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# The Effects of Person-Environment Fit and External Locus of Control on Organizational Affective Commitment: a Study of Immigrant Wives in Taiwan

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Abstract The National Immigration Agency of Taiwan reported that, by 2014, more than 498,000 immigrant spouses were registered in Taiwanese households, 91 % of which was female. Immigrant wives are now a significant part of Taiwanese society, and they are an important aspect of the labor force in Taiwan's economy. However, they face major challenges in the workplace, which influences their work outcomes, results in a reduced labor force for enterprises, and increases societal costs. This pioneering study employed the person-environment fit and locus of control concepts from the organizational behavior field to address this issue. A sample of 130 immigrant wives from Indonesia and Vietnam living in Taiwan was surveyed. The results of a hierarchical regression analysis found that immigrant wives' person-job fit and person-supervisor fit significantly influenced their affective commitments to their workplaces. An external locus of control significantly weakened the relationship between person-environment fit and affective commitment. The contributions and implications of the study results were discussed.

**Keywords** Immigrant wives  $\cdot$  Person-environment fit  $\cdot$  External locus of control  $\cdot$  Affective commitment  $\cdot$  Taiwan

#### Introduction

The number of transnational marriages greatly increased in Taiwan in the late twentieth century (Zhu 2005). According to Taiwan's Ministry of the Interior, the National

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Immigration Agency of Taiwan reported that, in 2014, the number of immigrant spouses in Taiwan reached 498,368; 92.45 % of which was female. Enterprises in Taiwan are becoming more inclined toward adopting diversified human resources, and the growing numbers of immigrant spouses should be a source of labor, particularly for relatively small and micro-businesses. Taiwanese enterprises also recruit employees with diverse cultural backgrounds to increase their competitiveness. However, the employment rate of this group is far below expectations, particularly regarding immigrant wives.

Previous research has found that Taiwan's socioeconomic structure has become dual-income and family-based (Gao 2000; Hsia 2002; Wang 2004). When immigrant wives migrate to Taiwan because of marriage, they might be working outside the home as well as providing the housework to help support the family's livelihood and security, particularly when husbands do not earn adequate incomes. However, the Ministry of the Interior of Taiwan reported in 2008 that only about 51.9 % of immigrant wives were employed and that language and communication barriers were the major problems they faced in the workplace (Cheng 2010). Moreover, Cheng (2010) found that most immigrant wives encounter crucial workplace integration difficulties, such as limited human capital, lack of sufficient job-related skills, lack of an inclusive work culture, and possible experiences of social exclusion by their employers or co-workers caused by difficulties adapting to work policies aiming to accommodate immigrants on the part of the employers and other employees.

Most of these problems relate to the extent to which individual and environmental characteristics fit, which corresponds to the concept of person-environment fit (P-E fit), a specific type of person-situation interaction involving the suitability between a person and his or her environmental characteristics (Caplan 1987; Kristof-Brown and Guay 2011). It is usually assumed that a failure of P-E fit, sometimes referred to as "misfit," leads to negative consequences, such as lack of employee organizational commitment or increases in employee turnover, which might increase the loss of diverse and low-cost employees for the enterprises and personal misfortune for the immigrants because of their inability to integrate into the host country.

Countries, such as Taiwan, with large immigrant populations should invest more resources into providing social assistance that could help immigrant wives integrate into their workplaces. It is clearly a critical human resource management issue in societies that host large numbers of immigrant spouses. To date, studies on migration and marriage have largely focused on legal and policy aspects of the topic (Oxman-Matinez et al. 2001) or on the antecedents and consequences of marriage migration (Hidalgo and Bankston 2011). Despite their significantly increasing size and societal influence, research on female immigrants' workplace integration is scarce (Riaño and Baghdadi 2007), globally and in Taiwan.

P-E fit theory is derived from the organizational behavior literature, and it can be used to explain a positive correlation among factors, such as employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, and personal career achievement (Bretz and Judge 1994). Moreover, there are four important dimensions of P-E fit, person-job fit (P-J fit), person-organization fit (P-O fit), person-supervisor fit (P-S fit), and person-group fit (P-G fit). These dimensions of P-E fit significantly relate to employees' willingness to quit their jobs and their levels of work satisfaction, work performance, career decisions, and organizational commitment (Cable and DeRue 2002; Caldwell and O'Reilly 1990; Chuang and Lin



2005; Kristof-Brown 1996; Kristof-Brown et al. 2005; Young and Hurlic 2007). Thus, scholars have encouraged more studies applying the P-E fit perspective to improve our understanding of social integration in various contexts, particularly in non-Western countries (Greguras and Diefendorff 2009; Namini et al. 2010).

Employees' organizational commitments positively influence their work outcomes, such as increased productivity, job quality, stronger loyalty, and less turnover (Allen and Meyer 1991; Millward and Brewerton 2002; Mohamed et al. 2006). Meyer et al. (1993) proposed three organizational commitments, and Herndon et al. (2001) argued on behalf of a positive relationship between employees' affective commitment and their emotional connection—to the organization, which further supports and strengthens the organization's value. Mohamed et al. (2006) also pointed out that employees' affective commitment to the organization is the strongest and most consistent predictor of an organization's desired outcomes.

In addition, a significant body of research has found that locus of control (i.e., the extent to which individuals believe they can control the events and circumstances that influence them) is important to some employee work outcomes, such as job satisfaction, psychological ownership, emotional stability, organizational citizenship behavior, and job performance (Judge and Bono 2001; McIntyre et al. 2009; Ng et al. 2006; Wang et al. 2010). Mowday et al. (1982) found that personality influenced individuals' affective commitments. Thus, locus of control has been introduced as a moderator to clarify the relationship between employees' behaviors and their work performances (Ng and Butts 2009; Srivastava 2009).

The subjects of this study are immigrant wives, and we argue that their affective commitments could be relatively important because of their unfair treatment and social exclusion in the workplace. An application of the above-described theories and research findings could help to explain and predict workplace P-E fit difficulties faced by immigrant wives in Taiwan. These concepts are potentially important to enterprises aiming to hire immigrant wives and appropriately assign jobs and to institutions involved with social support. However, their importance has not been empirically supported to an adequate extent. Therefore, this study aims to answer the following two questions:

- 1. Do immigrant wives' overall P-E fit, and their fit with the four separate dimensions of P-E fit, positively influence their affective commitment to their workplaces?
- 2. Do immigrant wives' extents of external locus of control moderate the relationships of their overall P-E fit, and their fit with the four separate dimensions of P-E fit, with their affective commitment to their workplaces?

The sample comprised immigrant wives from Vietnam and Indonesia who were residing in the Kaohsiung area of Taiwan. Vietnam and Indonesia are the countries of origin of the majority of Taiwan's immigrant wives. The analysis employed a quantitative methodology to test the hypotheses. The results of this study could help enterprises when they are hiring immigrant wives and assigning jobs, and they could help enterprises that are providing social assistance to help immigrant spouses adapt to their workplace environments. Families with immigrant wives might benefit, the burden on society might be lightened, and workplace productivity might be increased.



# Literature Review and Hypotheses

# Workplace Integration Difficulties Faced by Immigrant Wives

According to the Immigrant Wives' Living Conditions Satisfaction Report, published in 2008 by the Ministry of the Interior (Taiwan), the labor force participation rate of immigrant wives was 55.9 %, suggesting that immigrant wives' employment situations need improvement. Two categories of obstacles block immigrant wives who are seeking employment, internal and external factors. The internal factors include language barriers, cultural differences, literacy problems, and low levels of education. The external factors influencing immigrant wives' employment include negative cultural impressions, gender discrimination, racial discrimination, lack of social resources, and unsupportive governmental policies (Wu 2004). Cheng (2010) found that, in addition to the above-stated obstacles, social exclusion critically impeded immigrant wives' workplace integration. They are prevented from participating fully in the economic, social, and political life of the society in which they live. These factors could interfere with immigrant wives' abilities to fit into the workplace by which they help to provide for their families, which exacerbates social problems. Despite new studies on the consequences of female immigrants' workplace integration (Riaño and Baghdadi 2007), limited attention has been paid to the antecedents and consequences of marriage migrants' workplace integration. The following sections review the literature on P-E fit, its four dimensions, and their effects on affective commitment. Then, the possible moderating effects of immigrant wives' locus of control on the relationship between their P-E fit and their affective commitment to their workplaces is examined.

# Workplace Integration: a P-E Fit Perspective

P-E fit has long been a central concept in organizational behavior research (Edwards 2008). Previous studies have defined P-E fit as the extent of compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched (Kristof-Brown et al. 2005). In his recent review of the theoretical progress of P-E fit research, Edwards (2008) concluded that specific dimensions of P-E fit involve the fit between the needs of a person and the rewards provided by the environment, the fit between the abilities of a person and the demands of the environment, and the extent of similarity between a person and the social environment, in which the environment could be individual, groups, organizations, or vocations. Studies have found that P-E fit is positively related to career achievements, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), organizational satisfaction, and employment retention (Bretz and Judge 1994; Chatman 1991; Edwards 2008; Harris and Mossholder 1996; Kristof-Brown 1996). The better fit that an individual has to her or his environment, the better would be her or his work performance, and these positive outcomes might degrade if a misfit was to occur (Edwards 2008).

P-E fit is widely accepted as a multidimensional concept (Greguras and Diefendorff 2009; Kristof-Brown et al. 2005), although scholars vary in the ways that they conceptualize those dimensions. For example, Werbel and Gilliland (1999) proposed a facet model of P-E fit incorporating P-J fit, person-workgroup fit, and P-O fit. Judge and Ferris (1992) and Kristof-Brown (1996) divided P-E fit into the following four



dimensions: P-O fit, P-G fit, person-vocation fit, and P-J fit. Chuang and Lin (2005) suggested that P-S fit also should be given attention. Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) suggested that person-vocation fit is a rather broad idea for P-E fit, and they suggested four dimensions (P-J fit, P-O fit, P-G fit, and P-S fit) to assess the extent of the match between a person and his or her work environment. This study follows Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) and assumes that these dimensions should explain and predict the workplace fit of immigrant wives in Taiwan.

#### P-J Fit

P-J fit is the extent of compatibility between an individual's personality and his or her job's characteristics. Werbel and Gilliland (1999, p. 211) defined P-J fit as the "congruence between the demands of the job and the needed skills, knowledge, and abilities of a job candidate." Tinsley's (2000) found that a good P-J fit reduced stress; stabilized emotions; and increased organizational commitment, motivation, and performance. P-J fit might explain the extent to which immigrant wives match with their jobs.

#### P-O Fit

Kristof-Brown (1996) considered P-O fit from two perspectives: (1) the extent of similarity between an individual's goals and the organization's goals and (2) the compatibility between personal supply and demand with organizational supply and demand. Werbel and Gilliland (1999, p.217) defined P-O fit as "the congruence of individuals' needs, goals, and values with organizational norms, values, and reward systems." When there is a good P-O fit, employees' career satisfactions and organizational commitments are high, which could lower employees' motivations to quit their jobs and, thereby, influence their career plans (Cable and Judge 1996; Chuang and Lin 2005; Young and Hurlic 2007). Because individuals' values, needs, and goals are primary antecedents of P-O fit, and its immediate outcomes are linked to OCBs, organizational satisfaction, organizational commitment, and so on, thus we posit that P-O fit could explain the extent to which immigrant wives' needs, goals, and values match their organizations' goals, norms and values, and management systems.

# P-G Fit

P-G fit refers to the compatibility of an individual with his or her immediate workgroup (work unit) (Werbel and Gilliland 1999). Organizations' extensive use of the term "person-group" implies the importance of person-group interactions to organizational performances (Guzzo and Salas 1995; Hoerr 1989). Some studies have found that similarities within a group regarding values (Haythorn 1968; Klimoski and Jones 1995), personalities (Driskell et al. 1987; Hackman and Morris 1975), and goals (Kristof-Brown and Stevens 2001; Shaw 1981; Weldon and Weingart 1993) influence groups' and their members' behaviors and attitudes. Meglino et al. (1989), Chuang and Lin (2005), and Young and Hurlic (2007) all found that high P-G fit increased employees' career satisfaction and organizational commitment, which might influence their career planning. P-G fit could explain the extent to which immigrant wives fit in with their colleagues, the value that they



place on the groups to which they belong, and their interpersonal relationships with their colleagues.

# P-S Fit

P-S fit is the compatibility of an individual with her or his supervisor (Chuang and Lin 2005). Factors that identify P-S fit include leadership style, personality, values, and preferences. When employees and their supervisors have similar preferences, personalities, backgrounds, and problem-solving methods, the interpersonal attraction and affinity between them is stronger, they tend to interact more often, and employees tend to be more satisfied at work (Tsui and O'Reilly 1989; Zenger and Lawrence 1989). Regarding the compatibility of values, Meglino et al. (1989) suggested that the more that a supervisor's and an employee's values, interests, and/or hobbies overlap, the greater is the employee's satisfaction and extent of organizational commitment. P-S fit could help us explain variation in the extent to which immigrant wives fit their supervisors' leadership and communication styles, ways of interacting, and values.

In sum, P-E fit is a multidimensional concept that includes P-O fit, P-J fit, P-G fit, and P-S fit. The P-E fit perspective posits that current job-related attitudes and outcomes are maximized when a person has a good fit to his or her job, group, supervisor, or organization. Thus, examining these four dimensions of P-E fit could predict the variation in the affective commitment of newcomers (i.e., immigrant wives) to organizations.

# The Relationship Between P-E Fit and Affective Commitment

Meyer et al. (1993) sorted organizational commitment into three categories: (1) affective commitment, (2) normative commitment, and (3) continuance commitment. Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment to an organization as feelings of loyalty toward the employer (Carmeli 2005; Millward and Brewerton 2002; Mohamed et al. 2006; Vandenberghe et al. 2004)Affective commitment has been found to be the strongest and most consistent predictor of an organization's desired outcomes, such as employees' commitment to retention (Mohamed et al. 2006). Because the research subjects of this study are immigrant wives, they are relatively new members of Taiwanese society, and they quite often experience social exclusion from their employers or co-workers because of the difficulties that the local employers and employees have in adapting to work policies intended to accommodate immigrants (Cheng 2010). Based on this context, this study assumed that the subjects' affective commitment is more important than their normative or continuance commitments.

The empirical findings on P-E fit and job attitudes and outcomes suggest that the separate dimensions of P-E fit predict different employee outcomes. Greguras and Diefendorff (2009) empirically tested the relationships of dimensions of perceived P-E fit to employee affective commitment and job performance. They found that P-O fit, P-G fit, and job demand-ability fit (a type of P-J fit that measures the perceived match between an employee's skills and abilities to those required to effectively perform that employee's job) significantly and positively related to employee affective commitment. Chuang and Lin (2005) also found that P-J fit, P-O fit, P-G fit, and P-S fit significantly



and positively related to organizational commitment. A meta-analysis of different dimensions of P-E fit implied that organizational commitment was most strongly related to P-O fit, followed closely by P-J fit, P-G fit, and P-S fit (Kristof-Brown et al. 2005).

The match between newcomers' personal characteristics and those of their work environments influence their attitudes, outcomes, and the extent of their commitment to their employers during their employment periods. We argued that achieving a connection to the workplace to become part of a group is something that immigrant wives desire most after leaving their hometowns and entering a new environment. Thus, when immigrant wives achieve a certain extent of compatibility with their jobs, organizations, groups, and supervisors, their affective commitments to their workplaces are positively influenced. Therefore, we proposed the following hypothesis.

**H1**: Immigrant wives' affective commitment to their workplaces positively relates to their overall P-E fit and to the four dimensions of P-E fit (P-O fit, P-G fit, P-J fit, and P-S fit).

# The Moderating Role of External Locus of Control

The literature on P-E fit mentions personality as an influential factor on the extent of P-E fit (Kristof-Brown et al. 2005; Ryan and Kristof-Brown 2003); we argued that personality of locus of control influenced the extent of immigrant wives' organizational commitment and that personality of locus of control moderates the relationship of P-E fit to affective commitment. Locus of control is also referred to as "control belief," meaning "one's belief in the interrelationship between the individual and the environment in everyday life" (Rotter 1966). Locus of control originated in Rotter's (1954) social learning theory. There are two types of locus of control. Internal locus of control (ILC) is belief in oneself and one's own actions. Those who possess it believe that their personal actions, capabilities, and efforts determine their personal successes and failures. On the other hand, external locus of control (ELC) is an individual's belief that personal interests, lifestyles, destinies, leadership responsibilities, successes, and failures are mostly controlled by others (Lam and Schaubroeck 2000). Many studies have found that locus of control significantly influences the extent of an individual's organizational commitment. Some studies have proposed that employees with an ILC have stronger organizational commitment than those with an ELC (Coleman et al. 1999; Furnham 1994; Kinicki and Vecchio 1994; Schyns and Collani 2002). Some researchers understand locus of control (ILC and ELC) as a moderator of the relationship between behaviors and work performance (Ng and Butts 2009; Norris and Niebuhr 1984; Srivastava 2009).

Based on the previous studies' results, we argue that immigrant wives' external locus of control might moderate the influence of their P-E fit on their affective commitment. Because immigrant wives are relatively new to Taiwan, they tend to have limited resources, and they are expected to adapt to and comply with their employers' rules and norms of interpersonal relationships. However, language barriers and cultural differences could increase their difficulties in effectively communicating with their colleagues and their abilities to adapt to the rules, particularly during the settlement process.



In Taiwan, the number of immigrant wives has rapidly increased since the 1990s. Due to their economic disadvantages in their home countries, most of the Vietnamese and Indonesian immigrant wives married for financial reasons, through arranged marriages (Li and Huang 2008). Hence, the current study posited that immigrant wives are relatively more reliant on men and marriage for financial support than other wives in Taiwan, and, therefore, their personalities tend to attribute causality or the control of events to external factors, such as destiny, other people, luck, and task difficulty. One purpose of this study was to investigate the moderating influences of locus of control on the relationship of P-E fit to affective commitment. In this context, ELC is expected to negatively moderate this relationship because of the tendency of immigrant wives to attribute causality or control to external factors as opposed to internal factors, and we developed the following hypothesis:

**H2**: Immigrant wives' external locus of control negatively moderates the influence of their overall P-E fit and of the four P-E fit dimensions on their affective commitment toward their workplaces.

#### Methods

# Samples and Data Collection

To examine the P-E fit perceived by Vietnamese and Indonesian immigrant wives in Taiwan and their impact on their affective commitment toward their organizations, primary data were obtained by the research team through the distribution of surveys. Before data were collected, a questionnaire was designed; feedback was sought from experts, Director Lee of the Good Shepherd Social Welfare Services and Ms. Shu, a social worker at the Service Center for New Immigrants of Kaohsiung City. The experts were invited to examine the questions and to correct and modify the terms. The questionnaires were translated into Vietnamese and Indonesian, and back-translation was used to ensure consistency. Five immigrant wives from each country of origin were invited to participate in a pilot test. After the meaning of each question was discussed with the pilot test's participants, the question wording was further modified to ensure that all of the respondents could fully understand all of the questions.

Data were collected over the period of July to August 2009; Vietnamese and Indonesian immigrant wives residing in Kaohsiung were invited to participate in the study through four agencies: (1) Service Center for New Immigrants of Kaohsiung City, (2) Tree of Life International Care Association, (3) Good Shepherd Social Welfare Services, and (4) Jun-Yi Community Child Care Center. Participants also were sought at Vietnamese and Indonesian restaurants in the Kaohsiung area. Those who agreed to participate received questionnaires. During a 2-month period, 225 questionnaires were distributed and 150 questionnaires were returned. Of the 150 returned questionnaires, 130 were valid, amounting to a response rate of 57.78 %. The descriptive information on the sample subjects is provided in Table 1.



Table 1 Sample characteristics

Basic personal information		Number of persons	Percent
1. Country of origin	Vietnam	101	77.7
	Indonesia	29	22.3
2. Age	Under 18	3	2.3
	20~25	24	18.5
	26~30	48	36.9
	30~40	43	33.1
	41~50	6	4.6
	Over 51	4	3.1
3. Degree of education received	Illiterate	5	3.8
	Elementary school	22	16.9
	Junior high school	34	26.2
	Senior high school/vocational school	54	41.5
	College	11	8.5
	Masters and above	0	0
4. Number of years in Taiwan	Under 1	4	3.1
	1~3	19	14.6
	4~6	44	33.8
	7~9	27	20.8
	Over 10	33	25.4
5. Work experience in country of origin	None	18	13.8
	Under 1 year	17	13.1
	1~3 years	46	35.4
	4~6 years	24	18.5
	7~9 years	11	8.5
	Over 10 years	11	8.5
6. Number of children	0	25	19.2
	1	51	39.2
	2	42	32.3
	3	6	4.6
	4	0	0
	5 and more	2	1.5
7. Nature of working hours	Part-time	41	31.5
	Full-time	86	66.2
8. Personal monthly income in average	Under 5000	11	8.5
	5,001~10,000	14	10.8
	10,001~15,000	34	26.2
	15,001~20,000	35	26.9
	20,001~25,000	17	13.1
	25,001~30,000	9	6.9
	30,001~35,000	3	2.3
	Over 35,001	3	2.3



Table 1 (continued)

Basic personal information		Number of persons	Percent
9. Current field of employment	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, livestock	3	2.3
	Manufacturing industry	52	40.0
	Service industry	40	30.8
	Other	29	22.3
10. Years of work experience	Under 1 year	21	16.2
	1~3 years	55	42.3
	4~6 years	27	20.8
	7~9 years	14	10.8
	Over 10 years	9	6.9

#### Measures

All of the variables were developed based on the relevant previous studies and adapted to the specific context of Taiwanese society. All of the items used to measure the predictors, outcomes, and moderator provided the respondents with response options on a five-point Likert-type scale, where 1 = strongly disagree through 5 = strongly agree.

# **Independent Variables: P-E Fit**

**P-J Fit** The items were edited from Cable and DeRue (2002) for total seven questions.

**P-O Fit** The items were developed with reference to Autry and Daugherty (2003) and Cable and DeRue (2002), and five questions were designed for this study.

**P-G Fit** Based on the "work value inventory" of Wu et al. (1996), seven questions were asked.

**P-S Fit** The items were edited following Cable and DeRue's (2002) questions, and seven questions were asked.

#### **Moderator: ELC**

The items were edited following Lam and Schaubroeck (2000). Eight items were used to measure personality of locus of control. ELC was measured as ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly external and 5 is low ELC, which is the same as ILC.

#### **Dependent Variable: Affective Commitment**

Based on the organization commitment questionnaire of Meyer et al. (1993), six items were used to measure the dependent variable.



#### **Control Variables**

The relationships of the measures of P-E fit to affective commitment could be influenced by the demographic characteristics of the sample, such as the number of years in Taiwan, work experience in the country of origin, number of years of work experience, country of origin, and family income. These variables were employed as control variables in analysis.

# Reliability and Validity of Measurements

The questionnaire was developed from previous studies, and a factor analysis was performed to confirm the construct validity of the measures. During the screening process, a principal component analysis procedure with orthogonal rotation exploratory factor analysis using varimax was employed to extract common factors. Factors were identified based on the criteria of the factor loadings, as suggested by Hair et al. (1998). Because the survey data used one sample of respondents, common method variance (CMV) was a potential problem, which was handled following Podsakoff and Organ's (1986) advice to perform a Harman's one-factor test. The total variance explained for one factor was 27.77 %, indicating that the CMV was at an acceptable level.

Regarding the independent variable P-E fit, seven items were dropped after three rounds of exploratory factor analysis, leaving 19 items for a cumulative variance of 63.99 %. A confirmatory factor analysis was performed to examine the model's goodness of fit. The results found that the factor loading of each item exceeded about .72 and the model fit was at a good fit level (CMIN/df=1.29, GFI=.93, CFI=.97, RMSEA=.05, p=.09, PCLOSE=.53). The reliabilities of the measures of the four P-E fit dimensions (P-J fit, P-O fit, P-S fit, and P-G fit) were individually assessed using Cronbach's alpha statistics. All four reliabilities exceeded .70, indicating sufficient internal reliability (P-J fit=.78, P-O fit=.80, P-G fit=.87, and P-S fit=.83). Three items were dropped from the construct of the dependent variable (affective commitment), its cumulative variance was 63.13 %, and its Cronbach's alpha was .71. No items were eliminated from the construct of the moderator variable (ELC), and its Cronbach's alpha was .85.

#### **Results and Discussion**

Table 2 reports the means, standard deviations, and correlations for each of the variables in the model. The five measures of P-E fit were significantly and positively correlated with affective commitment and ELC. The mean of ELC was only 2.13, suggesting that this sample's tendency was relatively more toward ELC than ILC. ELC significantly and negatively correlated with all of the other variables, indicating that ELC weakened P-E fit and related to affective commitment.

Regarding the demographic variables, there were significant differences in the "years in Taiwan" regarding affective commitment and in the "work experience in country of origin" variable regarding P-G fit and P-S fit. The variable measuring "years of work experience" was significant regarding P-G fit, and "country of origin" was significant for P-O fit.



	Means	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. P-G fit	3.914	.682	(.872)					
2. P-S fit	3.684	.699	.332**	(.825)				
3. P-O fit	3.684	.650	.501**	.592**	(.798)			
4. P-J fit	3.532	.814	.265**	.265**	.367**	(.783)		
5. Affective commitment	3.505	.763	.322**	.435**	.439**	.493**	(.707)	
6. ELC	2.131	.621	271**	287**	355**	232**	454**	(.845)

Table 2 Descriptive statistics, correlation, and reliability

Values in the parenthesis denote Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , n = 130

# **Results of Regression Analysis**

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis are presented in Table 3.

# The Influence of P-E Fit on Affective Commitment

Table 3 (model 1.1) shows that P-E fit had a significant effect on affective commitment ( $\beta$ =.481, p<.001). Therefore, hypothesis 1 (H1: Immigrant wives' affective commitment to their workplaces positively relates to their overall P-E fit and to the four dimensions of P-E fit (P-O fit, P-G fit, P-J fit, and P-S fit)) was partially supported. This result supports the arguments about P-E fit in the current literature (Harris and Mossholder 1996; Kristof-Brown 1996), and it verifies that the expectations of P-E fit apply to immigrant wives' work experiences in Taiwan.

The variance inflation factor (VIF) values of the P-E fit's four dimensions ranged between 1 and 10; therefore, the multicollinearity of the four dimensions was acceptable, which allowed them to be individually interpreted as independent variables. Regarding the positive effects of the four dimensions of P-E fit on affective commitment, Table 3 (model 2.1) shows that only P-J fit and P-S fit were statistically significant ( $\beta$ =.308, p<.001 and  $\beta$ =.261, p<.001). Neither P-O fit nor P-G fit had statistically significant effects. This result is consistent with the arguments in the literature (Chuang and Lin 2005; Meglino et al. 1989; Tinsley 2000; Tsui and O'Reilly 1989), and it supports the previous empirical results of Chuang and Lin (2005), who found that the dimensions of P-E fit might not have similar effects on a given work-related outcome.

For the sample under observation, this result means that immigrant wives believed that their compatibility with their jobs and their supervisors could most significantly improve their sense of emotional affiliation to the organization. If enterprises intend to employ, motivate, and effectively manage immigrant wives, they should focus on targeted on-the-job training for the employees and improved supervisory skills of their supervisors. Neither P-G fit nor P-O fit significantly explained the variance in affective commitment, which might be, as Felfe and Yan (2009) found, that cultural differences reduce the predictive value of having work-group commitments.



<sup>\*</sup>p < .05

<sup>\*\*</sup>p < .01

Table 3 Results of hierarchical regression analysis

	Dependent variable: affective commitment					
	Model 1.1		Model 1.2	Model 2.1		Model 2.2
Step 1 main effect	$\beta(p)$	VIF	β (p)	$\beta(p)$	VIF	$\beta(p)$
Control variables						
Country of origin <sup>a</sup>	146 (.038)*	1.085	121 (.147)	149 (.046)*	1.108	135 (.052)
Years in Taiwan <sup>a</sup>	.158 (.015)*	1.244	.201 (.035)	.139 (.101)	1.427	.120 (.124)
Work experience <sup>a</sup> in origin	049 (.528)	1.354	.044 (.654)	033 (.694)	1.406	048 (.543)
Independent variables						
Whole P-E fit	.481 (.000)***	1.231				
ELC	261 (.000)***	1.180				
P-G fit				.102 (.233)	1.411	055 (.810)
P-S fit				.261 (.004)**	1.629	.162 (.529)
P-O fit				.133 (.182)	2.005	012 (.971)
P-J fit				.308 (.000)***	1.299	.867 (.000)***
Step 2 interactive effect						
Whole P-E fit × ELC			191 (.027)*			
P-G fit $\times$ ELC						.260 (.486)
P-S fit $\times$ ELC						.028 (.942)
P-O fit $\times$ ELC						.109 (.805)
P-J fit $\times$ ELC						789 (.000)***
$R^2$	.667	.311		.400		.503
$\triangle R^2$	.444	.097		.400		.103
F change	19.843***	3.348	k	11.615***		6.138***

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Treated as a dummy variable

# **Moderating Effect of ELC**

The results found (model 1.2, Table 3) that a high ELC-oriented personality negatively and significantly moderated the effects of P-E fit on affective commitment ( $\beta$ =-.191, p<.05), which partially supported hypothesis 2 (H2: Immigrant wives' ELC negatively moderates the influence of their overall P-E fit and of the four P-E fit dimensions on their affective commitment toward their organizations). Moreover, Fig. 1 illustrates that the positive influence of P-E fit on the affective commitment of lower ELC immigrant wives was stronger than its positive influence on higher ELC immigrant wives, perhaps because immigrant wives with lower ELC are relatively more independent, willing to try new things, and ready to accept challenges. These participants also might tend to overcome difficulties relatively more independently and to easily adjust to their environments, which could help to strengthen their affective commitments.



<sup>\*</sup>p < .05

<sup>\*\*</sup>p < .01

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>p < .001

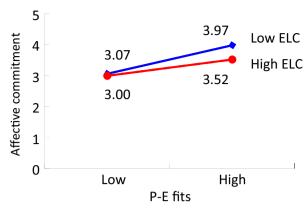


Fig. 1 P-E fit × ELC on affective commitment

Regarding the moderating effects of ELC on the four dimensions of P-E fit (model 2.2, Table 3), ELC had a significant weakening effect on P-J fit ( $\beta$ =-.789, p<.001). However, the other three dimensions were non-significant (P-O fit and ELC  $\beta$ =.109, P-G fit and ELC  $\beta$ =.260, and P-S fit and ELC  $\beta$ =.028). Figure 2 shows that the positive influence of P-J fit on affective commitment among the lower ELC subjects was stronger than that of the higher ELC immigrant wives. In other words, ELC had a negative moderating effect.

The reason that P-J fit interacted with ELC and presented a significant weakening effect might be understood through the concept of knowledge, skill, and attitudes (KSAs). People with a high ELC tend to be relatively more dependent on support from others (Lam and Schaubroeck 2000; Levenson 1974, 1981). Immigrant wives tend to lack sufficient job-related competencies (Wu 2004), are relatively less confident and less capable of learning work-related knowledge and skills, and tend to experience more difficulties meeting work-related behavioral requirements. To achieve a good job fit, immigrant wives require repeated instructions in addition to coaching and training from peers and supervisors, which might increase the language and cultural obstacles they face. Furthermore, immigrant wives might resist job instructions and training, even though they might not fully understand or dislike the coaching or training methods imposed upon them. This unwillingness could harm their dignity. This situation also

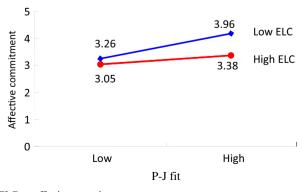


Fig. 2 P-J fit  $\times$  ELC on affective commitment



could cause ELC to weaken the relationship between P-S fit and affective commitment. Oh the other hand, people with a low ELC tend to be less dependent on others, more secure, more ready to tackle challenges, and more capable of independently overcoming difficulties, suggesting that they are relatively more likely to overcome difficulties in the workplace, which could strengthen their affective commitments.

P-O fit and P-G fit focus on values and human interactions, and immigrant wives with language difficulties tend to have difficulties accepting aspects of Taiwanese culture and values. However, those with higher ELC, because of their stronger dependence on others, might be relatively more willing to adapt to local values and overcome cultural barriers. P-O fit and P-G fit therefore could increase affective commitment. However, the effect might not reach a significant level.

# Conclusion

This study pioneered the application of P-E fit theory to study overall P-E fit as well as four separate dimensions of P-E fit in a sample of immigrant wives in Taiwan regarding their employment contexts. The results found that immigrant wives' P-E fit can, indeed, significantly influence their affective commitments to their organizations, particularly when they sense that they are personally compatible with their jobs and supervisors. However, contrary to our expectations, P-O fit and P-G fit were not significant predictors. Furthermore, having an ELC personality significantly weakened the relationship between P-J fit and affective commitment. A weakening effect was also found regarding P-S fit, whereas P-O fit and P-G fit had enhancing effects.

# **Implications and Suggestions for Management Practices**

It is clear from this study's results that ELC can influence whether the immigrant wives in this sample adapt well to their workplaces. Therefore, when enterprises employ immigrant wives and assign jobs to them, the more complex jobs should be assigned to those with lower ELC. Jobs that are easy and require obedience should be assigned to those with a higher ELC. Additionally, because the P-S fit of the immigrant wives in this sample significantly influenced their affective commitments, supervisors' managerial skills are crucial to immigrant wives' P-E fit. Enterprises should train their supervisors to be proficient in cross-cultural managerial skills when they closely oversee immigrant wives. They should strive to establish effective communication channels with them to boost confidence and trust, thereby strengthening affective commitments to the workplace.

P-O fit and P-G fit did positively correlated to affective commitment, which implies that employers should provide training to strengthen the bonds between their employees who are immigrant wives and the work units, departments, and workplace. Meetings and workshops could include employee gatherings, trips, or other activities to enable immigrant wives to share their native cultures with their co-workers. As social interaction increases between individuals and their work units, departments, and workplaces, individuals' affective commitments could strengthen. Enterprises also could establish programs to effectively provide assistance (e.g., Employee Assistance Programs) targeted at immigrant wives' aptitudes and personalities to help them fit into appropriate jobs in Taiwan.



# Limitation and Suggestions for Future Research

The results of this study suggest that using the concepts of P-E fit and ELC could be a good way to explain and predict workplace problems faced by immigrants in their host societies. However, some limitations of this study lead us to suggest some opportunities for future research. First, this study was limited to immigrant wives from Vietnam and Indonesia living in Kaohsiung City in Taiwan. Actually, immigrant spouses from mainland China account for 67.6 % (National Immigration Agency, Ministry of the Interior (MOI) 2014) of all the immigrant spouses in Taiwan. The major difference between Chinese and non-Chinese immigrant spouses is language, so a comparative analysis of immigrants and their P-E fits in the workplace between Chinese and non-Chinese immigrant wives would be a useful way to gain additional insights into the labor force participation of immigrant wives in Taiwan. Similarly, studies on immigrant wives' workplace fit issues regarding P-E fit across countries, social contexts, races, ethnicities, or regions could confirm this study's results. Other limitation concerns the studied variables that were collected from the same raters; to reduce single response bias, future studies should take into account to include two or more response subjects. A qualitative study also is recommended to allow us to learn more about the ways that immigrant wives think and feel about their P-E fit in their workplaces.

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