on Meyer and Herscovitch (2001)'s framework of workplace commitment, two limitations of Blau's studies could be detected. First, according to Blau's definition of career commitment presented above, he considered career commitment as a unidimensional construct. As described by Meyer and colleagues in their multidimensional framework, the nature of commitment is the underlying mind set that characterizes commitment, and workplace commitment involves distinguishable components, namely affective, calculative, and normative commitment, that reflect different features of the mind sets. Blau's studies have tended to neglect these distinguishable features of the underlying mind sets. Second, Blau's studies have more focused on the development of measurement and testing the reliability and validity of the scale, and paid little attention on identifying the antecedents of the career commitment construct. Although Blau tested several variables in the categories of personal and situational characteristics in London (1983)'s career motivation model as potential predictors of career commitment, how and why these variables influence career

commitment was not mentioned.

Thus, to understand the different nature of individual's psychological states towards one's career more clearly and completely, Meyer et al. (1993) suggested that career commitment should also be conceptualized in a multidimensional approach, and Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) also noted that although their three-component conceptualization of workplace commitment was mainly developed based on organizational literature, the general framework could be applied to other commitment constructs, namely career commitment. As demonstrated by Meyer et al. (1993), the definitions and antecedents of the three components of career commitment, affective, calculative, and normative commitment, were consistent with Meyer and Allen (1991)'s three-component model of organizational commitment, which were presented in the Section 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. Moreover, for the purpose of measuring career commitment reliably and validly, Meyer et al. (1993) revised the measurement based on organizational commitment and developed a three-factor scale, which correspondingly measured affective, calculative, and normative commitment. The details of their three-factor scale for career commitment will be discussed in the methodology chapter.

## 2.6. Definitions of Hofstede's Five Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede (1997) defined culture as "collective mental programming: it is that part of our conditioning that we share with other members of our nation, region, or group but with not with members of other nations, regions, or groups". Based on the scores obtained from 53 countries and regions, Hofstede (1980; 1988) summarized five cultural dimensions: power distance, collectivism vs. individualism, femininity vs. masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long- vs. short-term orientation, which reflected a society's cultural values and norms. Hofstede's studies provided an empirical foundation for understanding how the values and norms influence individuals' mind sets on the cultural level.

### *2.6.1. High vs. Low Power Distance*

According to Hofstede (1980), power distance referred to the degree of equality and inequality and the extend to which less powerful members expect and accept unequal power and wealth distribution within a society. Hofstede noted that high power distance cultures were more likely to follow a caste system that did not allow significant upward mobility of its citizens. And these high power distance societies tend to have centralized political power and establish tall hierarchies in organizations (e.g. family and company) with large difference in salaries and status. In the organizational context, clear distinction in the power and status between supervisors and subordinate is usually observed, and the subordinates tend to have little influence on and involvement in the decision making process. Moreover, Individuals on the higher level of hierarchy expect respect and obedience; subordinates are expected to be told what to do, to absolutely follow the order, and to do exactly what they are told. On the other hand, low power distance societies de-emphasize the differences between citizens' power and wealth, equality and opportunity for everyone is expected and desired. In the organizational context, low power distance societies have flatter hierarchies in organizations;

supervisors are expected to consult subordinates' opinions and ideas in daily work; employees tend to have more influence and involvement in the decision making process; and subordinates and supervisors are believed to be interchangeable. To sum up, the values of respect to the authority and acceptance of inequality are emphasized in high power distance cultures, while the value of mutual respect and equality are emphasized in low power distance cultures.

### 2.6.2. *Collectivism vs. Individualism*

Collectivism vs. individualism refers to the degree that the society reinforces individual or collective achievement and interpersonal relationships, which implies the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. Hofstede (1980) suggested that high individualism societies believed that individuality and individual right were paramount within the society, and loose interpersonal relationships were easily developed: individuals were expected to look after themselves and their immediate family only. Moreover, these societies place individual social-economic interests over the group, maintain strong rights to privacy, nurture strong private opinions, emphasize the political power of voters, maintain strong freedom of the press, and profess the ideologies of self-actualization, self-realization, self-government, and freedom. High collectivism societies believe everyone should take responsibility for fellow members of their group to maintain a harmonious interdependence, and the interpersonal relationships are collective and close. In these societies, individuals are integrated from birth into cohesive groups (e.g. extended family and organizations), which protect them in exchange of unquestioning loyalty. High collectivism societies place collective social-economic interests over the individual, favor laws and rights for groups over individuals, and profess the ideologies of harmony and consensus, and individuals are expected to behave in pursuit of collective interests for all the members of the group. Thus, to sum up, the values of loyalty and responsibility are emphasized and desired in collective culture, while the values of individual's interests/benefits and independence are emphasized in individualistic culture (Hofstede 1980).

According to the discussion above, Hofstede (1980)'s conceptualization of collectivism and individualism mainly focused on cultural or national level, and assumed that all members in the culture or country are homogeneous on the collectivism and individualism dimension (Shulruf et al. 2003). Triandis and Gelfand (1998) argued that there are different kinds of individualism and collectivism, and on the individual level, the collectivism and individualism dimension could be defined by four patterns: vertical individualism (VI), vertical collectivism (VC), horizontal individualism (HI), and horizontal collectivism (HC). They stated that the vertical and horizontal patterns differed in the relative emphases on the vertical or horizontal social relationships (e.g. emphases on hierarchy and status). More specifically, horizontal pattern referred to "one self is more or less like every other self", while vertical pattern referred to "one self is different from other selves" (p. 119). Furthermore, they defined HI as the desire of individual to be unique and distinct from groups without seeking high social status; VI was defined as the desire of individual to seek high and distinguished status through competitions; HC was recognized as senses of similar with

others emphasizing common goals with the group and interdependency; VC was recognized as senses of emphasizing integrity, sacrifice of personal goals for in-group goals, and submission to authority. To test the validity of the vertical-horizontal approach of collectivism and individualism, Triandis and Gelfand (1998) developed a vertical-horizontal scale, and the detail of this scale will be discussed in the methodology chapter.

### *2.6.3. Femininity vs. masculinity*

Femininity vs. masculinity refers to the degree the society reinforces, or does not reinforce, the traditional masculine work role model of male achievement, control, and power. The level of femininity or masculinity indicates the degree of gender differences in power and various statuses within the society. In other words, in masculine cultures, emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: males are expected to be assertive, tough and focused on material success, and females are expected to be tender and focused on quality of life. In feminine cultures, the emotional gender roles are observed overlapped: both males and females are expected to be modest, tender, and focused on quality of life. He also found that in masculine countries, males dominated a significant portion of the society and power structure, with females being controlled by male domination; and in feminine countries, females are treated equally to males in all aspects of the society. Hofstede also illustrated that traditional masculine goals included: earnings, recognition, advancement, and challenge, while traditional feminine goals included: good relations with supervisors, peers, and subordinates; good living and working conditions; and employment security (Hofstede 1980).

### *2.6.4. Uncertainty avoidance vs. Uncertainty Acceptance*

Uncertainty avoidance refers to a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, and it indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations refer to situations that are novel, unknown, surprising, and different from usual. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by strict laws, rules, regulations, and controls in order to reduce the uncertainty. Individuals in uncertainty avoiding countries are also more emotional, and motivated by inner nervous energy. However, uncertainty accepting cultures concern less about ambiguity and uncertainty and have more tolerance for a variety of opinions. This is reflected in a society that is less rule-oriented, more readily accepts change, and takes more and greater risks. Individuals within these cultures are more phlegmatic and contemplative, and they are not expected by using their environment to express emotions. Further more, on the work-related level, Hofstede noted that in the uncertainty avoiding cultures, longer career commitment was expected and valued, and individuals expect structure in organization, career, and relationships to make situation interpretable and predictable; while in the uncertainty accepting cultures, individuals are more likely to expect challenges, risks, and flexibility/mobility. Thus, to sum up, value of stability is desired in uncertainty avoidance culture, while values of challenge and mobility are emphasized in uncertainty acceptance culture (Hofstede 1980).

### *2.6.5 Long- vs. short-term orientation*

Long- vs. short-term orientation refers to the extent to which a society exhibits a pragmatic future oriented perspective rather than a conventional historic or short term point of view. By studying the students from 23 countries, Hofstede (1988) pointed out that Asian countries scored highest on this dimension, while most western countries scored comparably low. He stated that long-term orientation countries believed in many truths, had a long term orientation and had thrift for investment, while cultures scoring low on this dimension believed in absolute truth, were conventional and traditional, had a short term orientation. Moreover, Hofstede (1988) showed that long-term orientation countries believed in and defined virtuous work-related behaviors as affective to acquire skills and education, working hard, and being patient. In the work related aspects, individuals in long-term oriented cultures tend to concern more about long-term benefits, both financially and psychologically, in the future, and valued long-term commitment towards organizations and career. In the contrast, individuals from short-term oriented cultures tend to pursue instant benefits and satisfaction.

## 2.7. Aspects of Five Cultural Dimensions in Dutch and Chinese Cultures

Another question attempted to be answered by this research is what differences are in the patterns of development of affective, calculative, and normative career commitment between Dutch and Chinese culture, contributed by different cultural values and norms. In the last section, common sets of cultural values and norms have been systematically conceptualized by Hofstede's five cultural dimensions. Then to answer the question, it is necessary to understand the different aspects of each cultural dimension in Dutch and Chinese cultures.

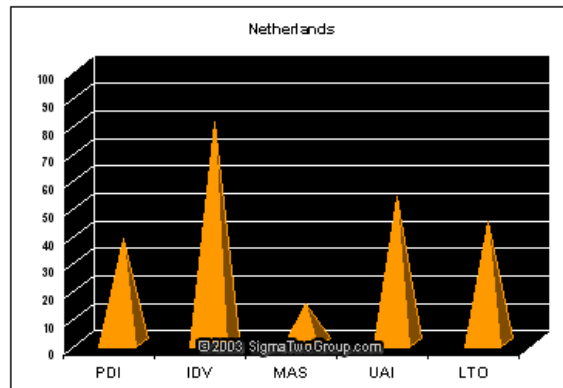
### *2.7.1. The Netherlands*

Hofstede<sup>3</sup> reported (presented in Figure 2.) that the Netherlands had the highest score on individualism (IDV) (score=80), which ranked the fourth highest individual score in the worldwide context. The high individualism score of the Netherlands indicates that the Netherlands is the society that has loose interpersonal relationship and more individualistic attitudes. Individuals in the Dutch culture are more self-reliant and look out for themselves and close family members. Privacy is considered as cultural norm, and individual pride and mutual respect is highly evaluated and appreciated. The second highest cultural dimension for the Netherlands is uncertainty avoidance (UAI), which marks the score of 53 and is close to the world average of 64. This moderate UAI score indicates a cultural tenancy to minimize or reduce the level of uncertainty within the population by enacting rules, laws, policies, and regulations. The following score of cultural dimension for the Netherlands is the long-term orientation (LTO) (score=44). As expected, this moderate LTO score is consistent with the level of the uncertainty avoidance of the Netherlands, and it reinforces the values of appreciating clarity and stability (e.g. long-term employment or involvement with one's career role). The score of power distance (PDI) of the Netherlands shows a close tie to its

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_netherlands.shtml](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_netherlands.shtml)



score of UAI. This relatively low PDI score (38) indicates that the Dutch people emphasize equality of power and wealth, decentralization of decision making process, and close relationship between subordinates and supervisors. The lowest score that the Netherlands marks is the score of masculinity (MAS) at 14. This low score of MAS indicates a low level

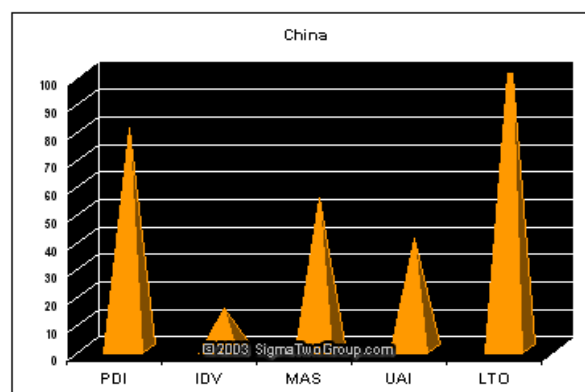


**Figure 2.** The Netherlands' Index Scores PDI=38, IDV=80, MAS=14, UAI=53, LTO=44<sup>4</sup>

of differentiation and discrimination between genders. In the Dutch culture, females are treated more equally to males in all respects of society, and it shows the values, which emphasize and appreciate good relationships with supervisors and employment security.

### 2.7.2. China

According to Hofstede's<sup>5</sup> index (presented in Figure 3.), China has the highest score on Long-term orientation (LTO) shared by all Asian cultures, which is 118. This index shows a society's time perspective and attitude of persevering, and the high score of LTO for China indicates that the population in China emphasize long-term orientation, and more likely to make plans toward long-term future. China's second highest score is on power distance (PDI)



**Figure 3.** China's Index Scores PDI=80, IDV=20, MAS=55, UAI=60, LTO=118<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_netherlands.shtml](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_netherlands.shtml)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_china.shtml](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_china.shtml)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_china.shtml](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_china.shtml)

ranking of 80 compared to the other Far East Asian countries' average of 60 and the world average of 55. This significantly high score of PDI for China shows a high level of inequality of power and wealth within the society, and also a high level of centralization of decision making. In this culture, respect to and following orders from the authority (usually the elder) are the cultural norms, and voice from lower hierarchies tends to be ignored. Another relatively high score for China is masculinity (MAS) compared to western culture, which marks 55. This score indicates a moderate level of inequality between genders, and the females are treated unequally in some aspects of society (e.g. occupation). As same as the Netherlands, China ranks an average score of 60 for uncertainty avoidance (UAI). This score is consistent with China's high rank on power distance. Due to the high level of centralization and tall hierarchies, organizations and events in this culture are highly structured and controlled. Individuals in China tend to pursue stable lives and works (e.g. jobs, occupations, and employers), rather than taking risks. The lowest score of cultural dimensions for China is individualism (IDV) at 20 compared to Asian average of 24. This low individualism score shows that the value of collectivist and loyalty is tightly held. Individuals in Chinese culture tend to look after members of a group (i.e. family, extended family, organizations), and at the same time everyone takes responsibilities for one's fellow members in the group.

### 2.8. Critiques on Hofstede's Studies

After presenting Hofstede's conceptualizations of five cultural dimensions, it is crucial to indicate that many literatures have challenged Hofstede's findings by criticizing both the assumptions based on which his claims are made and the research methods he used in those studies. To critically use Hofstede's conceptualization of cultural dimensions and his measurement, several major critiques are summarized here.

Firstly, as the start point of his conceptualization, Hofstede was inconsistent on using two notions of national culture. One definition of national culture he used as he selected the sample is that every individual in one culture shares a common national culture, but when he analyzed the data, he tended to use another different notion of national culture, which is "an average tendency" referring to a statistical average based on individual's views. This inconsistency of the use of the notion of national culture was challenged by the question: whether the sample Hofstede used could truly represent or reflect the national culture (McSweeney 2002: 93, 99, 100).

Secondly, the national representativeness of Hofstede's sample was also challenged by the fact that all respondents in his sample were from one organization (although different branches): IBM. According to McSweeney (2002), the narrowness of the sample is believed not nationally representative and not appropriate for cross-culture comparison.

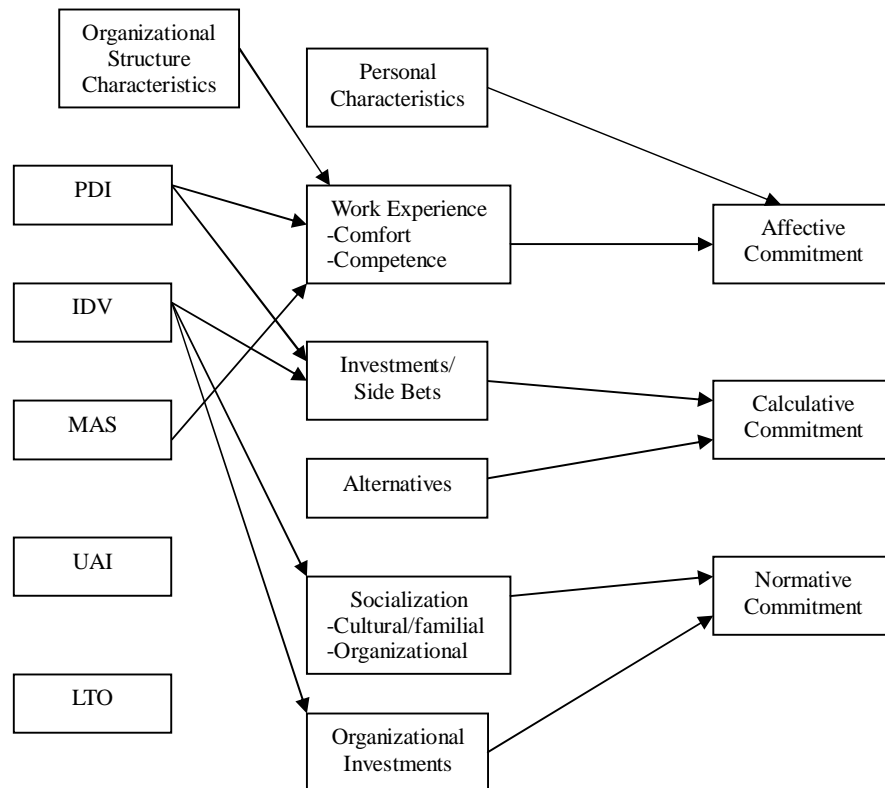
Finally, McSweeney (2002) also pointed out that all five cultural dimensions are defined by Hofstede as bi-polar dimensions, which means that each dimension is composed of contrasting positions. This critique was supported by Triandis and Gelfand (1998) in their study of collectivism and individualism. Triandis and Gelfand (1998)'s vertical-horizontal

approach suggested that individuals might reflect different individualism or collectivism in different situations or contexts, and one individual might carry both individualist and collectivist attitudes depends on different situation and emphases.

### 2.9. Hypotheses about the Influences of Cultural Dimensions on Career Commitment

Reviewing Meyer and colleagues (Meyer and Allen 1991; Meyer et al. 1993; Meyer and Herscovitch 2001))'s three-component model of commitment mentioned in section 2.3, they conceptualized the career commitment into three main components that reflected the underlying mind sets: affective (i.e. desire), calculative (i.e. need), and normative commitment (i.e. obligation). To demonstrate the development of each form of career commitment, they also identified positive work experience (i.e. comfort and competence), recognition of investments (side bets) and availability of alternatives, and socialization and organizational pre-paid investment as antecedents of affective, calculative, and normative commitment correspondingly. Moreover, as noticed in section 2.3, several authors have further suggested that cultural values could influence individual's feelings as positive work experiences, perceptions of costs and feasible alternatives, and internalized norms, and in turn influence and contribute to the development of each form of commitment.

In the empirical perspective, Meyer and colleagues' series studies had tested potential antecedents variables of commitment focusing on the organizational level. To further test Meyer and colleagues' theory about the mechanisms that contributed to the development of the three components of commitment, this research will focus on testing the influences of antecedents variables on the cultural level, conceptualized as five cultural dimensions, on affective, calculative, and normative commitment. Based on this point, several hypotheses have been made, and they are graphically presented in Figure 4.



**Figure 4.** Hypothesized Antecedents to Career Commitment

*(H1) Due to the differences in the dimension of power distance, Chinese employees experience lower level of affective commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*

As presented in section 2.3, decentralization of decision making process and equal treatment among employees are variables that contribute to develop positive work experiences, and consequently increase the affective commitment. This finding had been proved by Allen and Meyer (1990, study 2) who reported a strong positive correlation of .65 and .67 between “participation”, “equity”, and affective commitment. According to the features of power distance dimension presented in section 2.6.1, in high power distance culture, the decision making process is highly centralized, and with high hierarchy system, inequality in power and status among employees is expected and accepted. Thus, it is reasonable to presume that individuals in high power distance culture would experience lower level of affective commitment than individuals in low power distance culture do, because individuals in high power distance culture experience little involvement and employee influence, and more unequal treatment.

*(H2) Due to the differences in the dimension of power distance, Chinese employees experience higher level of calculative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*

Hofstede (1980) stated that high power distance cultures tended to have higher degree of inequality of distribution of power and wealth towards the authority or the elder, and the value of respect to the elder was broadly held. In other words, the authority or the elder in high power distance culture usually possesses more power and wealth. In the organizational context, these values in the high power distance society might influence individuals' perception toward membership in certain career as potential costs associated with leaving the career role. This hypothesis is consistent with Becker (1960)'s proposition that tenure would increase the side bets perceived by individuals, and result of Meyer et al. (1993 Study 2)'s study with registered nurse, which reported a correlation of .49 (beginning of year) and .43 (end of year) between calculative commitment and tenure. Moreover, since the high inequality of distribution of power and wealth, this tendency could be enhanced in high power distance culture, which means in high power distance culture, individuals might tend to remain with one's career longer for more power (i.e. opportunities to climb to higher hierarchy) and more wealth.

*(H3) Due to the differences in the dimension of collectivism or individualism, Chinese employees experience higher level of calculative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*

Becker (1960) had stated that side bet could be derived from "generalized cultural expectations", and presumed that in the culture that highly valued loyalty and responsibility, one form of side bets could be identified as the reputation of being stable, which was too "expensive" for individuals to lose by changing the job frequently (i.e. taking other alternatives) (p. 36). Hofstede (1980) found that in the collective culture, loyalty and responsibility were the values highly expected and held. Thus, it is presumably that individuals in collective culture would experience higher level of calculative commitment than who in the individualistic culture do. Moreover, this hypothesis has been tested by Wasti (2002) in the Turkish context by reporting a correlation of .20 between "norms of loyalty" and calculative commitment (p. 541).

*(H4) Due to the differences in the dimension of collectivism or individualism, Chinese employees experience higher level of normative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*

According to Hofstede (1980), in a collective culture, every one in the group shares the collective responsibilities and is expected to take responsibilities for one's fellow members in the group. Individuals in this culture might have much stronger feeling of obligation than those in the individualist cultures. This could be explained by that as Meyer and Allen (1991) suggested, the nature of normative commitment is the feeling of obligation, and this feeling of obligation could be derived from the need to reciprocate. In the case of collective culture,

group's protection is reciprocated for one's obligation to take responsibilities of other group members.

*(H5) Due to the differences in the dimension of femininity or masculinity, Dutch employees experience higher level of affective commitment towards career than Chinese employees do.*

London (1983) pointed out that one's career motivation and level of satisfaction of work experiences was closely linked with one's supervisory support. According to Blau (1985), supervisory support or consideration means "the degree to which the supervisor develops friendships with subordinates as well as sets goals and monitors work" (p. 4), and he tested that supervisory was significantly and positively correlated with career commitment. Hofstede (1980) believed that individuals in the feminine cultures were more likely to develop a good relationship with their peers and supervisors than individuals in the masculine cultures. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that individuals in the feminine cultures would experience higher level of affective commitment than those in the masculine culture.

To sum up, based on literatures of both conceptualization of commitment and cultural values, above five hypotheses are made for the purpose of testing the influences of cultural values, conceptualized as five cultural dimensions, on each form of career commitment, namely affective, calculative, and normative commitment. However, some cultural dimensions, due to the lack of literature support (long- vs. short-term orientation) or the lack of significant distinction between Dutch and Chinese culture (uncertainty avoidance vs. uncertainty acceptance), are not included in those hypotheses. For now, these cultural dimensions are not expected to develop the functions as antecedents to career commitment, but they are still considered as potential predictor variables and will be tested in the following research.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

### 3.1. Type of the Research

According to King (1994), this research could be considered as a quantitative research. The instrument used in this research is questionnaire survey, and all items in the questionnaire are structured, 38 of which require the respondents to choose their attitude of agreement or disagreement towards the item based on structured scales; 6 of which require respondents to identify their demographic status. The result will be analyzed statistically.

### 3.2. Participants

For the purpose of comparing the influences of Dutch and Chinese cultures on the components of career commitment, two sample groups, one from Dutch culture and the other from Chinese culture, are selected. The Dutch sample is composed of members of BEKADER which is the former MBA students association of University of Twente, and the Chinese sample is composed of former MBA students from NANC (Netherlands Alumni Network in China) which is the alumni association of former MBA students who used to study in the Netherlands. Both groups consist of full-time working employees with education level of master degrees in Business Administration. Furthermore, According to the nature of both groups, the sample population is employees from a variety of organizations and in several different industries.

### 3.3. Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaires are attributed to approximately 200 employees for each sample group in the summer of 2006. For the participants from Dutch Former Student Association (BEKADER), the questionnaires are attributed randomly to the members of BEKADER through E-mails, and the Dutch respondents answer the questionnaire in Word file and send them back also through E-mails. While for the participants from Chinese Former Student Association (NANC), an online questionnaire survey is established. The Chinese respondents are invited to answer the online survey by E-mails, and the final results are collected by the online instruments. For both Dutch and Chinese participants, the questionnaires are written in English for two reasons: first, as former Master students, the participants are capable of English communication; second, since the original items were developed in English, the unification of language is aimed at eliminate errors due to translation.

### 3.4. Variables and Measurements

#### *3.4.1. Commitment Variables*

The measurements of affective commitment, calculative commitment, and normative commitment were originally developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) in their study of organizational commitment, and they labeled them as Affective Commitment Scale (ACS), Continuance (Calculative) Commitment Scales (CCS), and Normative Commitment Scales (NCS). Later, the ACS, CCS, and NCS were modified in Meyer et al. (1993)'s studies for the career commitment. According to the ACS, CCS, and NCS developed by Meyer et al. (1993), each scale consists 6 items, and each item is structured into seven-point scales (1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree). In Allen and Meyer (1996)'s evaluation of the validity of the measurement, ACS of career commitment received a coefficient alpha value of .82 for internal consistency, and ranged from .61 to .73 for the test-retest reliability; CCS of career commitment marked a coefficient alpha value of .74 for internal consistency, and ranged from .56 to .67 for the test-retest reliability; and NCS of career commitment marked a coefficient alpha value of .83 for internal consistency, and ranged from .61 to .73 for the test-retest reliability. Moreover, the three-factor scales (ACS, CCS, and NCS) were tested to be best fit with the data by Meyer et al. (1993) using the factor analysis. For this research, modified versions of Meyer et al. (1993)'s ACS, CCS, and NCS of career commitment are used. Some modifications are made, because ACS, CCS, and NCS of career commitment in Meyer et al.'s study were specified in particular industry (registered nurses). Other modifications include: two items in the ACS are switched with two newly developed items, because the original items tend to have ambiguity in the measurement with other scales; and five new items are added to the CCS to specially measure the "low alternative" dimension of calculative commitment. Sample items of ACS, CCS, and NCS are presented in the Appendix One.

#### *3.4.2 Cultural Value Variables*

According to the hypotheses listed in section 2.7, five cultural dimensions as sets of systemized cultural values could have influences on the development of affective, calculative, and normative career commitment and serve the functions as antecedents of these forms of career commitment. To assess and compare the five cultural dimensions among cultures, Hofstede and Bond<sup>7</sup> developed the Value Survey Module 1994 (VSM 94). The Value Survey Module 1994 is a 26-item structured scale developed for measuring culturally determined values of people from two or more countries and regions.

Four questions are originally included for each dimension, and the other six questions are demographical, which ask the respondents' age, gender, education level, kinds of job, current nationality, and nationality at birth. However, according to McSweeney (2002), many items in

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<sup>7</sup> <http://feweb.uvt.nl/center/hofstede/english.html>



the VSM 94 are irrelevant to the constructs which are intended to measure. Items concerning this problem are mainly power distance and collectivism-individualism items. Hence, to measure cultural factors more accurate, several items in power distance dimension scales of VSM 94 are modified. Items measuring collectivism-individualism in VSM 94 are removed, and sixteen items developed by Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, and Gelfand (1995) using the vertical-horizontal approach are used in this research instead. Sample items are presented in Appendix One.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

To examine the influences of cultural dimensions on the components of career commitment, several statistic analyses are performed. For doing the statistic tests, the software SPSS is used. The tests include: 1) Cronbach Alpha analysis to test the reliability of the scales; 2) independent sample t-tests to compare the differences of all studied variables between Dutch and Chinese samples; 3) linear regression analysis to test the influences of cultural dimensions on components of career commitment; 4) descriptive analysis to demonstrate the demographic characteristics of the respondents. More details about the statistic analyses will be presented in the following result chapter.

## Chapter Four: Results

In this chapter, the hypotheses promoted in the theoretical chapter will first be presented. Second, after reviewing the hypotheses, the results of data analysis will be reported and explained. Finally, according to the results of statistical analysis, the hypotheses for this research will be tested.

### 4.1. Hypotheses Review

In the theoretical chapter, five hypotheses have been made to help answer the research question, and they are the following:

- (H1) Due to the differences in the dimension of power distance, Chinese employees experience lower level of affective commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*
- (H2) Due to the differences in the dimension of power distance, Chinese employees experience higher level of calculative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*
- (H3) Due to the differences in the dimension of collectivism or individualism, Chinese employees experience higher level of calculative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*
- (H4) Due to the differences in the dimension of collectivism or individualism, Chinese employees experience higher level of normative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*
- (H5) Due to the differences in the dimension of femininity or masculinity, Dutch employees experience higher level of affective commitment towards career than Chinese employees do.*

By reviewing these five hypotheses, one can find out that each hypothesis can be divided into three assumptions. Firstly, each hypothesis assumes that the independent variables *cultural dimensions* (i.e. power distance, masculinity, and collectivism) are significantly different between Dutch and Chinese sample. Secondly, each hypothesis assumes that the independent variables *cultural dimensions* have influences on the dependent variables *components of career commitment* (affective, calculative, and normative commitment). Finally, each hypothesis assumes that due to the differences in *cultural dimensions*, the dependent variables *components of career commitment* are significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples. The three assumptions for each hypothesis will be tested correspondingly in the next section, and according to the results of tests, all hypotheses will be tested by the end of this

chapter.

## 4.2. Results of Data Analysis

### *4.2.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents*

Since the introduction of both sample groups and the distribution procedures of questionnaires have been mentioned in the methodology chapter, here the results of descriptive characteristics of both samples will be summarized. In this research, 508 questionnaires were administrated in total, and 156 valid copies of answers were collected and the total respondent ratio is 30.7%. Of these, 279 questionnaires were sent out to the Dutch sample, and 96 copies were collected, which achieve a respondent ratio of 34.4%; while 229 questionnaires were sent out to the Chinese sample, and 60 copies were collected, which achieve a respondent ratio of 26.2%. Among all sample population, 23.1% are female, and 76.3% are male. In the Dutch sample, the female compose 9.4% of the sample population, and the male compose 90.6% of the sample population. In the Chinese sample, the female compose 45.0% of the sample population, and the male compose 53.3% of the sample population. Moreover, the average age category of the 156 respondents is between 30-34 years old, and the results show that the average age category is indifferent between Dutch and Chinese samples.

### *4.2.2. Reliability of the Scales*

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the questionnaire used in this research is composed of 18 modified items from Meyer and colleagues (1993)' career commitment scale, 23 modified items from Hofstede (1994)'s Values Survey Module 1994, and 16 items from Triandis et al (1995)'s vertical-horizontal scales for collectivism. Moreover, 5 items measuring low alternative dimension of the calculative commitment are originally developed and added to this survey. Thus, to make sure all the hypotheses could be tested validly, the reliability of scales must be tested, and the results are shown in Table 1.

<b>Names of Variables</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach Alfa</b>
Affective Commitment	6	.87
CC:HiS	6	.79
CC:LoA	5	.78
Normative Commitment	6	.82
Power Distance	5	.75
Masculinity	5	.70
Collectivism	16	.89
Long-Term Orientation	4	.77
Uncertainty Avoidance	3	.76

**Table 1.** Reliability of Scales

As shown in Table 1, the value of Cronbach Alfa for each variable scale varies from .70 to .89, and the newly developed items for low alternative dimension of calculative commitment reveal a scale reliability of .78. One can see that for all variables, the values of Cronbach Alfa are above .70, which indicates that both the commitment scales and the cultural dimension scales have good reliability for the items loaded.

#### 4.2.3. Comparisons of Studied Variables between Dutch and Chinese Samples

In light of the hypotheses mentioned earlier, this research will compare the mean values of both the dependent variables (i.e. affective, calculative, and normative commitment) and the independent variables (i.e. five cultural dimensions) between Dutch and Chinese samples. To do that, independent samples t-tests in SPSS are performed, and the results are shown in Table 2 and Table 3.

**Group Statistics**

	Nationality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Affective Commitment	Dutch	96	32.3542	5.24751	.53557
	Chinese	60	26.3333	9.50409	1.22697
Calculative Commitment	Dutch	96	30.9167	9.63619	.98349
	Chinese	58	40.7414	13.64919	1.79223
Normative Commitment	Dutch	96	16.9063	6.18500	.63125
	Chinese	60	24.3833	8.20106	1.05875
Power Distance	Dutch	96	11.3229	4.33467	.44241
	Chinese	60	13.3500	3.85247	.49735
Masculinity	Dutch	96	10.5000	3.48531	.35572
	Chinese	60	14.5000	3.77099	.48683
Collectivism	Dutch	96	37.7813	10.13613	1.03451
	Chinese	59	54.5593	8.82643	1.14910
Long-Term Orientation	Dutch	96	8.5833	2.57791	.26311
	Chinese	60	13.6167	2.86470	.36983
Uncertainty Avoidance	Dutch	96	11.0104	3.11700	.31813
	Chinese	59	8.9661	2.49113	.32432

**Table 2.** Differences in Mean Values of Studied Variables

	t-test for Equality of Means						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Difference	Difference	of the Difference	of the Difference
Affective Commitment	5.093	154	.000	6.02083	1.18208	3.68566	8.35601
Calculative Commitment	-5.224	152	.000	-9.82471	1.88080	-13.54059	-6.10883
Normative Commitment	-6.466	154	.000	-7.47708	1.15628	-9.76131	-5.19286
Power Distance	-2.963	154	.004	-2.02708	.68404	-3.37840	-.67576
Masculinity	-6.756	154	.000	-4.00000	.59203	-5.16955	-2.83045
Collectivism	-10.499	153	.000	-16.77807	1.59811	-19.93528	-13.62086
Long-Term Orientation	-11.364	154	.000	-5.03333	.44292	-5.90832	-4.15834
Uncertainty Avoidance	4.268	153	.000	2.04431	.47903	1.09796	2.99067

**Table 3.** Results of Independent Samples t-tests

According to Table 3, the differences between Dutch and Chinese samples in mean scores of all studied variables are significant ( $p < .05$ ). More specifically, according to Table 2, Dutch employees experience higher level of affective commitment than Chinese employees do, and Dutch employees rank higher at the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension; while Chinese employees experience higher level of calculative and normative commitment than Dutch employees do, and Chinese employees reveal higher level of Power Distance, Masculinity, Collectivism, and Long-term Orientation. In terms of hypotheses for this research, this analysis tests the first and third assumptions for each hypothesis mentioned in the first section of this chapter. The results indicate that for all five hypotheses, the independent variables (i.e. cultural dimensions) and dependent variables (i.e. components of career commitment) are significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples.

#### 4.2.4. Regression Analysis of Dependent and Independent Variables

Last section has shown the results of testing the first and third assumptions for each hypothesis. To be able to fully test the hypotheses, multiple linear regression analysis will be performed to test the second assumption for each hypothesis. More specifically, the regression analysis will test whether cultural dimensions have influences on the components of career commitment. In another words, the regression analysis will indicate whether the differences in dependent variables (shown in Table 3) are generated by corresponding differences in independent variables (shown in Table 3). The results are reported in Table 4, 5, and 6.

	Unstandardized		R Square	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	48.018	3.873		12.399	.000
Power Distance	-.560	.178	.337	-3.143	.002
Masculinity	-.627	.180	.283	-3.477	.001
Collectivism	-.036	.065		-.558	.578
Long-Term Orientation	.006	.178		.033	.973
Uncertainty Avoidance	-.192	.203		-.946	.346

Note: a Dependent Variable: Affective Commitment

**Table 4.** Results of Regression Analysis of Affective Commitment.

Table 4 indicates that the independent variables power distance and masculinity have significant negative influences on the dependent variable affective commitment. Moreover, according to the values of R Square in the stepwise regression analysis, masculinity is shown as the best predictor for the dependent variable affective commitment followed by power distance. In terms of hypotheses made for this research, the regression analysis for affective commitment tests the second assumption of the first and the last hypotheses (H1 and H5). For

the first hypothesis (H1), the result shows that the independent variable power distance has significant negative influence on the dependent variable affective commitment ( $p < .05$ ). For the last hypothesis (H5), the independent variable masculinity is also shown to have significant negative influence on the dependent variable affective commitment ( $p < .05$ ).

	Unstandardized		R Square	t	Sig.
	Coefficients				
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	-1.923	5.894		-.326	.745
Power Distance	1.179	.273	.324	4.318	.000
Masculinity	.494	.275	.622	1.796	.075
Collectivism	.191	.099	.608	1.935	.055
Long-Term Orientation	.197	.274		.720	.473
Uncertainty Avoidance	.556	.310		1.792	.075

Note: a Dependent Variable: Calculative Commitment

**Table 5.** Results of Regression Analysis of Calculative Commitment.

Table 5 indicates that the independent variables power distance has significant positive influences on the dependent variable calculative commitment ( $p < .05$ ). According to the value of R Square, independent variables collectivism and masculinity also have positive influences on calculative commitment, but neither of the influences is significant. In terms of hypotheses for this research, the regression analysis for calculative commitment tests the second assumption of the second and third hypotheses (H2 and H3). For the second hypothesis (H2), the result shows that the independent variable power distance has significant positive influence on the dependent variable calculative commitment ( $p < .05$ ). For the third hypothesis (H3), the independent variable collectivism is not shown to have significant influence on the dependent variable calculative commitment ( $p > .05$ ).

	Unstandardized		R Square	t	Sig.
	Coefficients				
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	-2.497	3.467		-.720	.473
Power Distance	.415	.160	.493	2.602	.010
Masculinity	.295	.161	.444	1.831	.069
Collectivism	.172	.058	.400	2.959	.004
Long-Term Orientation	.539	.160	.470	3.379	.001

Orientation				
Uncertainty				
Avoidance	.050	.182	.273	.785

Note: a Dependent Variable: Normative Commitment

**Table 6.** Results of Regression Analysis of Normative Commitment.

Table 6 indicates that the independent variables collectivism, power distance, and long-term orientation have significant positive influences on the dependent variable normative commitment. According to the value of R Square, masculinity is also shown to have positive influence on normative commitment, but its influence is not significant ( $p > .05$ ). The independent variable collectivism is shown as the best predictor of normative commitment followed by long-term orientation and power distance. In terms of hypotheses for this research, the regression analysis for normative commitment tests the second assumption of the fourth hypothesis (H4). This result shows that the independent variable collectivism has significant positive influence on the dependent variable normative commitment ( $p < .05$ ).

#### 4.3. Testing Hypotheses

Based on the results shown and explained in section 4.2, all three assumptions for each hypothesis are tested. Thus, in this section all five hypotheses made for this research could be tested.

*(H1) Due to the differences in the dimension of power distance, Chinese employees experience lower level of affective commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*

According to Table 2 and 3, the independent variable power distance is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and Chinese employees appeal a higher level of power distance than Dutch employees do. According to Table 4, power distance has significant negative influence on the dependent variable affective commitment. And again according to Table 2 and 3, affective commitment is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and Chinese employees experience a lower level of affective commitment than Dutch employees do. Thus, this hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

*(H2) Due to the differences in the dimension of power distance, Chinese employees experience higher level of calculative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*

According to Table 2 and 3, the independent variable power distance is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and Chinese employees appeal a higher level of power distance than Dutch employees do. According to Table 5, power distance has significant positive influence on the dependent variable calculative commitment. And again according to

Table 2 and 3, calculative commitment is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and Chinese employees experience a higher level of calculative commitment than Dutch employees do. Thus, this hypothesis (H2) is accepted.

*(H3) Due to the differences in the dimension of collectivism or individualism, Chinese employees experience higher level of calculative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*

According to Table 2 and 3, the independent variable collectivism is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and the dependent variable calculative commitment is also shown to be significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples. However, according to Table 5, collectivism does not have significant influence on calculative commitment. Thus, this hypothesis (H3) is rejected.

*(H4) Due to the differences in the dimension of collectivism or individualism, Chinese employees experience higher level of normative commitment towards career than Dutch employees do.*

According to Table 2 and 3, the independent variable collectivism is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and Chinese employees appeal a higher level of collectivism than Dutch employees do. According to Table 6, collectivism has significant positive influence on the dependent variable normative commitment. And again according to Table 2 and 3, normative commitment is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and Chinese employees experience a higher level of normative commitment than Dutch employees do. Thus, this hypothesis (H4) is accepted.

*(H5) Due to the differences in the dimension of femininity or masculinity, Dutch employees experience higher level of affective commitment towards career than Chinese employees do.*

According to Table 2 and 3, the independent variable masculinity is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and Chinese employees appeal a higher level of masculinity than Dutch employees do. According to Table 4, masculinity has significant negative influence on the dependent variable affective commitment. And again according to Table 2 and 3, affective commitment is significantly different between Dutch and Chinese samples, and Chinese employees experience a lower level of affective commitment than Dutch employees do. Thus, this hypothesis (H5) is accepted.



## **Chapter Five: Conclusion**

In the conclusion chapter, first, the main research question for this research will be answered and explained. Second, theoretical and practical implications of the findings of this research will be derived from the literatures used in the theoretical chapter and the results of the empirical survey. Finally, the limitations of this research will be remarked.

### 5.1. Discussions about the Research Question

As promoted in the introduction chapter, the main research question designed for this research is that:

**Do cultural values and norms, conceptualized as five cultural dimensions, influence affective, calculative, and normative career commitment in Dutch and Chinese cultures?**

According to the results of the data analysis and the tests of hypotheses reported in the result chapter, this research finds that some cultural dimensions do have significant influences on the components of career commitment. More specifically, the cultural dimensions power distance and masculinity are shown to have significant negative influences on the affective commitment; power distance also has significant positive influences on calculative commitment; collectivism, power distance, and long-term orientation have significant positive influences on normative commitment. This result suggests that one component of commitment could be under the influences of more than one cultural dimension, and one cultural dimension could serve the function of antecedent to more than one component of career commitment.

According to the hypotheses made before the empirical research in the theoretical chapter, among those findings, the negative influence of power distance on affective commitment (H1), the positive influence of power distance on calculative commitment (H2), the positive influence of collectivism on normative commitment (H4), and the negative influence of masculinity on affective commitment (H5) are expected. Firstly, as mentioned in the theoretical chapter, according to Hofstede (1980) and Allen and Myer (1990), the negative influence of power distance on affective commitment (H1) could be explained as that high

power distance culture would reveal inequality in power and wealth distribution and lower level of employee involvement and participation. These characteristics of high power distance cultures would decrease employees' positive work experiences, and as a result decrease employees' affective commitment. Secondly, the positive influence of power distance on calculative commitment (H2) could be explained as that since the elder or the senior members in the group would receive more power and wealth in high power distance cultures, employees from higher power distance cultures would perceive higher costs associated with quitting their career roles. This perception would encourage employees to pursue long-term membership, and it would increase employees' calculative commitment (Hofstede 1980; Allen and Myer 1990). Thirdly, the positive influence of collectivism on normative commitment (H4) could be explained as that the value of respecting group interests in collective culture would help create more normative pressure for employees to feel obligated to remain in their career positions and share responsibilities with their group members. Finally, one possible explanation of the negative influence of masculinity on affective commitment (H5) is that employees in femininity cultures may develop better working relationships with their supervisors or subordinates than employees in masculinity cultures do (Hofstede 1980), and the positive supervisory support and peer relationship would lead to positive work experiences, which is proved to positively correlated with affective commitment (Blau 1985; London 1983; Allen and Myer 1990).

Besides those expected antecedent relationships between cultural dimensions and components of career commitment, two unexpected relationships are also found: according to Table 6, power distance and long-term orientation are found to have significant positive influence on normative commitment. For the positive influence of power distance on normative commitment, one possible explanation could be the following. According to Hofstede (1980), respecting authority and elders and following their orders and expectations are values that are widely accepted in high power distance society. Individuals in such societies would treat being committed to their careers as social expectation and obligation to the authority (e.g. company, family, etc.). In Allen and Myer (1990)'s words, they would choose to remain in the current career position because they believe they ought to. On the other hand, individuals in low power distance societies emphasize equal relationships with others, and they are socially expected to make their own decisions; therefore they would experience less strong normative pressure of obligation from their society or community (Hofstede 1980).

For the positive influence of long-term orientation on the normative commitment, as the fifth cultural dimensions added to the original four-cultural-dimension model, long- vs. short-term orientation was challenged by McSweeney (2002) who believes this dimension is confused with the conceptualizations of other four cultural dimensions, and it weakens the original four-cultural-dimension model of Hofstede. With this unclarity in the conceptualization of the long-term orientation dimension and the lack of support by other literatures, it is difficult to explain the findings concerning long-term orientation in this research. To further examine and elaborate the construct of long- vs. short-term orientation and its influence as antecedent to the three components of career commitment, future researches will be required.

To sum up, Becker (1960) and Meyer et al. (2001) proposed that to fully understand the three components of commitment, it is necessary to systematically analyze and understand the sets of cultural values and norms that might have influences on them. In light of this statement, the main research question was promoted and answered. By explaining the findings concerning the research question, it is reasonable to conclude that the influences of some cultural values and norms on the three components of career commitment are testified, and they are also analyzed and demonstrated in a systematical perspective.

## 5.2. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Based on the discussions of the research question presented in the last section and corresponding literatures used in the theoretical chapter, both theoretical and practical implications of the present research can be made.

### *5.2.1. Theoretical Implications*

Firstly, by using the cross-culture samples, namely Dutch and Chinese former MBA students, this research proves that Myer and Allen (1991)'s three-component model of commitment can be adequately generalized and operated outside North America. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, to examine the cross-cultural generalizability of the scale, Lee et al. (2001) have tested the three-component model of commitment in the Korean context. They report that the three-component model could be applied to Asian cultures, and valid and reliable measurement could be developed based on items imported from the North America studies. The present research finds that the reliability of each component of career commitment is above .70 for both Dutch and Chinese samples. This result supports Lee et al. (2001)'s finding and further indicates that the three-component model of commitment could be validly applied to Dutch and Chinese cultures, and it also suggests that valid and reliable measurement of career commitment are successfully developed for Dutch and Chinese cultures.

Secondly, according to the tests of hypotheses discussed in the result chapter, this research shows different results regarding the antecedent variables of calculative commitment with Wasti (2002)'s study with Turkish samples. Wasti (2002) in her research reports that loyalty norm and ingroup influence as variables of collectivism have positive influence on calculative commitment, and they are examined as the antecedent variables of calculative commitment in the Turkish context. However, as presented in the result chapter, this research shows that instead of collectivism, power distance is shown to be the antecedent variable of calculative commitment and contributes most to the variations of calculative commitment in Dutch and Chinese cultures. A possible explanation could be that the inequality of power and wealth distribution in high power distance culture could enhance individuals' perception of the costs (side-bet) accumulated with longer tenure and lead to higher level of calculative commitment toward their careers.

Finally, the findings of this research partially support Hofstede's<sup>8</sup> cultural dimension index of Dutch and Chinese cultures. According to the results presented in Table 2, the mean scores of collectivism for Chinese employees are significantly higher than the mean score of Dutch employees, and the mean score of masculinity for Chinese employees is moderately higher than the mean score of Dutch employees. These findings are consistent with Hofstede's index of Dutch and Chinese cultures. These findings indicate that Chinese employees do experience a more collective and masculine culture; while Dutch employees experience a more individualistic and feminine culture. On the other hand, the evaluations of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation in this research are conflicting with Hofstede's index of Dutch and Chinese cultures. According to Hofstede's cultural dimension index<sup>9</sup> presented in section 2.7, Chinese culture ranks slightly higher than Dutch culture on uncertainty avoidance and ranks significant higher than Dutch culture on power distance and long-term orientation. However, Table 2 shows that the mean score of uncertainty avoidance for Chinese employees is lower than that for Dutch employees and the mean score of power distance and long-term orientation for Chinese employees is just slightly higher than that for Dutch employees. One possible explanation could be that compared with Hofstede's study, the samples from both cultures in this research are only composed by former MBA students, and this might make the samples not representative for individuals with other education status in both cultures. This limitation of this research will be discussed more specifically in section 5.3.

#### *5.2.2. Practical Implications*

Myer and Allen (1991) note that the three components of commitment are crucial predictors and contributors to turnover and on-the-job behaviors. For managers, the question is how to foster various forms of commitment of employees to achieve desired behaviors. Beer et al. believe that commitment is one of the short-term outcomes of HR policies and practices, and commitment can also influence the design of HR policies and practices. Thus, to obtain desired outcomes and to foster favorable working commitment, managers need to be able to formulate effective HR policies and practices, and effective HR policies and practices are hardly made without understanding any antecedent variable that imposes influences on employees' commitment. In the case of international company, it is important for managers to understand how different cultural values and norms influence the three components of commitment of employees who come from different cultures. According to the analysis and discussion in this research, two implications or recommendations could be made.

Firstly, Table 4, Table5, and Table6 show that power distance has significant negative influences on affective commitment and significant positive influences on calculative and normative commitment. According to Table 2, Chinese employees experience a higher level of power distance than Dutch employees do, and due to this difference in power distance, Chinese employees reveal higher level of calculative and normative commitment, while Dutch employees reveal higher level of affective commitment. Furthermore, it is reasonable

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.geert-hofstede.com>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.geert-hofstede.com>

to state that due to the socialized values and previous experiences, employees from different power distance societies might behave consistently with their power distance values. Thus, for Chinese companies with Dutch employees, managers should design HR policies and practices to decrease the power distance in work system and decision making process in order to obtain the higher level of affective commitment; while for Dutch companies with Chinese employees, managers should try to increase the power distance in work system and decision making process to foster employees' calculative and normative commitment. As mentioned, to change the power distance within the organization mainly concerns the policies and practices of the design of work systems. To decrease the organizational power distance, managers could break down the hierarchies and enhance or create bottom-up communication channels to listen to employees' advices and comments on their daily work. Managers could also decentralize the decision making process by enhancing the roles of labor unions and increasing employees' participation and influences on the decisions making. Concerning other area of HR policies and practices, to decrease the organizational power distance, managers could shrink the amount of supervisory personnel, encourage mutual supervision, and diminish the wage differences between authority or senior members and subordinate employees. On the other hand, to increase organizational power distance, managers could establish hierarchies in promotion system and decision making process, and enhance top-down communication by giving direct instructions and suggestions to employees' daily work and tasks. Managers could also centralize the decision making process and formalize employees' work to create the normative pressure of obligation for employees. With compensation policies and practices, manager could enlarge the wage difference between senior members and new members to increase employees' perception of potential costs associated with leaving the current career position. To sum up, since power distance influences all three components of career commitment, to design what kind of HRM policies and practices or to determine which policies and practices are truly effective depends on the goals and strategies of the company about which components of commitment the company needs to foster.

Secondly, Table 6 shows that collectivism has significant positive influence on normative commitment, and it is the best predictor of normative commitment. According to Table 2, Chinese employees reveal a higher level of collectivism and experience a higher level of normative commitment. Hence, with Dutch employees, managers should design HR policies and practices to encourage collectivism on employees' tasks to increase their normative commitment. Hofstede (1980) notes that in a collective culture, respects to collective achievements and interests are highly appreciated, and individuals prefer team works and good relationships with team members. Thus, to create a collective working environment, managers could design a work system which encourages team works. Managers could assign tasks to working teams instead of individuals, provide more opportunities for communication among team members, and let the working teams become self-responsible working units. Furthermore, managers could also design compensation policies and practices to reward employees on the collective level.

### 5.3. Limitations of the Research

This research focuses on examining the influences of cultural dimensions on three components of career commitment in Dutch and Chinese cultures. Regarding the literatures and methodology used in this research, three limitations could be found.

Firstly, the three-component model of commitment (Allen and Meyer 1990) was originally developed in the organizational context, although Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) have generalized the model into workplace commitment including career commitment, the career commitment construct is not adequately elaborated. Concerning the literatures in the domain of career commitment, many studies still have arguments and disagreements on the career commitment construct namely the definition, antecedents, and outcomes of career commitment (Blau 1985). Hence, the influences of cultural values and norms on career commitment still need to be tested by further cross-culture studies.

Secondly, this research performs a cross-culture study by administering surveys to Dutch and Chinese samples. According to Lee et al. (2001), to properly perform researches regarding cross-cultural comparisons, the translation- and expression-based errors need to be avoided. This research selects Dutch and Chinese former MBA students as the target samples, and the original English questionnaire is used, because it is believed that with the master education, the respondents could be more capable to accurately answer the original English items and to farthest avoid the translation- and expression-based errors. However, this selection of samples might generate the problem that it is not representative for individuals with other levels of education in both cultures. To get a more complete and accurate picture of the examinations and comparisons of the influences of cultural dimensions on career commitment between Dutch and Chinese culture, future researches would be required to further test the influences of cultural dimensions on career commitment based on different target samples with other education levels, such as blue-collar workers or college students.

Finally, the disagreements on and insufficient literature about the conceptualization of Hofstede (1988)'s fifth cultural dimension the long- vs. short-term orientation make the analysis of the influence of this cultural dimension on career commitment remain problematic. Besides that, the limitations of the sample selection discussed in the last paragraph might also baffle the present research alone to provide adequate conclusions to the degree of long- vs. short-term orientation for Dutch and Chinese cultures and its influence on career commitment.

To conclude, in this research, reliable measurement scales of career commitment and cultural dimensions are well developed and applied to Dutch and Chinese cultures. Significant differences in three components of career commitment and five cultural dimensions are found and explained, and certain cultural dimensions are tested to have the functions as antecedents that influence three components of career commitment in both Dutch and Chinese cultures. However, due to the limitations presented above, there is still a need for future researches in the area of cross-culture comparison of career commitment to contribute to the

conceptualization and validation of career commitment and cultural dimensions.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Script of the Questionnaire

#### Questionnaire

**Part One:** Meyer et al. (1993)'s Affective, Calculative, and Normative Commitment Scales (Modified)

To what extent you agree or disagree following statements? Please circle the answer.

1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree

1. I am happy with my current career.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I never regret having entered the current profession.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I am proud to be in the current profession.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I like doing the work I do now.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I want to spend rest of my life on my current career.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I am enthusiastic about my career.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I have put too much into the current profession to consider changing now.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Changing professions now would be difficult for me to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I were to change my profession.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. It would be costly for me to change my profession now.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. There are pressures to keep me from changing professions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Changing professions now would require considerable personal sacrifice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I have few options for changing my current career.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I do not have security of other alternatives, besides my current career.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I can not fit with other professions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. If I quit this job, I probably can not get another one.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I need to work hard to keep my current career, because there are no other feasible alternatives for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I believe people who have been trained in a profession have a responsibility to stay in that profession for a reasonable period of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I feel obligated to remain in the current profession.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. I feel a responsibility to the current profession to continue in it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel that it would be right to leave my current work now.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I would feel guilty if I left my current work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I am in this profession because of a sense of loyalty to it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Part Two:** Hofstede' Value Survey Module 1994 (Modified) and Triandis's Measurement on Collectivism-Individualism.

Please think of an ideal job, disregarding your present job, if you have one. To what extent you agree or disagree following statements? Please circle the answer.

1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree

1. I do not have a good working relationship with my direct superior and colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
2. I work with people who do not cooperate well with one another	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am not often consulted by my direct superior in his/her decisions	1	2	3	4	5

4. Career success or advancement is more important for me than family life.	1	2	3	4	5
5. If a coworker gets a prize, I would feel proud.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The well-being of my coworkers is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. To me, pleasure is spending time with others.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I feel good when I cooperate with others.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Parents and children must stay together as much as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
10. It is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifice what I want.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Family members should stick together, no matter what sacrifices are required.	1	2	3	4	5
12. It is important to me that I respect the decisions made by my groups.	1	2	3	4	5

To what extent you agree or disagree following statements? Please circle the answer.

**1=strongly agree to 5=strongly disagree**

13. I'd rather depend on myself than others.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I often do "my own thing."	1	2	3	4	5
16. My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
17. It is important that I do my job better than others.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Winning is everything.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Competition is the law of nature.	1	2	3	4	5
20. When another person does better than I do, I get tense and aroused.	1	2	3	4	5

In your private life, how important is each of the following to you?

1= of very little or no importance to 5= of utmost importance

21. Personal steadiness and stability	1	2	3	4	5
22. Thrift	1	2	3	4	5
23. Persistence (perseverance)	1	2	3	4	5

24. Respect for tradition	1	2	3	4	5
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25. Do you feel nervous or uncomfortable about uncertainty at work?

1. never      2. seldom      3. sometimes      4. usually      5. always

26. How frequently, in your experience, are subordinates afraid to express disagreement with their superiors?

1. very seldom      2. seldom      3. sometimes      4. frequently      5. very frequently

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree

27. Most people can not be trusted	1	2	3	4	5
28. One can not be a good manager without having precise answers to most questions that subordinates may raise about their work	1	2	3	4	5
29. I am expected to exactly follow the orders of my boss.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Competition between employees usually does more good than harm	1	2	3	4	5
31. A company's or organization's rules should not be broken -not even when the employee thinks it is in the company's best interest	1	2	3	4	5
32. I strongly want to be successful in my career.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I would receive more power and respect as a senior member.	1	2	3	4	5

Some information about yourself (for statistical purposes):

34. Are you:

1. male                              2. female

35. How old are you?

1. Under 20  
2. 20-24  
3. 25-29  
4. 30-34  
5. 35-39  
6. 40-49  
7. 50-59  
8. 60 or over

36. How many years of formal school education (or their equivalent) did you complete (starting with primary school)?

1. 10 years or less
2. 11 years
3. 12 years
4. 13 years
5. 14 years
6. 15 years
7. 16 years
8. 17 years
9. 18 years or over

37. What is your nationality?

1. Dutch

2. Chinese

3. Others

**Thank you for your participation!**