

**POWER, TRUST AND RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT
IN DEALER-SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIP IN THAILAND
AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY**



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SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIP IN THAILAND AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY**

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**Thesis Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

In supplier-dealer relationships, commitment is referred to as a desire to develop a stable relationship and a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to realize long-term benefits from the relationship. Despite the many past studies conducted in the area of relationship commitment, little is known to what extent the power and trust factors influence relationship commitment. The present research examines the factors that influence relationship commitment, particularly the roles of the supplier's power and trust in enhancing relationship commitment among the dealers. Based on the Social Exchange Theory, this research endeavored to develop a conceptual model of relationship commitment that links the element of relationship commitment with the mediated and non-mediated power of the supplier as perceived by the dealer and the trust of the dealer towards the supplier. Using a questionnaire, data from 317 car dealers in Thailand were collected and analyzed to test the hypotheses. Data were analyzed using descriptive analysis, factor analysis, correlational analysis and regression analysis. The results show that the level of relationship commitment among car dealers towards their suppliers is at high level. Trust influences relationship commitment among the car dealers. However only non-mediated power (expert and referent) show significant influences on relationship commitment while mediated power (reward, coercive and legal legitimate) show no significant influence on relationship commitment. It was also found that trust plays a role as a partial mediator that links non-mediated power and relationship commitment. Theoretical, methodological and managerial implications are discussed along with suggestions for future research avenues.

Keywords: relationship commitment, automobile industry, trust, power, supplier.

ABSTRAK

Di dalam perhubungan pembekal-pengedar, komitmen dirujuk sebagai keperluan untuk membangunkan hubungan yang stabil, dan kesanggupan untuk membuat pengorbanan jangka pendek bagi merealisasikan faedah masa hadapan dalam sesuatu perhubungan. Walaupun terdapat banyak kajian lepas dalam bidang komitmen perhubungan, namun tidak banyak yang diketahui tentang sejauh mana faktor kuasa dan kepercayaan memberi kesan kepada komitmen perhubungan. Justeru, kajian ini mengkaji faktor yang mempengaruhi komitmen perhubungan, iaitu peranan kuasa dan kepercayaan pembekal untuk menggalakkan komitmen perhubungan dalam kalangan pengedar. Berdasarkan Teori Pertukaran Sosial, kajian ini dijalankan dengan bertujuan untuk membangunkan model konseptual komitmen perhubungan yang menghubungkan antara elemen komitmen perhubungan dengan kuasa perantara dan bukan-perantara pembekal yang dilihat oleh pengedar dan kepercayaan pengedar terhadap pembekal. Dengan menggunakan borang soal selidik, data daripada 317 pengedar kereta di Thailand telah dikumpul dan dianalisis untuk menguji hipotesis kajian. Seterusnya, data dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis deskriptif, analisis faktor, analisis korelasi dan analisis regresi. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa tahap komitmen perhubungan dalam kalangan pengedar kereta adalah pada tahap yang tinggi. Kepercayaan mempengaruhi komitmen perhubungan dalam kalangan pengedar kereta. Walau bagaimanapun, hanya kuasa bukan-perantara (kemahiran dan rujukan) menunjukkan hubungan yang signifikan dengan komitmen perhubungan manakala kuasa perantara (ganjaran, paksaan, dan legitimasi perundangan) menunjukkan hubungan yang tidak signifikan. Kajian turut mendapati bahawa kepercayaan memainkan peranan sebagai perantara separa yang menghubungkan antara kuasa bukan-perantara dan komitmen perhubungan. Implikasi teori, metodologi dan pengurusan turut dibincangkan bersama-sama dengan cadangan penyelidikan masa hadapan.

Kata kunci: komitmen perhubungan, industri automobil, kepercayaan, kuasa, pembekal.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The concept of relationship commitment between buyers and sellers has generated substantial interests and has been the central focus in relationship marketing research. The purpose of this study is to examine the power influence in the relationship commitment between dealers and suppliers in the Thai automobile industry. This chapter introduces the background of study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study and thesis organization.

1.2 Background of the Study

The automotive industry is one of the leading industries in Thailand with significant contribution to the economy, employment, value added and automotive technology development in Thailand as well as supply chain related industries. The automotive industry is one of the main industries in Thailand that generates economic value for the country. Due to consistent economic and industrial growth in Thailand and Asia, in 2014, Thailand automotive production capacity manage to exceed 3 million vehicles each for automobile and motorcycles (<http://www.thaiauto.or.th/2012>).

At present, it is one of the largest industries in the country, which is crucial for the growth and security of economic system and national development. The industry has links with a variety supporting industries, which tend to be small and medium enterprises

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