

Factors affecting organizational commitment of students in Foreign Trade University's clubs

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Abstract

There are limited data on organizational commitment in education sector with student organizations as the target. The research adopts an empirical design by building a model of factors affecting organizational commitment of students in Foreign Trade University's clubs based on existing models in the literature and testing the model with data from a survey with 237 club members in nearly 40 clubs in Foreign Trade University Hanoi. The collected data is analysed by SPSS and AMOS using structural equation modelling (SEM). Four factors are identified to positively influence organizational commitment of club members include social influence, supervisor support, teamwork and training. Practically, these findings are expected to provide beneficial suggestions for the management in Foreign Trade University's clubs in particular and other Vietnamese universities clubs in general to improve organizational commitment among members by focusing on these factors.

Keywords: Commitment, Education, Students' club, Foreign Trade University

1. Introduction

University students' clubs play an important role in students' skills fostering, self-fulfilment and career preparation (Cooper *et al.*, 1994; Martin, 2000). Through participating in projects and activities, members have a plenty of opportunities to improve soft skills such as communication, teamwork and time management (Goldy-Brown, 2017). Not only helping students to gain leadership experience but being a club member also has positive impact on social integration (Jirayu and Deborah, 2008). Such extracurricular activities as singing, dancing and painting organized in clubs is a valuable opportunity for its members to share hobbies and demonstrate artistic talent. Moreover, an unexpected benefit of joining in a club is that through peer-to-peer mentorship, personal, professional and organizational growth are gradually advanced (Julie *et al.*, 2017).

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Since the first club – Young Research Club (YRC) was formed 25 years ago, the model of student clubs in Foreign Trade University has been continuously developing and expanding. In terms of quantity, there are more than 40 active clubs, divided into 4 groups: academic clubs, language clubs, hobby clubs. It is estimated that every year, approximately 1000 students are chosen to be new club members (Foreign Trade University Youth Union, 2017). The quality aspect assured by successful competitions, events, and projects that are hosted by or co-organized by those clubs. As a result, Foreign Trade University has a well-established favourable reputation for students' extracurricular activities and job performance. It is partially the experience as a club member or leader that helps Foreign Trade University students exercising necessary skills, say, independent working, group work and presentation (Lan, 2017).

Throughout years of operations, the organizational structure and management practices of clubs have been progressively improved. Each club is divided into separated functions, such as communications, external relation and human resources. Nonetheless, according to a survey conducted by the authors, more than 70% percent of clubs is dealing with the problem of high member turnover and low club commitment. As a consequence, the work effectiveness and motivation of other members are seriously affected. It is essential to identify and measure factors affecting organizational commitment in these clubs in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of organizational commitment in student clubs and more strategically manage members' organizational behaviours accordingly.

Foreign Trade University is the leading university in Vietnam in developing the effectiveness of students' club activities as the high quality and quantity of students' clubs. The model to build skills and knowledge of student base on students' club activities of Foreign Trade University is also learned and followed by some other universities (such as University of Maritime). Based on a survey by the authors in several students' clubs in Foreign trade University, National Economics University, Maritime University, Hanoi University of Science and Technology, Academy of Agriculture, the organizational framework of students' clubs in almost universities in Vietnam are similar and they also suffer from the same commitment problem as Foreign Trade University students' clubs do.

Authors' effort in this paper is identifying factors affecting organizational commitment of students in clubs; measuring how each factor individually affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign Trade University's clubs; and suggesting solutions for club leaders to improve organizational commitment of Foreign Trade University students' clubs in particular and for other Vietnamese students' club leaders to retain their team members in general. By fostering commitment among club members, club leader and other Departments that in charge of managing and facilitating activities of students' clubs such as Student Association, Youth Union can ensure both high productivity and efficiency of work as well as help the organization to successfully bring more value and skills for student community.

2. Literature review

2.1 Definition of organizational commitment

Employee commitment to their company has received great attention from both managers and researchers and this makes organizational commitment one of the most popular topics in human resource management field. According to Rodriguez *et al.* (2006), the literature on organizational commitment has progressed to integrate broad reaching conceptions, such as Etzione, some more specific approaches, generally one-dimensional in character and including Mowday, Porter and Steers (1979), as well as some recent efforts designed to identify components of organizational commitment from a multidimensional perspective.

Etzione (1961) develops one of the first definition of organizational commitment. According to this approach, organizational commitment reflects the degree of conformity that individuals experience with respect to organizational directives, and it can be expressed in the following ways, which, although subdivided in three different states, represent an attitude continuum of concerning organizational commitment: i) Moral, where a positive and intense orientation in relation to the company is established, starting from internalization of the company's goals, values and organizational norms, and identification with authority; ii) Scheming, characterized by a less intense connection with the company, which is grounded in an exchange relationship between the company and its employees. In this case, individuals make a commitment to the company because they consider they will benefit. There appears to be a relationship between how they perform and the kind of rewards they receive; iii) Alienated, which reflects a negative orientation towards the organization, and is grounded in situations where individuals find their behavioural options limited.

In 1979, Mowday, Steers and Porter propose one of the most well-known definitions that is widely used in empirical research. They consider organizational commitment a strength of identification of an individual with the organization and particularly with his participation in that organization. Thus, conceptually, it can be characterized with three factors: i) Deep conviction and acceptance of objectives and values of the organization; ii) Predisposition to exercise a considerable effort to benefit the organization; iii) Strong desire to stand as an organization member.

Meyer and Allen (1991) consider that this state bears a strong influence on employee decisions as to whether or not to continue as a member. Specifically, they propose the definition of a commitment that is characterized by the intensity of a psychological link between the worker and organization, and which simultaneously includes differing degrees of each of the three dimensions of organizational commitment: i) affective, ii) continuity and iii) normative.

2.2 Factors affecting organizational commitment

The process model of commitment was developed by Klein *et al.* in 2012, after reconceptualising definitions and constructs of workplace commitment from various perspectives since the earliest research. The model illustrates a complete process of commitment in work contexts,

including four main stages: (1) Commitment antecedents; (2) Cognitive and affective process; (3) Degree of target commitment; (4) Commitment outcomes.

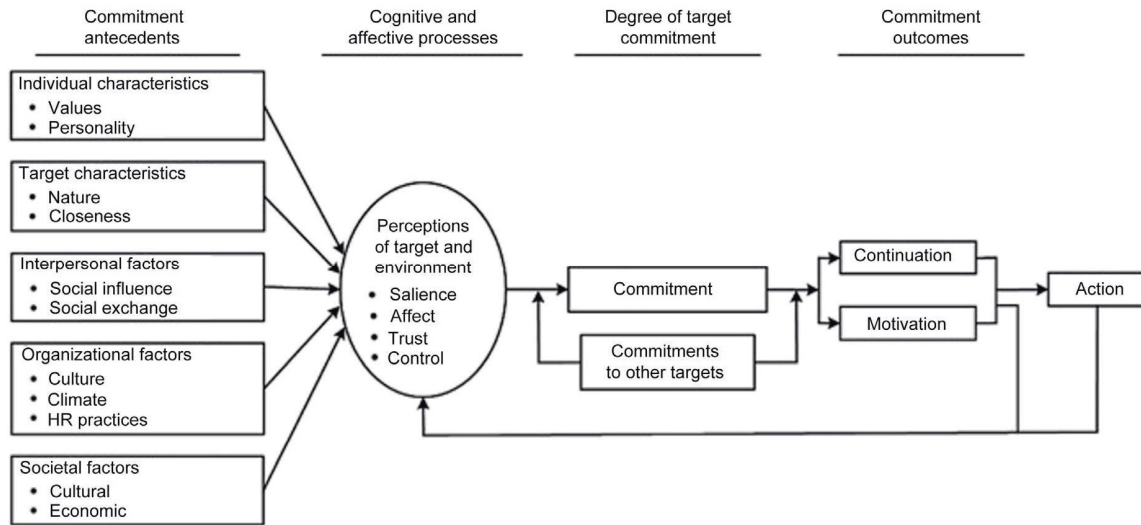


Figure 1. The process model of commitment

Source: Klein *et al.* (2012)

Klein *et al.* suggests that the extent to which one commits to a target is directly influenced by four proximal states in their perceptions of the target and environment (saliency, affect, trust and control). These perceptions are determined by an inclusive set of more distal antecedents, organized by level. The consequent action and commitment to other targets (e.g. goal, team, supervisor (Reichers, 1985; Becker, 1992) also impact the process as mediating variables.

According to the authors, the degree of commitment can be determined by employees' perceptions of five groups of antecedents: (1) individual characteristics, (2) target characteristics, (3) interpersonal factors, (4) organizational factors and (5) societal factors.

(1) *Individual characteristics* are employee's attributes like personal values and traits. Personal values such as integrity and loyalty have been found to lead to commitment in the workplace, as has the conformity between personal and organizational values. Personality traits found to relate to commitment consist of locus of control, conscientiousness, extraversion, and regulatory focus.

(2) *Target characteristics* include factors such as the psychological proximity of the organization, which impacts saliency. Similarly, characteristics such as the legitimacy and reputation of the organization can influence commitment through evaluations of trust and positive affect.

(3) *Interpersonal factors* refer to the social relationships that employees have, both work and non-work. It has been shown, for example, that having a dense friendship network is positively associated with commitment (Morrison, 2002). In addition, both social influences and exchanges resulting from these relationships can impact the identified perceptual evaluations and subsequently commitment.

(4) *Organizational factors*: with the organization as the target, target and organizational characteristics become a single category. Other organizational factors that would impact the more proximal states include culture (and subcultures) and climate relative to numerous foci (e.g. safety, justice productivity, burnout).

(5) *Societal factors* are aspects in the broader socioeconomic environment in which the individual and organization are embedded. Because national culture shapes perceptions and ascribed meaning, cultural factors can influence the proximal states that determine commitment. Uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and collectivism, for example, can impact perceptions of control and trust, and have been shown to influence commitment. Macroeconomic factors can similarly impact perceptions and, in turn, commitment. Factors relevant to target salience and trust toward an organization, for example, include a country or region's economic conditions, business system characteristics, and labour market features (e.g. segmentation, strength, and role of unions).

2.3 Organizational commitment in temporary organizations

Temporary organization is defined as an organization involve a set of diversely skilled people working together on a complex task over a limited period of time (Goodman and Goodman, 1976). Student club which is an association dedicated to a particular interest or activity of students in school, college or university is also a typical example of a temporary organization which is in some ways different to normal permanent organization by the following characteristics:

(1) Membership duration: Ex ante limitation in their duration (temporariness) and members are aware of impending termination (Lundin and Söderholm, 1995)

(2) Human resources: temporary organizations are composed of experts with different disciplinary backgrounds (Hobday, 2000; Zwikael and Unger-Aviram, 2010)

(3) Tasks: often unique, less routine and more complex than tasks in permanent organizations, which implies higher level of risk and uncertainty (Brockhoff, 2006; Hanisch and Wald, 2014)

(4) Coordination: relies less on formal structures and processes than in the permanent organizations as temporary organization members often have a high degree of autonomy (Becky, 2006; Janowicz-Panjaitan *et al.*, 2009)

(5) Cooperation: work is often carried out in ambiguous hierarchies; for example, members can have different hierarchical positions in different projects (Nuhn *et al.*, 2016)

The model of antecedents of organizational commitment in the context of temporary organizations was initiated by Spanuth and Wald in 2017, and they suggested that some antecedents of organizational commitment to this type of organization can be assumed to be different from those of organizational commitment to the permanent organization due to the characteristics of temporary organizations. The author concluded that work autonomy, job complexity and trainings positively influence organizational commitment, while career opportunities has no significant effect. The results that job complexity linked with organizational

commitment is consistent with research in permanent organizations in the aspect that it does have an impact. However, in permanent organizations, job complexity shows a negative relationship with organizational commitment, whereas the results in this research suggest the opposite side. Work-life conflict acts as an intervening factor in the model. High level of work autonomy and trainings, low level of job complexity leads to low level of work-life conflict and as a consequence, higher level of commitment.

3. Research methodology

3.1 Research model and hypothesis

Based on the process model of commitment, the model of antecedents of organizational commitment in the context of temporary organizations and operations of student clubs in Foreign Trade University, the research model is proposed as illustrated in Figure 2 with three group of antecedents which are interpersonal factors, job-related factors and organizational factors.

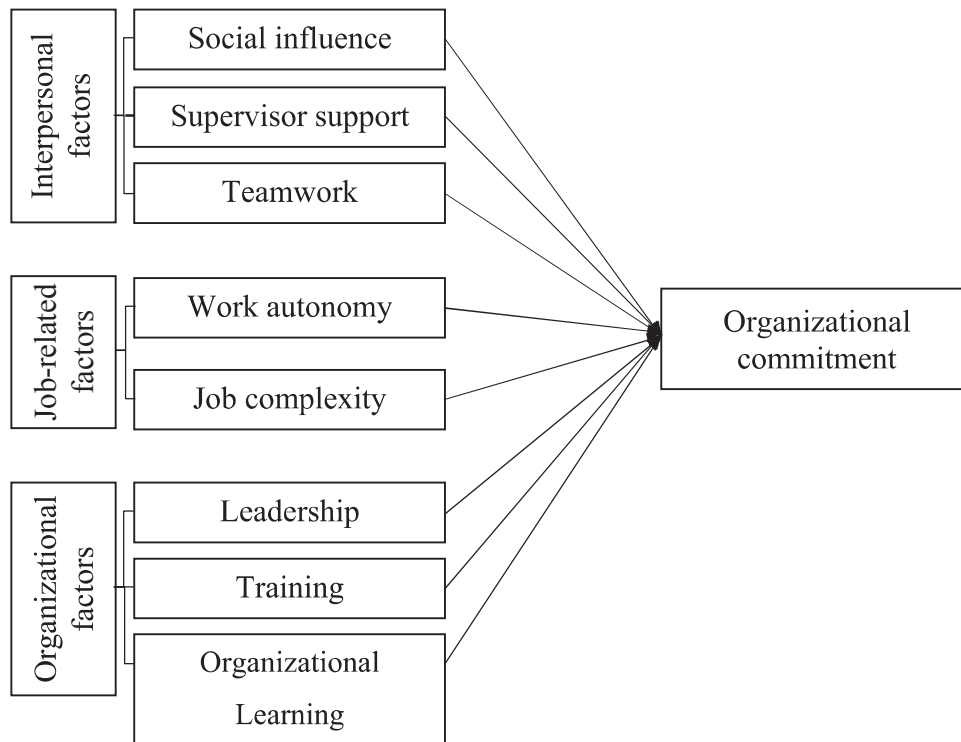


Figure 2. Research model

Source: Authors' collection

Social influence. Social influence (or cohesion) is a process whereby the work-related attitudes of network participants who are in close relational proximity will tend to converge. It has been shown, for example, that having a dense friendship network is positively associated with commitment (Morrison, 2002). In addition, social influences resulting from these relationships can impact the identified perceptual evaluations and subsequently commitment.

Examples of these social influences include what others think and say about the organization and the commitment of others. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Social influence positively affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign Trade University's clubs.

Supervisor support. Supervisor support is defined as the extent to which leaders value their employees' contributions and care about their well-being (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986). A leader with high supervisor support is one that makes employees feel heard, valued, and cared about. It is one of the key behaviours that effective leaders develop as soon as they move from individual contributor to manager. In specific terms, organizational research has identified a myriad of positive outcomes associated with high supervisor support, including organizational commitment. Students participate in a club expect that they can receive supports and experiences from their senior members. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Supervisor support positively affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign Trade University's clubs.

Teamwork. Working in teams enables members to cooperate, improve individual skills, and provide practical feedback without making any conflict between any of the members (Jones *et al.*, 2007). Teamwork is indeed a important strategy for smoothing the operation of the organization as team members upgrade their skills, knowledge, and abilities by working in teams, and this affects organizational performance and effectiveness (Fröbel and Marchington, 2005). A member who works with others in a team is likely to be more productive as compared to other peers (Jones *et al.*, 2007). Teamwork increases productivity and it leads to greater levels of organizational commitment (Gallie *et al.*, 2009). Other studies also found that teamwork had positive effect on organizational commitment (Ghorbanhosseini, 2013; Zincirkiran *et al.*, 2015). Particularly, working in teams empowers members and assist them to develop autonomy hat is a key source for improved organizational commitment and minimized stress. Based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Teamwork positively affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign trade University's clubs.

Work autonomy. Autonomy can be described as the degree of freedom an employee has regarding when, how and to what extent he performs the job assigned (Fornes *et al.*, 2008). High levels of autonomy are found to strengthen organizational commitment in permanent organizations (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Allen *et al.*, 2004). The new and to some extent unique tasks in temporary organizations require a certain degree of autonomy. In general, temporary organization members are likely to perceive more autonomy and flexibility during their work than employees in permanent organizations. High levels of autonomy will help keeping temporary organization members motivated during their problem-solving processes, which can have a positive impact on their commitment (Dwivedula *et al.*, 2013). Conversely, a lack of autonomy may lead to frustration as the necessary degree of freedom for solving the temporary organization tasks is not given. As the student clubs' work is more like the

work of a temporary organization – project-based, less routine, more complex, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Work autonomy positively affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign trade University's clubs.

Job complexity. Complexity was considered by many prior studies in the context of permanent organizations as a determinant for employees' turnover intentions (Chung-Yan, 2010), which can lead to a decrease of their organizational commitment. Temporary organizations, on the other hand, are seen as an appropriate means to cope with complex job assignments (Becky, 2006) and empirically, Hanisch and Wald (2014) show that temporary organizations have in fact a high degree of "complexity resistance". It can be expected, that this will also have an impact on the organizational commitment of temporary organization members for several reasons. First, each member of a temporary organization is typically allocated to a specific part of the temporary organization's goal achievement process. As a result, he will perceive a certain degree of self-esteem and ambition (Nuhn and Wald, 2016), which subsequently enhances his job satisfaction (Judge *et al.*, 2001). It can thereby be assumed that this effect might be even further enhanced by the task's complexity. Second, Lundin and Söderholm (1995) develop the concept of "time bracketing" which delimits the scope and time horizon of a temporary organization. Time bracketing accentuates the importance of temporary organization tasks as unique and complex and helps to secure the commitment of temporary organization members. In the light of these positive aspects of job complexity in temporary organizations, job complexity is expected to increase temporary organization commitment. The following hypothesis is proposed accordingly:

H5: Job complexity positively affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign trade University's clubs.

Leadership. Leadership effectiveness is considered as an outcome when the individuals in the positions of leadership are able to impact on a group to perform their roles with positive organizational outcomes. Leadership effectiveness results in good human resource practices and organizational culture, which are two factors influencing commitment to organizational, according to Klein *et al.* (2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Leadership positively affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign trade University's clubs.

Training. One way to develop and improve the quality of members is to provide them with beneficial training and development programs. This is because the capabilities, knowledge, and skills of the talented members were proved to be the key determinants competitive advantage in today society. Past studies revealed that training had significant positive effect on organizational commitment (Roehl and Swerdlow, 1999; Bulut and Culha, 2010; Lamba and Choudhary, 2013). Gazioglu and Tansel (2002) also confirm that training members can lead to favourable organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Other scholars such as Tarasco and Damato (2006) described training as an ongoing professional development that plays an

important role in building organizational commitment. Moreover, Nksoi (2015) confirm that training has a significant effect on employee commitment and overall retention. Based on the discussion presented above, the following hypothesis is postulated:

H7: Training positively affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign trade University's clubs.

Organizational learning. According to Bate and Khasawneh (2005), organizational learning is a phenomenon that “support the acquisition of information, the distribution and sharing of learning, and that reinforce and support continuous learning and its application to organizational improvement”. Overall, organizational learning is defined in terms of process and behaviour, and thus, a learning organization is perceived as a supportive entity. Past studies indicated that organizational learning had a significant positive effect on organizational commitment (Rose *et al.*, 2011; Usefi *et al.*, 2013; Salarian *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, Wang (2007) confirms that creating and encouraging organizational learning culture is a fundamental mechanism to nurture employee’s job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and to ensure a healthy and stable workforce on the long term. This means that organizational learning can enhance the levels of organizational commitment among members and it can yield to positive work outcomes. Based on the discussion made above, the following hypothesis is presented:

H8: Organizational learning positively affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign Trade University's clubs.

3.2 Measurement scale

A questionnaire survey was used to obtain measures of all variables. The survey instrument used in this study contains 9 established instruments as described in the following table:

Table 1. Measurement scale

Variable	Number of questions	References
Social influence	4	Caruana (1997)
Supervisor support	3	Eisenberger <i>et al.</i> (2002)
Teamwork	5	Shanahan <i>et al.</i> (2007)
Work autonomy	3	Abstein <i>et al.</i> (2014), Spanuth and Wald (2017)
Job complexity	2	Tyssen <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Leadership	5	Ehrhart and Klein (2001)
Training	5	Schmidt (2004)
Organizational learning	5	Joo and Park (2010)
Organizational commitment	5	Mowday <i>et al.</i> (1979)

Source: Authors’ collection

The items are expressed in a 5-point Likert-type scale, with strongly disagree (1) – strongly agree (5) anchored statements. Obviously, the 7-point scale allows respondents to provide more accurate evaluations. However, studies suggest that 5-point scale appears to be less confusing, increasing response rate, response quality and reducing respondents' frustration level (Buttle, 1996). Therefore, the 5-point scale is adopted in this research.

The questionnaire is translated from English to Vietnamese, then from Vietnamese to English. Besides ensuring the meaning and accuracy of the originals, this process also highlights the inadequate expressions of the translation and the discrepancies between the forward translation and the existing. Next, the questionnaire is pre-tested with 10 respondents, who are independent from the respondents in the main study. These respondents then give feedbacks about their understanding of concepts, words and expressions to avoid any vague concepts, misunderstandings or inaccurate wordings. The purpose of pre-test is to refine the questionnaire so that the respondents will have no problems in answering the questions and also there will be no problems in recording the data.

3.3 Sampling and data collection

The scope of this research limits respondents to be students who participate in at least one club in Foreign Trade University, but not necessarily be an on-going member. Data collected was analysed following two-step approach. In the first step, the survey is distributed to 65 students and 61 valid responses were used to test the adequacy of the measurement scale. After the pilot test, unnecessary variables (if any) are removed from the model before moving to the next step. In the second step, data are collected by Google form through online platform (such as Gmail and Facebook) under the intra - network of all clubs in Foreign Trade University (every club has their own groups to connect all members) with the number of responses is 237. The respondents consist of members in all clubs, with a lot of members who are studying in Foreign Trade University and some who have graduated.

3.4 Data analysis

After collected, coded and cleaned, the data are analysed with the support of SPSS and AMOS. Means, standard deviations were calculated for all variables, as well as their intercorrelations. Cronbach alpha estimates of reliability were calculated for all variables derived as summative scales. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is used to confirm the fit between the model and the collected data. After evaluating and adjusting the measurement scales, structural equation model analysis with path analysis techniques is used to test the research hypotheses.

4. Finding and discussion

4.1 Preliminary analyses

Total students participated in this research were 237. There are five criteria to classify the club membership of students, including (1) the number of clubs at Foreign Trade University the

student was/has been a member of, (2) the joining time, (3) the leaving time, (4) the duration of the membership and (5) the highest position the student has been in. All are multiple choice questions. The results are presented in the table below:

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of students' club membership

Criteria		Frequency	Percentages
Number of clubs	1 club	200	84.40%
	2 clubs	22	9.30%
	3 clubs	15	6.30%
Joining time	1 st year	218	92.00%
	2 nd year	13	5.50%
	3 rd year	6	2.50%
	4 th year	0	0.00%
Leaving time	1 st year	54	22.80%
	2 nd year	47	19.80%
	3 rd year	35	14.80%
	4 th year	9	3.80%
Duration	Current member	92	38.80%
	< 1 year	120	50.60%
	1 year – 2 years	101	42.60%
	> 2 years	16	6.80%
Position	President	3	1.30%
	Vice president	3	1.30%
	Head of department	14	5.90%
	Deputy head of department	16	6.80%
	Member	201	84.80%

Source: Survey results summarized by SPSS

The most observable feature in the number of clubs is that most students only join 1-2 clubs at Foreign Trade University, which accounts for more than 90%. Regarding the joining time, the data shows that all students start participating in a club in the first three years of university. These figures are practical as the club recruitment events are targeted at first year students (e.g., clubs' day) and the freshmen have more time to spend on extracurricular activities, in comparison with the more senior ones, who has internship, part-time jobs and out-of-school things to worry about. The leaving time and the duration in club are

compatible. More than half of the club members leave in less than a year and nearly all after 2 years result in a very small number of students (3.80%) stay until their last year. About 40% of the respondents are currently members of at least one club.

The distribution ratio in position is quite close with the club structure. Normally, each club has one president, one vice president, 4-5 departments which each has one head and one deputy head. The number of ongoing members in each club range from 50 to 70. This shows that the sample accurately represents the population in terms of position.

When conducting EFA with all independent variables, the two measurement scales Work autonomy and Job complexity converge into one factor. This could be explained by the leader's tendency to assign complex tasks to members who are highly capable. The more able and willing the followers are, the more lenient the leader will be in controlling their work. Thus, job complexity and work autonomy have the same movement pattern and therefore, work autonomy and job complexity are combined into one factor, named Work autonomy and job complexity. One item in Leadership variables group (LEAD5) was also removed due to the item-total correlation = $0.086 < 0.3$. OL3 in Organizational learning variable is found to be the least reliable measurement item with item-total correlation = 0.443, factor loading = 0.572 – just over 0.5 and Cronbach's Alpha increases from 0.761 to 0.786 if the item is deleted. The result from EFA for independent variables shows that OL3 is cross-loading with the factor loading difference smaller than 0.3 Thus, OL3 is excluded from the measurement scale. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and adjusted Cronbach's alphas are shown in Table 2. The adjusted Cronbach's alphas vary from 0.712 to 0.923, indicating that the measures used in this study are fairly reliable.

Table 3. Means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha after reducing item

Variables	Mean	Standard deviations	Cronbach's alpha
Social influences	3.7426	.63044	0.818
Supervisor support	3.7145	.73233	0.849
Teamwork	3.8118	.62235	0.833
Work autonomy and Job complexity	3.7527	.59301	0.834
Leadership	3.6962	.65379	0.786
Training	3.9958	.66701	0.818
Organizational learning	3.7764	.58999	0.712
Organizational commitment	3.5932	.57985	0.923

Source: Survey results summarized by SPSS

Based on the measurement scale preliminary analysis results, the adjusted research model is illustrated in Figure 3.

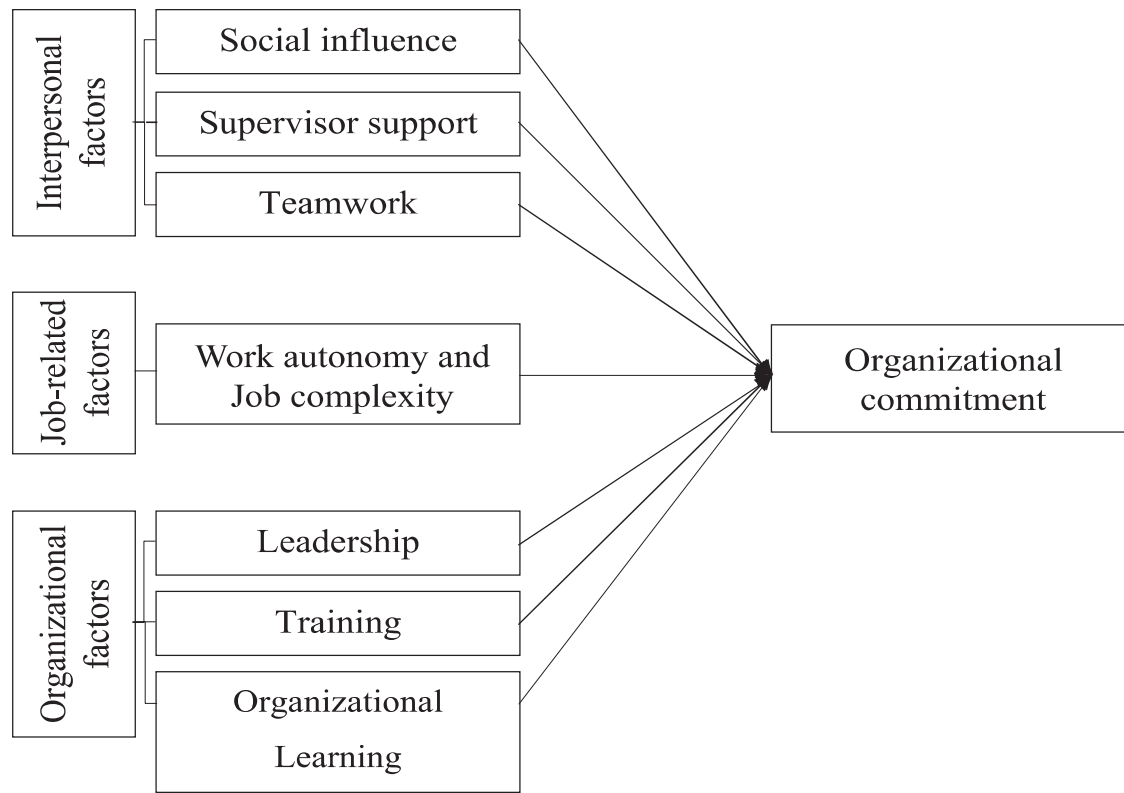


Figure 3. Adjusted research model

Source: Authors' collection

4.2 Adjusted model analysis

The measurement scales are analysed by confirmatory factor analysis with saturated model to assess the convergent validity, model fit and discriminant validity among factors. The results are illustrated in the figure below. In particular: Chi-square/df = 1.367 < 3; RMSEA = 0.039 < 0.08; CFI = 0.951, IFI = 0.952 and TLI = 0.946 are greater than 0.9, except GFI = 0.861 < 0.9. Though not all the indices meet the requirements, the model fits with the data and deems acceptable. The saturated model analysis results are illustrated in Figure 4.

The diagram shows that at 10% significance level, 4 relations are statistically significant (SI - OC, SS - OC, TW - OC and TRAIN - OC). At 5% significance level, 3 relations are statistically significant (SI - OC, SS - OC and TW - OC), the others are rejected.

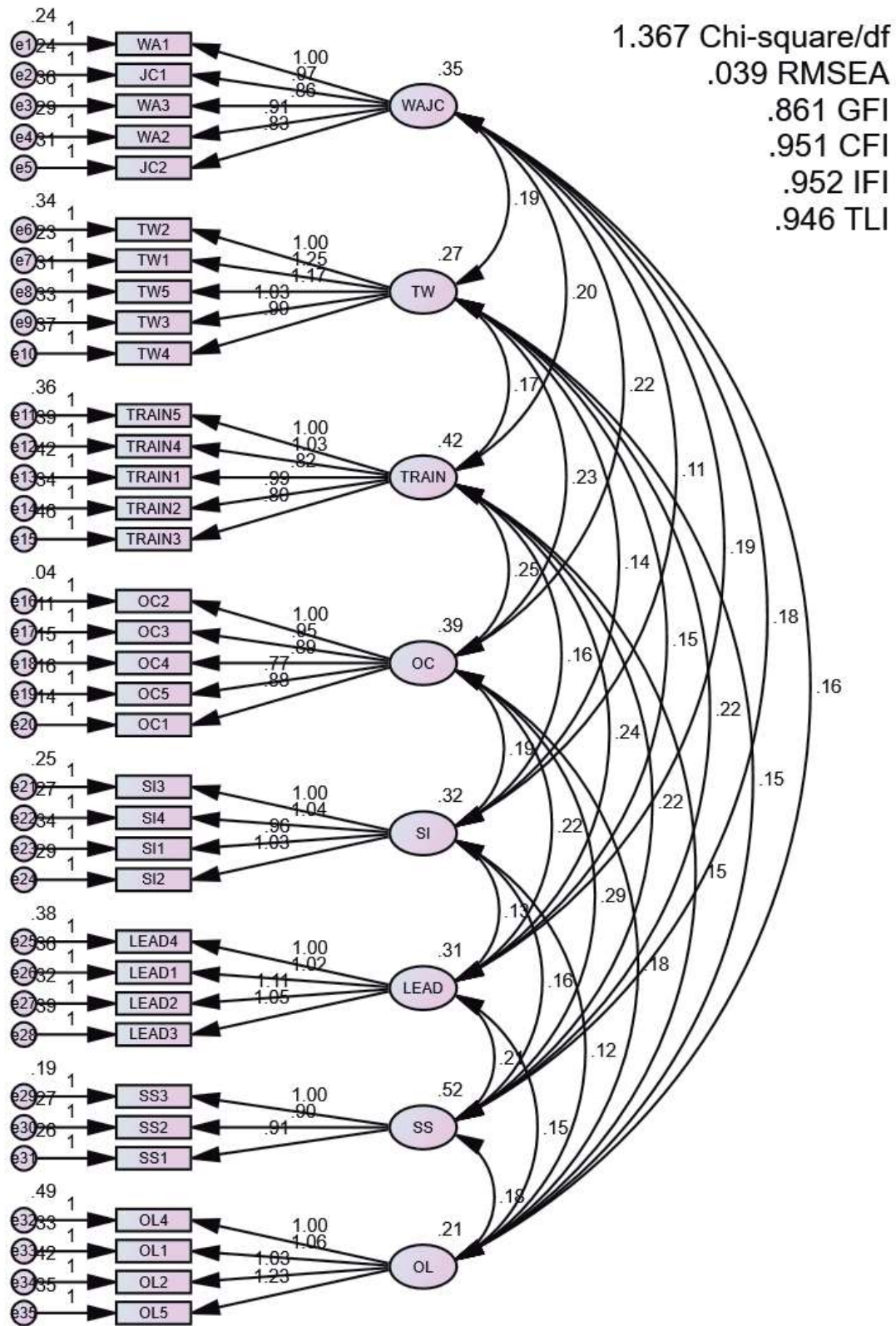


Figure 4. Saturated model analysis results
 Source: Survey results summarized by AMOS

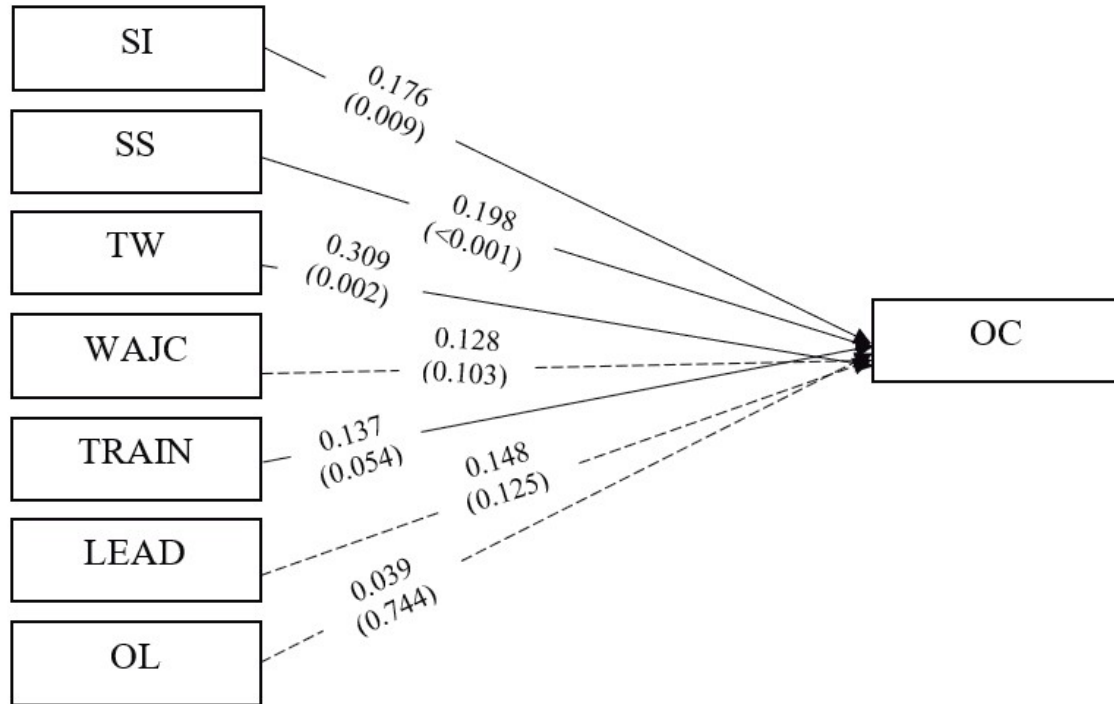


Figure 5. Hypothesis testing results

Note: SI - Social influence; SS - Supervisor support; TW - Teamwork; WAJC - Work autonomy and job complexity; TRAIN - Training; LEAD - Leadership; OL - Organizational learning; OC - Organizational commitment. The values in the brackets are p-value.

Source: Survey results analysed by AMOS

Table 4. Summary of hypotheses testing results

			Standardized Beta	Standard error	T value	p-value	Hypothesis
SI	→	OC	.176	.067	2.615	.009	Accepted
SS	→	OC	.198	.058	3.401	< 0.001	Accepted
TW	→	OC	.309	.097	3.171	.002	Accepted
WAJC	→	OC	.128	.078	1.632	.103	Rejected
LEAD	→	OC	.148	.096	1.536	.125	Rejected
TRAIN	→	OC	.137	.071	1.929	.054	Accepted
OL	→	OC	.039	.120	.327	.744	Rejected

Source: Survey results analysed by AMOS

4.3 Evaluation of categorical data clustering on organizational commitment

To examine whether difference in organizational commitment exists among different groups of gender, year, number of clubs duration and position. The research first uses Levene's test for equality of variances, then t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to examine whether difference exists. The results are summarized in the table below:

Table 5. Evaluation of categorical data clustering on organizational commitment

Variables	Test	Levene's test		t-test		Difference
		F	p-value	F	p-value	
1. Demographic variables						
Gender	T-test	.116	.734	.012	.912	No
Year	ANOVA	1.538	.205	6.416	.000	Yes
2. Club membership variables						
No. of clubs	ANOVA	.474	.623	10.121	.000	Yes
Duration	ANOVA	.753	.472	11.943	.000	Yes
Position	ANOVA	2.122	.079	12.389	.000	Yes

Source: Survey results analysed by SPSS

The results of the t-test show that there is no difference between organizational commitment of male students and female students. Difference in organizational commitment exists among students from different group of year. Senior and junior students are considerably committed to the clubs than freshmen and sophomores. ANOVA test results also suggest that all three club membership variables mentioned above has an effect on students' commitment to the club.

Number of clubs. Students participating more than 1 club are found to be more committed to the mentioned club than those who only joins 1 club. The means of organizational commitment of those who are a member of 2 and 3 clubs are 3.88 and 4.08, while the 1-club group's mean is just about 3.5. In four factors affecting the organizational commitment of students in Foreign Trade University's clubs above – social influence, supervisor support, teamwork and training, teamwork might contribute to these differences. Teamwork has always been a priority skill in selecting clubs' members (teamwork is a separated round in the recruitment process). Being a member of more than one club suggests that that student has strong teamwork skills, and therefore, higher commitment to the club. One more reason for this fact is because almost students who participate in more than one club choose to joint one academic club and one hobby or language club. Based on the interviews with many of these students, authors find out that activities in hobby or language club make them have time to relax and enjoy their interests, thus increasing their motivation and commitment to work in academic club.

Duration. Duration positively links with organizational commitment. Members who stay more than 2 years have average organizational commitment of 4.15, while that of those who leave in less than a year is just 3.47 and who leave between 1 and 2 years is 3.66. The result is consistent with many conclusions that higher organizational commitment leads to lower turnover rate (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990).

Position. Commitment of students in higher positions are also higher than those who are in lower positions. This trend can be explained by two reasons. First, with the annual promotion system, being in the leader group (president, vice president, head of department and deputy head of department) means that the student has stayed in the club more than 1 year (group (2) and (3) in duration). Second, those who are promoted to be leaders must possess excellent teamwork skills and possibly benefit from the supervisor support and training they received when being a member. Consequently, they are more committed to the club. Authors also conduct an additional estimation which excludes club leaders in the sample in order to see if there is any difference in the organizational commitment of club leaders and club members. The results show that there is no significant differences between samples with or without club leaders.

4.4 Discussion

First, the result shows that social influence, supervisor support, teamwork and training have a significant and positive effect on student commitment to clubs. These findings are partly consistent with prior research on organizational commitment in permanent organizational settings, and thus further support it. For example, the effect of these factors on organizational commitment specifies the general model towards commitment of Klein *et al.* (2012), which states that interpersonal factors (e.g. social influence, supervisor support and teamwork) and organizational factors (e.g. human resource practices) are antecedents of commitment in organizations.

Second, the positive relation between trainings and student clubs' commitment, on one side, is consistent with the model of antecedents of commitment in the context of temporary organizations (Spanuth and Wald, 2017). On the other side, the result strengthens the prior work of Kuvaas and Dysvik (2010) which states that the participation in suitable training programs will push not only an individual's performance, but also his motivation to work. Work motivation and organizational commitment are again found to be closely connected to each other (Dwivedula, *et al.*, 2013). The finding also underscores the result of Acton and Willie's (2003) work that trainings facilitate an individual's skill updating process, which in turn strengthens his affiliation towards their organization. As work in club are typically called into existence in order to solve tasks that are described as complex, novel and non-routine (Hanisch and Wald, 2014), this aspect becomes even more severe.

Third, the result shows that three out of four factors affecting students' commitment in university clubs belong to interpersonal factors (social influence, supervisor support and teamwork), whereas only training is organizational factor and job-related factor does not have

significant impact on the outcomes. More than half of the students admit that one of reason they join a club is to make friends and widen their social network. This contribute a new aspect on theory about antecedents of commitment when focusing on non-profit organization and students, compared to most of the current research of organizational commitment in the context of professional work and for-profit organization. When neither work nor salary is the motivation to work, fulfilling the need to belong and self-esteem need play an essential role in developing one's affection to the target.

5. Implications and conclusions

5.1 Implications

The study at hand implies not only implications for theory, but also for leadership practice as it points out several, possible ways to foster club members' organizational commitment and identification towards clubs: (1) building a strong teamwork spirit, (2) training middle-level leaders on supporting skills, (3) building a positive organization image on social media and (4) training members on technical skills and soft skills.

Building a strong teamwork culture. As concluded from the above analysis, teamwork positively influences club commitment. When members work in a team environment, they are also likely to make better decisions in terms of planning, thinking, and making decisions and actions by cooperating with one another. The sense of belongingness from working together effectively and self-esteem from making valuable contributions make them more likely to develop affective commitment towards the clubs. These following ideas are suggested to make teamwork an outstanding value in student clubs:

First, the president needs to clearly communicate to every member that the expectation of exceptional work is not just at an individual level but at a team level and collaboration is expected out of every team. They need to make it explicitly clear that no one wholly owns a particular work process or work area all by themselves. Leaders need to ensure that teamwork is maintained even at times when things are going wrong. There is usually a high level of temptation at such a time of crisis to go back to old ways of working in silos instead of working collaboratively as a team. To make it more appealing, rules should be formally written and shared across the team so that all the members often talk about and understand the significance of a teamwork culture.

Second, rewarding and recognising individuals and teams for demonstrating teamwork behaviours should be used to increase motivation to collaborate with other team members. Set expectations that bonuses, rewards, or compensation will vary depending on the collaborative practices adopted and followed by each team along with the individual achievement and contribution as a team member.

Third, outstanding achievements and success stories of teams should be shared with teams across the organisation, so that members feel encouraged to actively participate and nurture the teamwork culture within the club.

Training leaders on supporting skills. Leadership effectiveness has been integral to the success of every organization, regardless of context (e.g. for-profit or non-profit, business or political). Therefore, training leaders on supervisory skills is highly recommended. Depends on available budget, Associations in charge of managing clubs' activities can either choose external source (e.g. professional course or trainers) or internal source. In reality, internal source is preferable for two reasons. First, it is cost-saving. As the trainers are alumni or higher-level leaders, there is no cost incurred. Second, the internal leaders also have a better understanding of the club practices and culture, therefore, their guidance are more practically applicable.

Building a positive club image on social media. Building organizational image is one of the key methods to develop positive social influence from the public, which directly impacts on organizational commitment of clubs' members. Given the enormous impact of social media in everyday life, especially on young generations, the research suggests taking advantage of this platform to develop a positive club image. First, there should be an official website or page for the club, where information is updated and high response rate is maintained. The overall design trend should be consistent with the club mission and vision, whether it is professional (e.g. academic clubs) or more friendly and young-targeted (e.g. hobby clubs). Second, each member is an ambassador of the club in public. Provided members share the same positive perspective about the club, engaging members on social media is an effective way to effortlessly spread the words.

Training members on technical skills and soft skills. In order to develop an effective organizational training strategy, it is important to follow a process that will help to identify the core requirements of the clubs in terms of personnel training and qualifications. As for members, two aspects are determined essential here: technical skills and soft skills. However, regardless of the skills, training strategy should follow these steps: (1) Developing a training plan; (2) Setting up training goals; (3) Creating a training action plan (4) Implementation (5) Monitoring the training of trainees and personnel (6) Training evaluation (7) Making revisions to the training plan. Normally, trainings in clubs are informal, which often start with (3) and end by (4). All before and after steps are skipped, resulting in ineffective training. Therefore, this research suggests club leaders to take training an essential part of human resource practices and follow every step aforementioned to ensure expected outcomes.

In order to increase organizational commitment in every clubs, the responsibilities do not belong only to leaders and members of each club but also the authorities who are in charge of managing and facilitating club improvement. Such authorities like Student Association, Youth Union can practically apply these solutions to help club leaders building committed clubs. These implications are not only suggested for FTU's clubs but also can be considered to apply in many different students' clubs in others university and some other temporary organizations which also want to improve their team members' retention.

5.2 Conclusion

The research, by conducting an empirical study and analysing the results, has achieved the objectives set: (1) to review and reconceptualise theories on antecedents of organizational commitment, (2) to identify factors affecting organizational commitment of students in clubs, (3) to measure how each factor individually affects organizational commitment of students in Foreign Trade University's clubs and (4) to suggest solutions to improve organizational commitment in clubs in Foreign Trade University and other university.

In summary, the results advance research in the field of organizational commitment by explicitly considering a specific case of student clubs in Foreign Trade University which is different with previous researches that mainly focus on business organization or for-profit organization. Club's characteristics and student members with typical features as non-profit organization, low binding relationship and young age affect the antecedents of commitment in the way that strongly emphasize on interpersonal aspect in comparison with job and organizational factors. The conclusion does not conflict with prior research but further strengthens the theoretical study by the field study on students from Foreign Trade University. In addition, the research finds out new interesting fact that students participating more than 1 club are found to be more committed to the mentioned club than those who only joins 1 club as participation in hobby or language club can strengthens commitment in academic club.

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