

Abstract

The present study of commitment and detachment in Formal Voluntary Organizations (FVO_s) was a study of the role of social control in membership's commitment and detachment. Using a theoretical framework, membership commitment to and detachment from FVO_s is hypothesized to be affected by the degree to which the organization's political structure facilitates social control by its member, in the sense of mutual self regulation. Three components of the organization's polity-centralization, communication, and total influence were analyzed for their impact on 237 members of 21 development oriented FVO_s in Bangkok, purposively selected on the basis of the organizations' willingness to cooperate with the investigator.

The present study has two principal objectives : (1) to find out about the attitudes and involvement of individual members in those selected voluntary organizations ; and (2) to test whether a theoretical framework developed by western scholars is applicable to the same phenomena here in Thailand. The second objective was fulfilled by assessing the impact of organizational polity, specified in the adopted framework, on their members' attitudes and involvement. Furthermore, some test factors were introduced to elaborate the findings.

The findings indicate the FVO_s's members have a moderate level of commitment and detachment, they are 46.8 and 54.4 percent respectively. The elaboration reveals that the hypothesized relationships between the three organizational polity and members's commitment and detachment were still supported by the data and some test factors played the role of specifying the said relationships.