

**Public Enterprise Reform and Organizational
Commitment: A Comparative Study on the Energy
Public Enterprises in Thailand**
การแปรรูปรัฐวิสาหกิจกับความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงาน:
การศึกษาเปรียบเทียบระหว่างองค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจ
ด้านการพลังงานแห่งประเทศไทย

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยในครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์หลัก เพื่อศึกษาและประเมินผลกระทบของนโยบายแปรรูปรัฐวิสาหกิจที่มีต่อองค์ประกอบด้านต่าง ๆ ของความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงานในรัฐวิสาหกิจด้านการพลังงานของประเทศไทย การวิจัยนี้ จึงเป็นการศึกษาเชิงเปรียบเทียบระดับความผูกพันองค์การในรูปแบบต่าง ๆ ระหว่างรัฐวิสาหกิจด้านการพลังงานที่มีโครงสร้างขององค์การแตกต่างกัน 3 ลักษณะตามระดับการแปลงสภาพองค์การที่เกิดขึ้นจากนโยบายแปรรูปรัฐวิสาหกิจ ได้แก่ องค์การที่ยังไม่มีการแปลงสภาพองค์การ (แบบที่ 1) องค์การที่มีการแปลงสภาพเพียงบางส่วน (แบบที่ 2) และองค์การที่มีการแปลงสภาพเสร็จสิ้นแล้วทั้งองค์การ (แบบที่ 3) นอกจากนี้ งานวิจัยยังได้ศึกษาถึงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงานรัฐวิสาหกิจด้านการพลังงานกับปัจจัยที่ทำให้เกิดความผูกพันองค์การใน 3 ปัจจัยหลัก ได้แก่ พฤติกรรม

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ที่สัมพันธ์กับการเปลี่ยนแปลงองค์การ วิธีการปฏิบัติงานด้านการบริหาร ทรัพยากรบุคคล และค่านิยมที่สัมพันธ์กับการทำงาน โดยใช้การวิเคราะห์ตัวแบบประเมินแบบสมการโครงสร้าง (Structural Equation Modeling) การวิจัยได้เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลจากการสัมภาษณ์ผู้บริหารขององค์การ และการใช้แบบสอบถามกับพนักงานขององค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจด้านการพลังงาน 3 แห่งของประเทศไทย มีจำนวนผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามทั้งสิ้น 589 ราย คิดเป็นอัตราส่วนการตอบกลับร้อยละ 65.44 โดยแยกเป็นแบบสอบถามจากพนักงานจากองค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 1 ร้อยละ 32.94 แบบสอบถามจากพนักงานจากองค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 2 ร้อยละ 34.63 และแบบสอบถามจากพนักงานจากองค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 3 ร้อยละ 32.43 ตามลำดับ

ผลการวิจัยปรากฏว่า มีความแตกต่างกันทางสถิติอย่างมีนัยสำคัญระหว่างระดับของความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงานรัฐวิสาหกิจทั้งสามแห่งในด้านความผูกพันองค์การเชิงจิตใจ (affective commitment) และความผูกพันองค์การเชิงบรรทัดฐาน (normative commitment) แต่ไม่มีความแตกต่างกันในด้านความผูกพันองค์การเชิงความจำเป็น (continuance commitment) กล่าวคือ พนักงานในองค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 3 มีระดับความผูกพันองค์การเชิงจิตใจสูงกว่าพนักงานในองค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 2 และพนักงานในองค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 2 มีระดับความผูกพันองค์การเชิงจิตใจสูงกว่าพนักงานในองค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 1 สำหรับระดับความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงานเชิงบรรทัดฐานนั้น พบว่า องค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 2 และ 3 มีระดับสูงกว่าแบบที่ 1 แต่ไม่มีความแตกต่างกันระหว่างระดับความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงานเชิงบรรทัดฐานขององค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจแบบที่ 2 และแบบที่ 3 สำหรับ การศึกษาปัจจัยต่าง ๆ ที่ส่งผลต่อระดับความผูกพันองค์การนั้น พบว่า พนักงานขององค์การรัฐวิสาหกิจทั้งสามแห่งที่ศึกษา มีการรับรู้ในระดับที่แตกต่างกันในปัจจัยย่อยที่เกี่ยวข้องพฤติกรรมที่สัมพันธ์กับการเปลี่ยนแปลงองค์การปัจจัยย่อยบางประการที่เกี่ยวข้องกับวิธีการปฏิบัติงานด้านการบริหาร

ทรัพยากรบุคคล และปัจจัยที่เกี่ยวกับค่านิยมที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการทำงานขององค์การในบางประเภท ภายหลังจากที่มีการนำนโยบายการแปรรูปรัฐวิสาหกิจไปสู่การปฏิบัติ นอกจากนี้ การศึกษายังพบว่า ปัจจัยเกี่ยวกับพฤติกรรมที่สัมพันธ์กับการเปลี่ยนแปลงองค์การ มีผลกระทบด้านลบต่อระดับความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงาน ในขณะที่ปัจจัยเกี่ยวกับวิธีการปฏิบัติงานด้านการบริหารทรัพยากรบุคคล และปัจจัยเกี่ยวกับค่านิยมที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการทำงาน ส่งผลกระทบบวกต่อระดับความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงานรัฐวิสาหกิจด้านการพลังงานที่ทำการศึกษา

การวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่า พฤติกรรมที่ตอบสนองต่อการเปลี่ยนแปลงองค์การ ระเบียบวิธีปฏิบัติงานด้านการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์ และค่านิยมของพนักงานที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการทำงาน มีผลต่อความผูกพันองค์การโดยเฉพาะความผูกพันองค์การเชิงจิตใจและเชิงบรรทัดฐาน ดังนั้น องค์การที่ต้องการจะพัฒนาระดับความผูกพันองค์การของพนักงานควรคำนึงถึงสภาพแวดล้อมในการทำงานในลักษณะที่ส่งเสริมให้พนักงานสามารถทำงานที่ได้รับมอบหมายได้อย่างเต็มที่ โดยการสร้างวัฒนธรรมองค์การเฉพาะที่มุ่งเน้นผลการปฏิบัติงานขององค์การโดยรวมและวัฒนธรรมที่มุ่งเน้นการตอบสนองต่อสิ่งแวดล้อมภายนอก เช่น การสร้างระบบการสื่อสารองค์การที่มีประสิทธิภาพ การส่งเสริมการฝึกอบรมและพัฒนาบุคลากร การมีระบบการจ่ายค่าตอบแทนที่อิงกับผลตอบแทนของตลาดและการให้รางวัลผลการทำงานที่เท่าเทียมกัน ฯลฯ เป็นต้น

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of public enterprise reform policy on the attributes of organizational commitments in the public energy enterprises in Thailand. It compares three structural types of public energy enterprises; totally state-owned public enterprises, partially transformed public enterprises,

and totally transformed public enterprises, based on the degree of state ownership and the level of management control that exists in the public reformed organizations, by analyzing the presence of the desirable attributes of organizational commitment as perceived by employees. It also examines the causal relationship between organizational commitment and three categories of antecedents, change-related behaviors, human resources management practices, and work-related values, by using structural equation modeling (SEM). The data for this study were drawn from two major sources - through in-depth interviews with executives and a questionnaire eliciting the perceptions of the employees of public energy enterprises. Of 589 usable questionnaires (representing a 65.44% response rate), 32.94% came from employees of totally state-owned enterprises, 34.63% came from employees of partially transformed enterprises, and 32.43% from employees of totally transformed enterprises.

Findings indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the level of some dimensions of organizational commitment (affective commitment and normative commitment) between the three types of public energy enterprises. The lack of a structural type difference holds for only continuance commitment. Moreover, the employees perceived some organizational change-related behaviors, HRM practices, and work-related values at different levels in the public energy enterprises. The results also indicated empirical evidence concerning the causal relationship between these antecedents and organizational commitment. On the other hand, change-related behaviors showed a direct negative

influence on organizational commitment, and both HRM practices and work-related values indicated a direct positive influence on them.

Empirical evidence appears to support the view that change-related behaviors, human resource management practices, and work-related values can influence the development of organizational commitment, especially regarding affective and normative commitment. As a consequence, the study recommends a concrete effort by policy makers and management in order to improve the public enterprise's environment to enhance its role in development by emphasizing private management practices and by reducing negatively change-related behaviors through encouraging performance-oriented and market-oriented approaches. Organizations that require their employees to develop organizational commitment should provide a supportive work environment, which create a mutual benefit environment. The practical implications are that organizations should create specific commitment cultures by providing effective communications, extensive training and development, market-related compensations and equitable rewards.

Keywords: Energy sector, public enterprise reform policy, organizational commitment.

Introduction

Energy is a fundamental factor in the national development of a nation. In developing countries, growth in energy use is closely

related to growth in the modern sectors – industry, transport, and urban areas. According to the International Energy Agency, total world energy consumption will rise from 462 quadrillion British thermal units (Btu) in 2005 to 563 quadrillion Btu in 2015 and then to 695 quadrillion Btu in 2030. Global energy demand is growing despite the sustained high world oil prices that are projected to persist over the long-term (Energy Information Administration, 2008). Also in Thailand, the energy sector has also been one of the most important sectors, because the country depends largely on imported energy at a considerable cost each year. In 2006, the energy consumption in Thailand accounted for a value of approximately 1,488 billion Baht, which was almost 19% of the GDP, and the value of imported energy was greater than 912 billion Baht (EPPO, 2006; NESDB, 2007). Nonetheless, among 59 public organizations, there are only four public enterprises in the energy sector – PTT Public Company Limited, Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand, Metropolitan Electricity Authority, and Provincial Electricity Authority – that contribute significantly in the development of the energy industry in Thailand.

In order to cope with the rapidly increasing demand on energy in Thailand, on September 1, 1998, the Master Plan for State Enterprise Sector Reform for transforming state enterprises in Thailand received the cabinet's approval (Ministry of Finance, 1998). This plan aims at reforming and privatizing key utility and infrastructure sectors in Thailand. Of these, energy sector is one of the four key sectors that are given priority in the reform policy.

However, the transforming process of the public enterprise reform policy in Thailand has led to a major process change in the enterprises'

internal organization, with the objective of increasing effectiveness, efficiency and shareholder's value. This requires a sharp change in ownership, strategy, power structures and control of the organization. These changes are expected to have a profound impact, not only on the economic and financial results of the companies, but also on the human factor-individual employees, human resource management practice, organizational culture, and organizational commitment.

As described in the management and behavioral science literature, organizational commitment is considered as a key factor in the relationship between individuals and organizations. Organizational commitment refers to the degree of loyalty shown by employees towards their organization. Employees are regarded as committed to an organization if they willingly continue their association with the organization and devote considerable effort to achieving organizational goals. The higher level of efforts exerted by employees by greater level of organizational commitment leads to the higher level of performance and effectiveness at both the individual and the organizational levels (Mowday, 1998). Meyer and Allen (1997), furthermore, point out that organizational commitment, if properly managed, could lead to beneficial consequences such as organizational effectiveness, improved performance, and reduced turnover and absenteeism. This quest to harness potential organizational benefits has resulted in the large number of studies that focus on the nature of organizational commitment. Although a great deal has been written about organizational commitment, understanding remains unclear as to what and how organizational factors are associated with and how these organizational factors can be managed to promote the development of commitment in an organization.

The exact manner in which these factors influence the development of organizational commitment is still not well understood. Empirical evidence hence is needed in order to unravel the development of organizational commitment. Furthermore, little researches concerning the effects of reform policy on the employee organizational commitment has been conducted in Thailand, whereas there have been numerous studies conducted in other countries. This study therefore could further our understanding of employees that are going through transformation in Thailand in a more complete way. In the mean time, it also aims to examine that employees that are more committed and motivated to work will perform more effectively and efficiently.

Research Objectives

This empirical research is mainly concerned with public enterprise reform in Thailand and organizational commitment of the energy public enterprises as perceived and viewed by their employees. Furthermore, the research aims at identifying the variables affecting transformed organizational determinants (antecedents) leading to organizational commitment of the employees of the public energy enterprises in Thailand as well as eliciting causal relationships between these antecedents and the organizational commitment. The results of the study should assist management, executives, as well as policy makers to adopt the reform policy implementation in order to induce and maintain organizational commitment of employees in the transformed organizations; hence, the results make a contribution to public enterprise development in Thailand.

Literature Review

Organizational commitment has been identified as a critical factor in understanding and explaining the work-related behavior of employees in organizations. A committed employee is generally described as one that stays with an organization, attends work regularly, puts in a full day and more, protects corporate assets, and believes in organizational goal (Meyer and Allen, 1997). A committed employee therefore, in principle, contributes to the competitive edge for the organization because of the positive nature of this work behavior.

Meyer and Allen (1991) initially developed a three-component model to address observed similarities and differences in existing unidimensional conceptualizations of organizational commitment. Common to all was the belief that commitment binds an individual to an organization and thereby reduces the likelihood of turnover. The main differences were in the mindsets presumed to characterize the commitment. These mindsets reflect three distinguishable themes: affective attachment to the organization, obligation to remain membership, and perceived cost of leaving. In order to distinguish among commitments characterized by these different mindsets, Meyer and Allen labeled them "affective commitment", "normative commitment", and "continuance commitment", respectively (Meyer and Becker, 2004).

Affective commitment refers to employees' emotional attachment to, in identification with, and involvement in the organization. It represents a state in which an individual identifies with a particular organization and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in order to facilitate these

goals. According to Meyer and Allen (1997), affective commitment represents the employee's emotional attachment to the organization and employees retain membership because they want to do so.

Continuance commitment refers to commitment based on the costs that employees associate with leaving the organization, such as loss of income. This commitment also refers to utilitarian gain from the employment relationship, with the employee being less likely to leave the organization based on the extent to which the contribution ratio is in balance favorable to the employee. It is a function of the rewards and costs associated with organizational membership. Meyer and Allen (1997) also mentioned that employees that possess continuance commitment retain membership because they have to do so.

Finally, normative commitment refers to employees' feelings of obligation to remain with an organization. This type of commitment is viewed as a belief about one's responsibility to the organization. Normative commitment may result from pressures exerted either prior to or after organizational entry. According to Meyer and Allen (1997), employees retain membership because they feel that they ought to do so.

Researchers of organizational commitment have been trying to determine what the organization is about and the employee's experiences that influence the development of the organizational commitment once the individual has selected membership in an organization. As a consequence, hundreds of empirical studies have examined the correlations between organizational commitment and the variables hypothesized to be its antecedents.

Meyer and Allen's (1997) model focused on distal and proximal

influences on organizational commitment that are antecedents of organizational commitment. Distal variables are more direct than proximal variables, which typically have more implicit influence on individual behavior. Examples of distal variables are personal characteristics, organizational characteristics, socialization experiences, management practices, and environmental conditions. Distal causes exert an indirect influence on commitment through their association with more proximal causes. In contrast, proximal variables are direct and explicit influences on individual behavior. They reflect an exchange relationship with the organization. Examples of proximal variables are work experiences, role states, and psychological contracts. The literature generally focuses on two areas, antecedents and outcomes. Both predictors and results of affective, continuance, and normative commitment have been studied widely.

In regard to work environment attributes associated with organizational commitment, variables include organizational structure, organizational climate and change, organizational culture (values), and human resource processes (DeCotiis and Summers, 1987).

The literature contains some evidence that organizational structure variables influence commitment. In organic organization, research has shown that when workers feel he or she has a high level of autonomy, responsibility and empowerment on each organization level, and participative management, they will experience increased satisfaction and commitment levels (Campbell et. al., 1991). On the other hand, under bureaucratic structure which the structuring depersonalizes the exchange, commitment should fall. Koprowski (1972) reported that such workplace practices as rigid procedures, tight workplace controls, hierarchical top-down

management, and strict emphasis on chain of command all serve to negatively impact knowledge worker's satisfaction and commitment. Furthermore, the literature also contains a support that organizational structure-including type of organizational ownership-influences organizational commitment. Some research suggests that individual demographic and job characteristic variables are not particularly prominent correlates of commitment in comparison with the nature of ownership (Oliver, 1990). In this regard, private sector employees have often been reported to hold higher commitment than public sector employees (Odom et. al., 1990).

As described in Meyer and Allen's (1997) model, change-related behaviors, such as change-related communication and occupational stress factors (i.e., job insecurity, role ambiguity, role conflict, etc.), are recognized as the role states that are antecedents of organizational commitment. According to McGrath (1976), there is a potential for stress when an environmental situation is perceived as presenting a demand that threatens to exceed the person's capabilities and resources for meeting it, under conditions where he expects a substantial differentiation in the rewards and costs from meeting the demands versus not meeting them. It is therefore the person's perception of the demand rather than the demand itself that determines the degree of stress experienced, and this perception may be influenced by that person's self-perceived abilities and self-confidence.

Change-related communication is a key factor in influencing the phenomenon of perceived job insecurity. Moreover, ineffective internal communication is a major contributor to the failure of change initiatives (Hart et. al., 2003). Communication can be used to reduce resistance,

minimize uncertainty and gain involvement and commitment in the change process. This in turn improves morale and retention rates (Klein, 1996). Finally, role conflict and role ambiguity can also be reduced by providing timely feedback to employees regarding the changes.

Many theorists have proposed that organizational culture (employees' values and beliefs) is an important antecedent to organizational commitment. Wiener (1982) stated that organizational culture is the basic determinant of all values of the employees. In his model, Weiner postulated that feelings of obligation to remain with an organization may result from the internationalization of normative pressures exerted on an individual through the society's values and beliefs. Societal socialization precedes the organizational socialization process that starts when one enters the organization.

The position of Wiener (1982) is supported in Meyer and Allen's (1991) model of organizational commitment, which proposes cultural socialization as an antecedent to normative organizational commitment. They contend more specifically that the importance that collectivist cultures place on loyalty to the collective over the individual is likely to increase an employee's moral obligation to remain in an organization.

Employees' work-related beliefs and values affect their behaviors in organizations. Kamkwala (2006) suggested, for example, that the key dimension to successful organizational change is total commitment by management to support the desired beliefs and values that are important to its success. Management has to live by the organizational values and beliefs to demonstrate to employees that it is committed to making permanent cultural change. Furthermore, top management needs to ensure

that all aspects of its organizational functions reflect the beliefs and values of employees.

Scholars contend that many organizations adopt human resources practices in order to maximize employee commitment. As illustrated in Meyer and Allen's (1997) model, management practice factors (i.e., selection, training, compensation, etc.) and work experience factors (i.e., job scope, participation, relationships, support, justice, etc.) are recognized as the antecedents to organizational commitment.

The majority of studies have focused on variables that fall into the very broad category of work experience and there are some strong and consistent correlations with commitment across the studies. Specifically, across many different samples of employees, organizational commitment has been positively correlated with empowerment, participation, communication, supervisory relations, and co-worker relationship. For instance, Iverson and Roy (1994) found that employees that have close ties to their co-workers and participate in interaction rituals are more satisfied with their jobs. Moreover, empirical studies have consistently found the effectiveness of the supervisor to be a significant factor that has both a direct and indirect affect on their employees' organizational commitment levels (Krackhardt et. al., 1981). As a consequence, the influence of human resource practices on organizational outcomes such as organizational commitment has become important topic of research to date.

Impacts of the Public Enterprise Reform on Organization

The Public Enterprise Reform policy is a pretext to start a large-scale change process, which takes place both in terms of external and internal environments. Nelson et al. (1995) reported that while the changes in the external environment (which derive mainly from the introduction of competition and deregulation) have been abundantly analyzed, the same cannot be said about the changes in the internal environment and, particularly, their less tangible effects for the employees, human resource policies and organizational culture.

Under the reform regime, in almost all cases of transformed organizations, the organizational structure of a public organization will move toward the private organization. Given the new organizational goals and competitive strategies, organizational structures are also expected to adapt, in order to become more profitable and customer oriented. Research has reported major restructuring processes, with an emphasis on the core business, the adoption of more decentralized and flatter organizational designs, and a removal of layers of middle management and headcount reduction to make operations more cost-effective (Bishop & Thompson, 1994; United Research, 1990). The public enterprise reform hence leads to changes in organizational structure.

The literature on public enterprise has revealed multiple and different types of management which have been used to control them. In order to manage public enterprises, the government as owner is likely to exercise managerial controls on the lines of the family business in all important matters. Lioukas and Kouremeous (1989) have stated that the

management of public enterprises seeks and struggles to obtain some degree of autonomy over strategic and operational decision-making. However, most governments have applied strict and specific controls over a wide range of decisions in order to limit his management autonomy.

Unlike management in the public organizations, the public reform allows some degrees of flexibility and delegates some levels of decentralization to the transformed enterprises. One of the dominant management practices suggested for coping with change within the contemporary organizational environment is to adopt private-sector practices and, in so doing, to transform public sector organizations to be more flexible, adaptive and innovative (Parry and Proctor-Thomson, 2003). This impact leads to change in the management practices (particularly in human resource management practices) in the transformed enterprises.

Reductions in the labor force have been cited as a major consequence of the change process induced by reform policy implementation, since public sector organizations are traditionally associated with over-manning. Other changes have also been reported, such as those in labor relations and employment contracts, as well as compensation practices, with the introduction of performance pay. Extensive and intensive training programs have been implemented in order to develop a more commercial and customer-oriented approach. Little importance has, nevertheless, been given to other human resource policies, like recruitment of new organizational members and performance appraisal, which are important elements not only to fill gaps in terms of knowledge and skills, but also to clarify psychological contracts and facilitate superior/subordinate communication (Cunha and Cooper, 1998).

This change process implies behavioral changes on the part of the individual employees and is likely to be accompanied by resistance, stemming from the heightened perceptions of uncertainty that coexist with extensive organizational change and also from the changes in the power relations in the organization. Political behaviors are, therefore, encountered, particularly on the part of some managers who fear losing influence in the organization. In a crisis situation, however, resistance to change is less likely to occur, even though high individual costs are involved. The status shift from public to private ownership, with the external environment's change to which the organization must adapt, is likely to produce a sense of organizational crisis. Even when transformation-induced change is accepted by a significant majority of the stakeholders in the company, the uncertainty that is created in the short term with the restructuring should originate an increase in occupational stress for individual employees (Cunha and Cooper, 1998).

Occupational stress has powerful and far-reaching effects, both in terms of work behaviors and in terms of physical and psychological well-being. Growing evidence suggests that stress plays a role in some major health problems, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, ulcers and diabetes, as well as anxiety, depression, fatigue and lowered self-esteem (Cunha and Cooper, 1998). It has also been suggested and empirically confirmed that performance on many tasks is in fact affected by stress and that performance drops sharply as stress rises to high levels.

Several organizational characteristics may be identified as potential sources of occupational stress, such as role ambiguity and conflict, leadership behaviors and unsatisfactory relationships at work; these stressors

may be present in companies that are experiencing privatization processes, associated with the uncertainty of the consequences of change programs, as well as the anticipation or concern about the possibility of future job loss (job insecurity) and deterioration in working conditions (Roskies et. al., 1993).

Because of organizational changes, work-related values in different cultures and organizations have become more interesting issues. Dorfman and Howell (1988) stated that employees' work-related values affect their behaviors in organizations. Cury et.al. (1986) found strong beliefs in an organization's values and goals, willingness to extend considerable efforts for the organization, and a strong intent or desire to remain in the organization. Similarly, Williams and Anderson (1991) specified that organizational commitment represents behaviors that include personal sacrifice made for the sake of the organization, primary dependence on reinforcement or punishment, and an indication of a personal preoccupation with the organization.

The Energy Public Enterprise Reform in Thailand

The reform policy of the energy sector has been gradually implemented over a number of years. The current policy derives from a number of resolutions by the National Energy Policy Council (NEPC) and the government. To speed up corporatisation of the energy sector, on September 1, 1998, the Cabinet resolution approved the Master Plan for State Enterprise Sector Reform, that classified energy sector into power, natural gas and oil sub-sectors (National Energy Policy Office, 1999). The

implementation of the reform policy therefore involved in four public organizations that have long dominated in the energy sector in Thailand: the power sub-sector including Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT), Metropolitan Electricity Authority (MEA), and Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA); and the natural gas and oil sub-sector which includes PTT Public Company Limited (PTT) (National Energy Policy Office, 1999).

Originally founded in 1978 under the Petroleum Authority of Thailand Act, B.E. 2521 (1978), PTT Public Company Limited (PTT) is the state enterprise responsible for oil and gas exploration and distribution. The PTT sponsored the first pipeline to bring offshore gas onshore, owns the entire present natural gas processing and pipeline network, and is the exclusive purchaser of natural gas in Thailand. Under the State Enterprise Reform implementation, it was re-established in October 2001 following corporatization of the Petroleum Authority of Thailand. The PTT was listed on the Stock Market of Thailand (SET) and the Ministry of Finance remains its main shareholder with a direct holding of 52% (Stock Exchange of Thailand, 2008).

The Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) is the state enterprise that is the primary electricity generator, under the administration of the Ministry of Energy. Established by the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand Act (1967), the EGAT then was corporatised on June 2005 and converted to EGAT Public Company Limited (EGAT Plc.). On March 2006, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled against the privatization of EGAT Plc., citing conflicts of interest, public hearing irregularities, and the continued right of expropriating public land. However, EGAT continues to have the right to expropriate public

land to build power plants and transmission lines, a right reserved for the state.

The Metropolitan Electricity Authority (MEA) and the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA) are state enterprises under the Ministry of the Interior. MEA was established on August 1958 under the Metropolitan Electricity Authority Act 1958 while PEA was established under the 1960 Act by the Royal Decree and then was published in the Government Gazette. The authorities' responsibility is primarily concerned with the distribution, sales and provision of electric energy services to the business and industrial sectors as well as to the general public in the country. The State Enterprise Reform Master Plan included an action plan for the restructuring of MEA and PEA and their corporatization. Since the Administrative Court issued a ruling revoking retroactively the two Royal Decrees of EGAT in 2006, the effect has been interrupted the restructuring process and corporatisation of MEA and PEA. This incident has temporarily suspended the MEA and PEA reform until the present.

The State Enterprise Reform denotes reducing the role of the government while increasing that of the private sector in activities or asset ownership. In this context, both ownership and management control are the main variances of public enterprise reform. Hence, various results of public enterprise reforms reflect different degrees of public and private roles in ownership and management control. At present, in the Thai context, the energy reform policy creates three types of energy public enterprises as follows:

Organization Type I: Non-transformed enterprise (totally state-owned); in this type of organization, the state not only exerts absolute

ownership of a public enterprise, but also sustains firm control on the enterprise and its resource. In this study, the Metropolitan Electricity Authority (MEA) represents the Type I organization as the result of implementing the energy reform policy.

Organization Type II: Partially transformed enterprise; in this type of organization, the government sustains its absolute ownership while attempting to restructure the public enterprise through the sale of some assets or the development of joint ventures. By this definition, the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) represents the Type II organization as the result of implementing the energy reform policy.

Organization Type III: totally transformed enterprise; in this type of organization, the state maintains a significant portion of the stakes through which it can influence the management of the enterprise and receive profits. In this study, the PTT Public Company Limited (PTT) represents the Type III organization as the result of implementing the energy reform policy.

Research Hypotheses

The main purpose of this research is to examine organizational commitment in different structures of the transformed public enterprises under the State Enterprise Reform, while controlling for the energy industry. Hence, the hypotheses developed primarily entail the structural types of the transformed organization comparisons.

Comparing commitment between structures

Hypothesis 1: Employees' affective commitment mean of organization type I is lower than that of organization type II and employees' affective commitment mean of organization type II is lower than that of organization type III.

Hypothesis 2: Employees' continuance commitment mean of organization type I is lower than that of organization type II and employees' continuance commitment mean of organization type II is lower than that of organization type III.

Hypothesis 3: Employees' normative commitment mean of organization type I is lower than that of organization type II and employees' normative commitment mean of organization type II is lower than that of organization type III.

Comparing antecedents across structures

To explore the levels and types of commitment antecedents (human resource management practices, work-related values, and change-related behaviors) of Thai energy public enterprises differ among the three organizational structural types as perceived and viewed by their employees, the following hypotheses are set.

Hypothesis 4: The levels of change-related behaviors (policy perception, change-related communication, job insecurity, role conflict, and role ambiguity) differ among all types of the public energy organizations.

Hypothesis 5: The levels of human resources management practice (payment system, reward & recognition, power & empowerment,

supervisor effectiveness, work co-operation, training & development, employee participation, and job satisfaction) differ among all types of the public energy organizations.

Hypothesis 6: The levels of work-related values means (performance orientation, people orientation, organization orientation, and external orientation) differ among all types of the public energy organizations.

Relationship between commitment and antecedents

Furthermore, in order to explain the cause-effect relationship of the antecedents affecting the organizational commitment of the public energy enterprises in Thailand, the research hypothesis also includes:

Hypothesis 7: The change-related behavior factors directly influence organizational commitment to the public energy enterprises of Thailand

Hypothesis 8: The human resource management practice factors directly influence organizational commitment to the public energy enterprises of Thailand.

Hypothesis 9: The work-related value factors directly influence organizational commitment to the public energy enterprises in Thailand.

Methodology

This exploratory and empirical research examines the impacts of the State Enterprise Reform policy on the organizational commitment of the energy public enterprises in Thailand as perceived and viewed by their employees. This section addresses the research methodology used in conducting the study and sets forth the research design as well as

explains the research instrument used to collect the data and information and tests the hypotheses.

Sample and Data Collection

Participants in this research were employed in three public energy enterprises in Thailand; MEA, EGAT, and PTT. Survey questionnaire data were collected during mid of 2008. A stratified sampling method was employed in order to obtain equal representation of all organizations comprising the samples as well as appropriate representation of various departments within each organization. 300 questionnaires were then distributed to each target organization, and all in all, total distributed questionnaires were 900. A total of 611 questionnaires were returned, accounting for a 67.9% response rate. After eliminating for non-response or incomplete answers, a total of 589 questionnaires, representing 65.4%, was considered usable for this study. The response rate and details analyses of the demographic variables are provided in Table 1.

Measures

Scales for this research were developed using existing measures. For each measure, scale reliabilities (Crobach alphas) were tested. Organizational commitment was measured using 5-point scale of three-component organizational commitment measure scales developed by Meyer and Allen (1997). The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the commitment scale was .81.

Change-related behavior or role states antecedent refers to the

factors that interact and influence job burnout during the change in the organization. In order to measure the change-related behaviors, the adapted questions of Al-Harran (1996) and the modified Work Stressors Questionnaire used by Bersamin (2005) were applied. The 32 items of the combined questionnaire were rated on 5-point scale of five sub-concepts: reform policy perception, change-related communication, job insecurity, role conflict, and role ambiguity. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the change-related behavior scale was .80

Table 1: Participants and Sample Descriptive Statistics.

	Organization Type I	Organization Type II	Organization Type III
No. of Participants	194	204	191
Age: mean (SD.)	42.60 (8.06)	45.30 (8.40)	38.99 (8.69)
Gender: Females	57.7%	66.2%	59.2%
Education Level:			
High school	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%
College diploma	6.2%	17.6%	0.5%
Bachelor's degree	59.8%	54.9%	20.4%
Higher bachelor	34.0%	25.0%	79.1%
Managerial position:			
Non-management	71.1%	75.5%	70.2%
Middle management	28.9%	21.1%	26.7%
Top management	0.0%	1.5%	1.6%
Work specialization:			
Engineering/sciences	40.7%	23.0%	36.6%
Others	57.7%	47.0%	61.8%
Work experience:			
Less than 1 year	0.5%	2.0%	5.8%
1-5 years	10.8%	5.9%	17.3%
6-10 years	6.2%	7.4%	19.4%
More than 10 years	82.5%	84.8%	57.6%

Since it will be impossible to cover all the human resources management (HRM) practice that have been associated with organizational commitment; in this study, hence, it is necessary to narrow the focus towards HRM practice identified most prominently within the general

HRM practice literature and those practices of greatest relevance within the specific context of academic institutions. In order to measure the HRM practices, four measures were used (Vandenberg et. al., 1999; Boselie et. al., 2001; Pakerney, 1997; Hackman and Oldham, 1975). The 45 items of the combined questionnaire were rated on 5-point scale of eight dimensions: payment system, employee participation, reward and recognition, power and empowerment, training and development, supervisor effectiveness, work cooperation, and job satisfaction. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the human resource management scale was .95.

In this study, the researcher assumes that transitional culture is represented by the beliefs and values that manifest these values. While employees may differ in terms of their dominant beliefs and values, there are common dimensions according to which work-related values may be addressed. In order to measure the work-related values, the Questionnaire developed (based on Harrison's (1972) and Cooper's (1988) framework) by Cunha and Cooper (2002) was adapted. The modified questionnaire comprising 20 items, rated on 5-point scale of four dimensions: internal organization, result orientation, employee orientation, and external orientation. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the work-related value scale was .89.

In order to accomplish the objectives set for the research, statistical methods were employed to analyze data obtained from the questionnaire. The study tested the data to determine the perceived degree of organizational commitment in the public energy enterprises in general and the difference between the non-transformed, the partially transformed, and the totally transformed organizations. For the purpose