

Influences of Contractors' Work Identity on Contractors and Their Supervisors

by

Hsin-Yi Chen

A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

Major: International Workforce Education and Development

Advisor: Steven Chih-Chien Lai, Ph. D

National Taiwan Normal University
Taipei, Taiwan
January, 2009

**Influences of Contractors' Work Identity on
Contractors and their Supervisors**

by

Hsin-Yi Chen

A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF EDUCATION

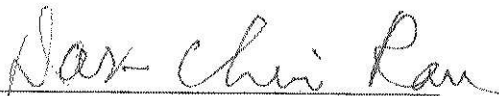
Approved:



Dr. Chih-Chien Lai,
In Charge of Major Work



Dr. Wei-Wen Chang,
Committee Member



Dr. Dar-Chin Rau,
Committee Member



Dr. Chih-Chien Lai
Director of the Graduate Program

Graduate Institute of International Workforce Education and Development
National Taiwan Normal University
Taipei, Taiwan
January, 2009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

在人力所就學的兩年是學生認為生活頗充實的一段時間，不僅結交各種文化背景的朋友，英文能力也不斷進步；更重要的是，除了專業知識之外，每位同學都具備國際觀與良好的人際溝通能力。

今日論文能順利完成，學生在此要特別感謝：指導教授賴志樑老師，總是在繁忙所務中還需抽空耐心地督促學生的論文進度，且賴老師雖貴為所長，但相處上就像朋友般自在愉快；所上教授兼口試委員的張煒雯老師，幽默生動又豐富的上課內容讓學生輕鬆吸收專業知識，清晰的口條與溫柔的態度令學生印象深刻，私底下更是學生的良師益友；校外口試委員饒達欽教授，在百忙之中還能不辭辛勞前來指導學生做論文修正，學生真的十分感激。

另外，所上辦公室的助理們更扮演研究所生活中相當重要的角色：Katie、Sophie、Abby 與 Lynn，謝謝妳們不厭其煩地協助及耐心的提醒，少了妳們我會老是錯過學校重要的待辦事項！研究所同學及朋友們：閔憶、冠仔、藝薰、庭芳、俐均、雅婷、嘉章、文志、鵬翔及怡君，很高興能認識你們這一群無論課業上或私底下都能相互扶持分享喜憂的朋友；Eleanor、Zabrina、Denroy、Melinda、SanSan 總是不吝嗇地將自己所知所學分享給我，你們都是我學習的對象。

最後，我要感謝的是家人與朋友，在我疲於研究過程時不斷地鼓勵、提醒與陪伴；謝謝各位學長姐與 Claire 學妹在尋找訪談對象上的協助，以及陳榮隆學長的建議，使此論文最後終能順利完成，所有其他對此研究提供協助的人我都銘記在心！

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to explore the influences the work identity of contractor brings about on contractors and their immediate supervisors. By means of qualitative methods, including interviews and observation, data were collected from three pairs of contractors and their supervisors. In detailed, contractors' and supervisors' perspectives toward the identity and problems they meet were discovered in this research. How supervisors supervise the blended workforce was also addressed. Additionally, other related issues were discussed, for example, regular workers' attitudes toward contractors. The results showed that contractors dislike the identity of contractor; there is little difference between supervisors' supervision over contractors and regular worker; and, there is a peaceful and harmonious relationship between contractors and supervisors.

Keywords: contractors, supervisors, interaction, blended workforce, nonstandard employment

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	I
Table of Contents	II
List of Figures.....	IV
List of Tables.....	V
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background of the Study	1
Purpose of the Study	4
Question of the Study.....	5
Delimitation of the Study.....	6
Definition of Terms.....	7
CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
Overview of Nonstandard Employment	9
The Role of Nonstandard Workers in Client Organizations.....	15
Issues on Blended Workforce.....	17
Relevant Research.....	19
CHAPTER III. RESEACH DESIGN	23
Rationale for Adopting Qualitative Research	23
Framework of the Study.....	24
Participants.....	25
Procedure, Reliability and Validity	27
Data Collection	33
Data Analysis.....	36
CHAPTER IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION.....	39
The Identity, Contractors, and Supervisors.....	39

The Interaction between Contractors and Supervisors	49
Other Related Issue and Phenomena.....	54
CHAPTER V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	56
Conclusion	56
Practical Implication	57
Suggestion for Future Research	58
Reflection.....	59
REFERENCES.....	61
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE BEFORE INTERVIEW AND	
INTERVIEW GUIDELINE	64
APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	68
APPENDIX C: OBSERVATION NOTE	72

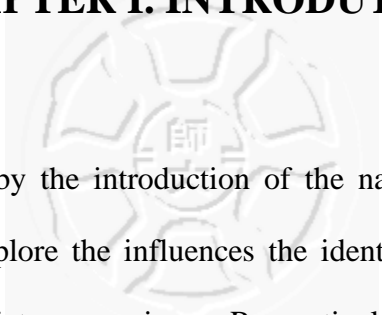
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1 Framework of the Study	25
Figure 3.2 Research Procedure	29
Figure 3.3 The Process of Data Analysis	38

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Profile of Interviewees	27
Table 3.2 An Example of Coding.....	37
Table 3.3 An Example of Analyzing Framework.....	37
Table 4.1 The Identity and Contractors.....	45
Table 4.2 The Identity and Supervisors	46
Table 4.3 The interaction between contractors and supervisors	53
Table 4.4 Other related issues on blended workforce.....	54

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION



This study is initiated by the introduction of the nature of nonstandard employment arrangements and aims to explore the influences the identity of contractor brings about on contractors and their immediate supervisors. Respectively, the influences the identity of contractor causes on contractors in personal and work life are explored; and, this study also inquire if there is any influence on supervisors' supervision because of the existence of subordinates' identity of contractor. Besides, the influences on interaction of these two subjects or other issues facing them are expected to be discovered. What else is particularly worth mentioned is that the study provides an interesting up-to-down and down-to-up perspective exchange and comparison from contract subordinates and their immediate supervisors. To make this chapter more comprehensible, the content is organized in the following way and includes five sections: the background of this study, research questions and purposes, proposition, delimitation of the study, and definitions of key terms.

Background of the Study

The background and motives of this study are addressed as following content which can be divided into three main parts: Organizations' pursuit of flexibility for business continuity, the presence of blended workforce, and issues on nonstandard employment with regard to human resource management. In the third part, the researcher also provides personal experience as a motive for this research.

In Search of Flexibility for Business Continuity

To survive from the competitive industrial environment, organizations have endeavored to figure out various strategies for their business continuity. One of the most important ways is to search for flexibility. As Connell and Burgess (2002) stated, flexibility has been hailed as the panacea for achieving greater organizational competitiveness, efficiency and effectiveness. Effective staffing strategy has been considered as an essential part of the efforts on pursuing organizational flexibility. In fact, traditional staffing strategy has been adjusted, organizations increasingly utilize non-standard workers to meet the needs for short-term or non-core tasks. In this way, time-consuming recruiting process and staffing cost are cut; the placement of organizational workforce also tends to be more flexible, that is, organizations' labor force can be easily and quickly decreased and increased with changes in the level of demand for labor (Atkinson, 1984). Furthermore, organizations can concentrate their energy on core competency. According to a survey of Taiwan Council of Labor Affairs, Executive Yuan in 2006, at least more than ten hundred thousand people work as nonstandard employees. Enterprises of thirty-five percent in Taiwan have the preference for employing non-standard workers in clerical jobs. Thus it can be seen that the growing importance of non-standard workers has become indisputable and the era of non-standard workers is coming.

Blending of Workforce: Nonstandard and Regular workers

Due to the increasing number of using non-standard workers in organizations, the blended workforce has become a major factor in today's workplace (Donna, 1998). Based on the definition made by the William Olsten Center for Workforce Strategies (1998), blended workforce represent a structured, yet flexible, mix of permanent (regular) and temporary (non-standard) workers. Generally speaking, a blended workforce is considered working well in organizations since it is expected that a central workforce concentrate on core process, and non-standard workers help with non-core support activities. Despite the benefits and

flexibility that a blended workforce brings for an organization, the participation of non-standard workers in traditional employee relations has resulted in some new issues on human resource management. Here in this study, the roles and perspectives of supervisors, non-standard workers and their standard (regular) counterparts are discussed. The triangular relations among them are also explored.

Issues on nonstandard employment related to human resource management

Management issues on standard employment relations have intrigued scholars and people in workplace for decades. However, the intrusion of non-standard workers in this traditional relation has increased the complexities with regard to supervising and management issues. As Olsen (2006) argued, the use of non-standard work arrangement is found to influence the client -organizations, often in unintended ways. On one hand, companies enjoy benefiting from non-standard workers in several ways, such like reducing cost and creating flexibility. On the other hand, the complexities in the employment relationship are found to produce dilemmas and challenges in managing non-standard workers (Ward et al., 2003). It was found that accompanying problems with non-standard workers, such like marginalized identity issues or perceived equity concerns which can influence job involvement and performance, are challenging human resource professionals. Additionally, contemporary organizations are advocating the concept of humanity-centrality. Therefore, perception and interaction among people in workplace and people's work experience are valuable for inquiry.

The researcher had a two-month working experience as a contract worker (non-standard worker) as an assistant for a project in a commercial bank in Taiwan. During those two months, the researcher found some interesting phenomenon of the blended work environment, for example, dispatching workers are found to be engaged in clerical tasks, contract workers gather and eat together in lunch time, and regular employees consider

contract workers as outsiders.

The background and the researcher's personal experience have motivated the exploration on the area of non-standard work, including non-standard workers' and their supervisors' perception toward each other. This study is expected to provide in-depth information and make contribution to either academic or practical field.

Purpose of the Study

The advantages of utilizing non-standard working arrangements were praised studies by studies. Potential problems and challenges were also submitted afterwards. However, there is a paucity of researches on non-standard work discussing in-depth about the contract workers' and their stakeholders' experiences and insights. Considering the increasing importance of non-standard workforce and the new issues and challenges it brings about in organizations, the researcher endeavors to explore the work experiences of contract workers and their supervisors with each other. The main purpose of this study is to explore the influences the identity of contractor brings about on contractors and their immediate supervisors. Respectively, the researcher wants to know what influences the identity of contractor causes on contractors in personal and work life; and, how the existence of subordinates' identity of contractor might affect supervisors' supervision. Besides, the inquiry of influences on the interaction of these two subjects is another focus of this study. Additionally, through their sharing on points of view, other related issues, phenomena, or realities are also expected to be discovered. Thus, four main purposes of this study are listed as following:

1. To discover what influences the identity of contractor brings about on the interaction between contractors and their immediate supervisors.

2. To explore influences the identity of contractor causes on supervisors in their supervision.
3. To explore influences the identity of contractor causes on contractors in individual and work life.
4. To discover other related issues facing contractors and their supervisors due to the existence of the identity of contractor in their work environment.

Question of the Study

Based on the background and the purposes of the study, a number of questions are developed and listed as bellow:

Purpose One:

To explore influences the identity of contractor causes on contractors in individual and work life.

1. What are the influences the identity of contractor causing on contractors in individual?
2. What are the influences the identity of contractor causing on contractors in work life?

Purpose Two:

To explore influences the identity of contractor causes on supervisors in their supervision.

1. How subordinates' identity of contractor might influence supervisors' supervision over contractors and regular workers?

Purpose Three:

To discover what influences the identity of contractor brings about on the interaction between contractors and their immediate supervisors.

1. Does the identity of contractor bring about influences on the interaction between contractors and their supervisors?
2. What are the influences the identity of contractor causing on the interaction between contractors and their supervisors?

Purpose Four:

To discover other related issues facing contractors and their supervisors due to the existence of the identity of contractor in their work environment.

1. What are regular workers' attitudes toward contractors from the points of view from contractors and their supervisors?
2. What are other related issues or phenomena facing contractors and their supervisors due to the existence of contractors in their work environment?

Delimitation of the Study

The delimitations of this study can be divided into three parts:

The topic

The topic representing the theme of this study stands for the exploration of how the factor, the identity of contractor, influences individual perspective, workplace phenomena and issues in nonstandard employment relationship through the mutual sharing of contractors' and their immediate supervisors' work experiences with each other in the client organizations. From the up-to-down and down-to-up ways of thinking, this study is expected to inquire the influences the identity of contractors might bring about on individuals, contractors and supervisors in this study, and on mutual interaction, including supervision and friendship. Thus, useful suggestions and contributions are expected to be submitted for academic and practical field.

The research subject

Six members are selected to be the subjects for interviewing. Each two come from the same organization and department and serve as one contract worker and basic-level manager. In terms of interviewee selection, the researcher sets a criterion by which contractors are all

workers with professional knowledge and skills in information technology industry. Corporations also all belong to Taiwanese locally owned business. By respectively interviewing these two groups of subjects, contract workers and supervisors in the client organization, a sythetical analysis on influences and phenomena are carried out.

The research period

First of all, the researcher discussed the interview questions with academic and practical experts in the field of human resource management. After the interview questions were revised and became reliable, the researcher submitted applications for the permission of conducting interviews to supervisors. As the permission was received, the researcher started implementing interviews. It takes about two month to search for appropriate subjects, waiting for responses and finally finish executing interviews of three pairs. And the duration of each interview is at least forty minutes and at most one hour depending on the interviewee's feedback.

Definition of Terms

To avoid possible ambiguity, and simultaneously, to make the content of this study more comprehensible and consistent, several important terms are especially defined as following:

Contractors

In this study, contractors can be explained as either workers employed by employment intermediaries but supervised by client-organizations (Olsen, 2006) or employees who are paid by one company but carry out assignments for another (Bendapudi et al., 2003).

According to Bendapudi *et al*, contractors belongs to one of the types of nonstandard employment so “nonstandard workers” is also used in this paper when the generality of description is needed.

Regular Employees

Regular employees are those who have no pre-determined ending date to the employment relationship with their employers, but that does not necessarily mean that the employment relationship will never end. As what Nolen and Axel say (1996), employees who are designated as employees normally will be scheduled on an on-going basis. In this study, regular workers are called standard workers or permanent workers as well with a contrary meaning of non-standard workers.

Blended workforce

In this study, the definition of blended workforce made by the William Olsten Center for Workforce Strategies (1998) is adopted and stands for a meaning of a structured, yet flexible, mix of permanent (regular) and temporary (non-standard) workers.

Interaction

Interaction is a kind of action that occurs as two or more objects have an effect upon one another in which two-way effect is essential in the concept. In this study, the interaction between contractors and their supervisors mainly indicates supervisors' supervision over contract subordinates, contractors' contrast performance, and mutual perceived friendship with each other.

Information Technology Industry

According to the definition made by the Industrial Development Bureau Ministry of Economic Affairs, the scope of information technology industry includes industries of computer hardware, communications, semiconductor, optoelectronics, software or digital design, and internet service.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is developed and supported with a foundation of reviewed important literature. This chapter presents essential issues submitted by previous studies on non-standard workers and includes four main sections. The first section is the overview of nonstandard employment which discusses the nature of nonstandard work arrangements and the advantages and potential problems of it. The second part is the analysis of the role of non-standard workers in client-organizations. The third part discusses the phenomenon of blended workforce followed by the fourth section which explains the problems facing supervisors with regard to blended workforce. At the end of this chapter, important findings of relevant researches are shown and discussed.

Overview of Nonstandard Employment

Contemporary organizations are striving toward the flexibility for competitiveness and effective staffing strategies are found to be able to achieve that goal. Through non-standard work arrangement, organizations can quickly meet staffing needs and shed them while unneeded. This section mainly expounds the nature of non-standard workers, why organizations utilize non-standard work arrangement and how they benefit from this kind of employment form. Accompanying issues and challenges of this trend are discussed as well.

Review of non-standard employment: introduction and development

Normally, traditional employment has to do with a permanent, full-time or continuous relation between workers and employers. This employment relation may include an

open-ended contract concerned with conditions such as overtime pay, paid vacation, working hour arrangement, seniority, severance pay, or pension etc. On the contrary, non-standard employment does not fit in with the pattern of traditional employment in a number of ways. Basically, non-standard works extensively embraces several specific working types which differ from the traditional one, such as telework, individual or group contractors, dispatching work, part-timer or temporary work etc. In the article of Bendapudi *et al* (2003), we can more explicitly understand the definition of nonstandard employment:

Nonstandard employment includes both “alternative” and “contingent” employment relationship... the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) divides alternative employment arrangements into independent contractors, on-call workers, temporary help agency workers, and workers provided by contract firms. BLS defines contingent employment broadly as all work that does not involve explicit or implicit contracts for long-term employment. (p.g.25)

The creation of flexible labor markets has led to increases in non-standard working whereby non-permanent and part time forms of employment are encouraged and enabled (Connell & Burgess, 2002). Embracing the most important distinguishing features, like flexibility, adaptability and diversity, organizations are having more preference over nonstandard employment arrangement except for traditional labor hire activities. For example, the presence of staffing agencies which has given a big hand to organizations in embodying effective labor use strategies to achieve the pursuit of organizational competitiveness. According to Hall's (2006) analysis of employer motivations for using non-standard workers, five sets of reasons are generated: flexibility; cost; recruitment and selections; access to skills; risk management and other administrative or management reasons. How organizations benefit from non-standard work and why they are motivated in using this kind of labor form are discussed based on Hall's five-reason statement.

1. Flexibility:

The leading benefit of using non-standard workers is flexibility which is helpful for organizations to staff up only when they need to. Occasionally, non-standard workers are used to cover short-term absence of regular employees or to meet special skill needs. Non-standard employment supplies workforce timely and in demand, and thus enable client-organizations' dexterity in staffing strategies. Non-standard forms of employment, Johnson (2004) argued, have been seen as part of a wider process of employment restructuring, incorporating strategies which enable the full agility of the competitive organization.

2. *Cost*

Employers' use of agency labor is found to be driven by pressure relating to labor cost (Forde and Slater, 2006). As Hall states, client-organizations save on recruitment, selection, induction, training and development costs and benefit from the allegedly greater efficiency of agencies in sourcing and placing labor. For those organizations which are cost-oriented, using non-standard employment may give a big hand in achieving organizational goals.

3. *Recruitment and selections*

Hiring non-standard workers is like buying prepared food. Less risk might be taken of spending too much time, making cooking mistakes, and eating terrible finished food at the end. A human resource professional cannot stand the stress of hiring the wrong person and the organization cannot afford to those consuming time and money and the futility. In fact, the presence of non-standard workers does decrease human resource professionals' sense of insecurity of making wrong decisions. Organizations also enjoy taking advantages of non-standard work arrangement by shifting recruitment and training efforts to staffing agencies.

In addition to the less time, money and transaction associated with the recruiting and training process, the using of non-standard workers also provide organizations a probationary period for a potential permanent employment. Like what Foote (2004) has argued, it is not

uncommon for firms to hire workers into temporary positions with an increased potential for longer-term employment.

4. *Access to skills*

Presumably, staffing agencies are thought to possess a comparative advantage in sourcing and supplying specialized or in-demand-skilled workers for client- organizations. In fact, this has to do with economizing the use of time. For human resource professionals, divesting as much minute and complicated matters as they can, might be able to save their time and energy for relative important and core tasks. Via staffing agencies organizations can quickly have people on job while there is an instant need for a certain skill.

5. *Risk management and other administrative or management reasons*

In traditional employment relation, organizations are always taking the risk of being accused with flawed labor treatment, such like unfair dismissal actions, unpaid benefits or misuse of occupational health and safety laws. According to what Connell and Burgess said, there is evidence that firms are using temps to avoid unfair dismissal claims if employees have to be laid off. Hiring workers through intermediaries could be considered a risk management strategy because staffing agencies have shouldered those risks for client organizations.

Increasingly, organizations are advocating focusing on core competitiveness. Those who can economically use time and money on relative peripheral matters are found to survive easily within industries. Undoubtedly, the administrative convenience staffing agencies provide can be a part of effective approaches for organizations to focus on core tasks.

In fact, those five sets of organizations' motivations could be also interpreted as reasons why non-standard employment becomes a current trend. By meeting those needs of contemporary organizations and bringing additional benefits, non-standard working arrangement keeps its great popularity within industries. Another factor for this trend, however, is also noticeable, that is *the nature of contemporary workers*.

In the backdrop of rapid information explosion and transformation of industries, people nowadays embrace different attitudes toward their career and work conditions. The traditional hours of 9.00am-5.00pm, five days per week, from leaving school until retirement at 65 years old, is no longer the dominant pattern of employment (Johnson, 2004). Embracing distinguishing features like flexible working time and place, relative short-term working period, or less constraints from employer companies, non-standard work form has been the prior choice for particular groups like students, younger generations and knowledge workers. In addition to the presumable “freedom” conferred by non-standard works, opportunities and entries for permanent jobs are thought by some individuals as a reason why they actively choose this form of employment. People take agency jobs as “entry jobs” (Forde and Slater, 2006) because in the short working duration, non-standard workers are likely to be screened as potential permanent employees.

Consequently, the utilization of non-standard employment is becoming an imperative path toward the goal of achieving organizational competitiveness, and simultaneously, a popular alternative access for contemporary job seekers. By meeting those needs of contemporary organizations and individuals, non-standard working arrangement and staffing intermediaries have become so widespread, growing steadily and were expected to continue to expand over the coming decades (Connell and Burgess, 2002).

Non-standard workers on skilled, core jobs

It is assumed to be advantageous for organizations that core functions be undertaken by regular workers, while peripheral activities may be performed by non-standard workers (Olsen, 2006). Years ago, companies hire non-standard workers mainly as fill-ins for positions like secretaries and receptionists, or for vacationing permanent employees but they are now, as Connell and Burgess addressed, frequently employed on an ongoing basis. As the high-skilled side of non-standard work increasingly has come into focus, it has been discovered that the tasks of non-standard workers are not always peripheral, said Olsen. In

fact, the nature of non-standard work and the temporary workforce has changed. Today's non-standard workers increasingly fill positions in a variety of executive, managerial, professional and technical areas requiring extensive skills (Foote, 2004).

The growing proportion of using non-standard workers in high-skilled job positions shows the development tendency of non-standard work arrangement. With the undoubted increasing importance of non-standard workers, the compatibility between non-standard employment and human resource practice should come into client organizations' notice.

Concerns nonstandard employment brings about to human resource practice

As agency working has grown over the 1990s, a number of often contradictory assertions have been made about the composition and nature of this form of employment (Forde and Slater, 2006). Though the rise of non-standard work arrangement has created convenience for human resource practice in recruitment, selection and administration, some problems with regard to human resource management are accompaniments. Two fast-growing trends are demanding that business leaders pay more attention to employee relations, Drucker (2002) says. Those two trend mentioned refer to the rise of temporary or contract workers and the growing number of business outsourcing. Actually, a relative small third party has participated in the traditional employee relations adding the degree of complexities in management. According to three sets of challenges the *HRfocus* (2006) has pointed out, possible problems facing the human resource practice are addressed. The first is issues on compensation. Generally, there has been a fact that non-standard workers tend to receive less benefits form client-organizations in comparison with regular employees. Arguments with regard to issues on compensations of non-standard workers can be seen studies by studies. Second, issues with regard to motivation of non-standard workers are also questioned non-standard workers are thought to be less devoted to the company and to the productivity. According to what Foote (2004) said, the limited motivation of temporary workers leads to

reduced productivity and predisposition toward early departure. Motivation has been a big challenge; however, it is not clear that they have an incentive to build commitment (Forde and Slater, 2006). The third is about the issues over management. Despite that some traditional human resource functions have shifted to staffing agencies, matters like how non-standard workers perform and integrated in client-organization are inevitably facing supervisors. The last but not least, nonstandard workers' feelings about client organizations, such like sense of unsafety which was resulted probably from the lack of an explicit or even implicit promise of continued employment , lower pay and benefits, and the relatively unequal protection comparing with regular employees under the law (Bendapudi *et al*, 2003).

Attempting to utilize non-standard employment, organizations should not only take the positive influences of it into consideration, but also contemplate whether it fits neatly into the human capital management picture. Knowing the development tendency and current status of non-standard employment should be a continuous effort of human resource practitioners, like what the *HRfocus* (2006) addressed, companies are still working on HR strategies to make sure that information on contingents is up to date.

The Role of Nonstandard Workers in Client-organizations

Since non-standard work forms have emerged, issues over the role of non-standard workers in client-organizations have intrigued practitioners and scholars. In fact, many controversial issues with regard to non-standard employment are resulted from the complicated features, like non-regular status, of non-standard workers. By generalizing reviewed literature, the discussion of the role of non-standard workers are divided into three dimensions which are the nature of non-standard workers' identity, core-peripheral arguments on job and employment status, and issues on their loyalty and commitment.

Complexities of identity

Non-standard workers often embrace the triangular nature of the employment relationship. As what Forde and Slater (2006) stated, agency workers have a dual relationship with both the employment agency and with the client firm to which they are assigned. Generally, non-standard workers have trouble in clearly defining their responsibility or commitment for the client-organization they work for. The intermediary arrangement, said Burgess and Connell (2006), generates ambiguity regarding the employment relationship and consequently, it is not overly clear who bears the responsibility of an employer and where the commitment and loyalty of the agency worker lies. Besides, how nonstandard workers follow the organizational norms or supervisory instruction could probably be influenced by their non-regular identity. In fact, the nature of complexities of non-standard workers' identity has resulted in many other controversial issues and could be regarded as the most regulatory problem around this area.

Core-peripheral division

Though the nature of non-standard work is changing and tends to be higher skilled and core-oriented, clerical tasks remain a large proportion. In some cases, Burgess and Connell (2006) addressed, boundaries between core and periphery were redrawn, usually shrinking the former and enlarge the latter. As an employee hired from an "outside" agency and filling in the relative peripheral jobs, it is assumed that non-standard workers might considered themselves as secondary and excluded in comparison with other regular workers.

Frequently, non-standard workers embrace relative low job satisfaction due to the sense of being expendable and marginalized in the client-organizations they work for. They can be anxious about the arbitrary dismissal (Forde and Slater, 2006) from the client firm and most of the time they are marginalized from internal labor market and social decision making procedure.

Loyalty and commitment

In fact, three issues over non-standard workers discussed here presumably connected with one another. Complexities of identity and the relative peripheral employment status are likely to result in lower loyalty and commitment than other regular employees. On average, temporary workers remain detached from an ongoing relationship with the organization where they work. (Burgess and Connell, 2006) Due to their contract relations with an outside agency, they are thought to be loosely connected to the organization they work for. Non-standard workers' commitment becomes questionable, as they are not fully aligned with the organization. (Johnson, 2004) Clearly, commitment is part of a relational contract that excludes temporary workers (Connell and Burgess, 2002). Lower Levels of affective commitment is like to lead to poorer work outcomes (Forde and Slater, 2006). That is the reason why non-standard workers are also thought to be devoted lower job involvement. Issues on loyalty and commitment can be a lasting challenge facing those firms using non-standard work arrangement.

Issues on Blended Workforce

A blended workforce, defined by Blake *et al.* (2003), represents one with standard and non-standard workers in the same jobs. The emergence of this blended workforce is the result of choice and necessity, out-sourcing and privatization policy, and ad hoc acquisition decision-making (Bednar and Quigley, 2007). With the growth of non-standard work arrangement, a big proportion of companies include diverse forms of workers in their staffing, resulting challenges facing management and employee relationship. Burgess and Connell (2006) have addressed the problem of diverse workforce. Differentiation can generate flexibility, they said, but can also compromise quality and commitment, whereas integration may reduce flexibility but also reduce the risk associated with differentiation. Thus, it is

likely that to strike a balance between the usage of diverse workforce for achieving flexibility and the effort on striving for integration for high performance and involvement, is a big challenge for supervisors nowadays.

How using nonstandard workers affects regular employees

In general, there is still a limited amount of studies talking about the reciprocal influences between non-standard workers and regular employees. In the research of Blake *et al.* (2003), however, it was found that the existence of non-standard workers does affect some behaviors and attitudes of regular workers. Firstly, they said that the blended workforce could decrease standard workers' loyalty and increase their motivation in leaving their organizations while the proportion of non-standard workers tends to be large. Additionally, more amounts of non-standard workers in a working unit are also assumed to decrease work-related helping behaviors. Occasionally, non-standard workers can be screened as a potential permanent worker plus the current tendency of using non-standard workers in core task, regular workers may feel threatened. Like what Olsen (2006) has said, periphery workers getting too close to the core make the core-workers feel threatened. Yet, despite those unfavorable outcomes and influences nonstandard workers have caused, some studies show that regular workers also indicate benefits they bring about. For example, nonstandard workers ease regular ones' work pressure and serve as a buffer. No matter what, to work cooperatively and achieve high performance, both nonstandard workers and regular employees have to accept the diversity of each other.

Supervisors in the blended workforce

The presence of blended workforce has resulted in managerial challenges and dilemmas facing supervisors. The need for "chameleonic" managers has never been more evident

(Johnson, 2004). With the intrusion of non-standard workers into traditional managing relations, original efforts on management supervisors are engaged in are multiplied, for example, the first, motivation issues. In fact, it is important to provide contingent workers with an environment that makes them want to do their best work for the client-organization. Being excluded from training and development, benefits and compensations, and sometimes decision making, how to motivate non-standard workers is a big challenge for supervisors.

Additionally, matters with regard to the relations have also intrigued human resource practitioners. The accelerated growth of diversity in the workforce over the past 20 years has spawned new development in managing employee relations, making it one of the biggest challenges facing managers (Roper, 2005). Supervisors have to carefully deal with the relations between non-standard workers and regular employees. As Forde and Slater (2006) warned, factors like issues of non-standard workers' legal status and responsibility, the degree of precariousness faced and the nature of interaction with members of the client firm are likely to seriously affect the experience of work, and hence attitudes and performance. Working with diverse groups of people requires a tremendous amount of interaction. If these interactions are positive, they can help create the right workplace climate, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors (Roper, 2005). To efficiently using non-standard work arrangement, supervisors still have a lot to pay effort on. As roles begin to evolve and change in organizations, said Johnson (2004), now need a more facilitating coordinating role making better of integrated management and communication systems and ensuring full integration of the atypical workers.

Relevant Research

Based on those reviewed literature, a clear picture of the rise and development of non-standard employment, the role of non-standard workers, and issues on the blended

workforce is shown and provides a grounded knowledge of this study. From several important related quantitative researches results and statements on the area of non-standard employment, intrinsic and further inquiry about relations and respective experiences of non-standard workers, regular employees and supervisors are expected to be held through this study.

According to previous quantitative researches, several important results and findings submitted are discussed here in two dimensions:

Attitudes of nonstandard workers

Forde and Slater (2006) drawn on the results of *Working in Britain Survey* (2000) which provides a national sample of 2,466 employed people to examine the attitudes of Britain agency workers in 2000. Several important aspects are submitted after the analysis of the survey.

Job Satisfaction

1. Agency workers are significantly less likely to be satisfied with their jobs in comparison with other workers.
2. Agency workers are less likely to report satisfaction with their promotion prospects and job security.
3. Agency workers are less satisfied with pay.
4. Agency workers are less satisfied than other workers in their relations with management.

Commitment

1. Agency workers are expected to report lower commitment.
2. Agency workers report little loyalty or pride in the organizations they are working for.
3. Agency workers are less like to report a strong desire to remain with the current

organization.

4. Agency workers are not significantly different from other workers in terms of reporting shared values with the organization.

Precariousness

1. Agency workers report higher levels of anxiety over the threat of arbitrary dismissal, discrimination and victimization.

Supervisors and regular workers in the blended workforce

In 2003, Blake et al. have conducted a quantitative research examining how a blended workforce affect exit, “voice,” and loyalty among standard workers. Additionally, Broschak and Blake (2006) implemented another research on consequences of mixing standard work and non-standard deals. The results show a number of significant findings which can be seen in two dimensions.

Nonstandard workers and regular employees

1. The workforce blending worsens relations between managers and employees.
2. The workforce blending decreased standard workers’ loyalty
3. The workforce blending increased standard workers’ interest in both in leaving organizations and in exercising voice through unionization.

Nonstandard workers and supervisors

1. Higher proportions of non-standard workers were associated with less favorable attitudes toward supervisors and peers.
2. Higher proportions of non-standard workers were associated with increased turnover intentions.
3. Higher proportions of non-standard workers were associated with decreased work-related helping behaviors.

From the former literature review and those studies related to quantitative research approaches, some important evidence on the attitudes of non-standard workers and their influences is contributed. Initiated into the phenomenon alongside non-standard employment through previous researches and relevant researches, this study aims to inquire deeply how the identity influences the respective perception and mutual interaction of contract workers and their supervisors. Additionally, it is expected that more issues, phenomena, and realities on nonstandard employment can be discovered through in-depth interviews of their experiences of working together. .

CHAPTER III. RESEARCH DESIGN

Further, the research design is introduced in the following sections: reason why adopting qualitative research methods, the framework of this study, the criteria of sampling and background information of subjects, the last but not least, the ways and processes how data is collected and analyzed. With thick and detailed description on the whole research design, this qualitative research is expected to be distinct and valid.

Rationale for Adopting Qualitative Research

This study is synergistic with the theme “The influences of contractors’ work identity on contractors themselves and their supervisors, including individual, interaction, and workplace phenomena”. Since the topic is related to individual inner parts and is relatively sensitive, the study was conducted with qualitative research methods for unexplored field and social phenomenon.

Qualitative research methods, said Stern (1980), can be used to explore substantive areas about which little is known or about which much is known to gain novel understandings; also, they are used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific program, practice or setting (Mertens, 1998). Based on scholars’ statements and the assessment of the characters of this study, the reasons of choosing qualitative research method as the research method can be listed as following three points:

1. Since the purpose is to explore individuals’ perspective and interaction, they are expected to say about what they see as important and help the researcher make a comparison of their feedback and analyze further connotations. Therefore, it belongs to

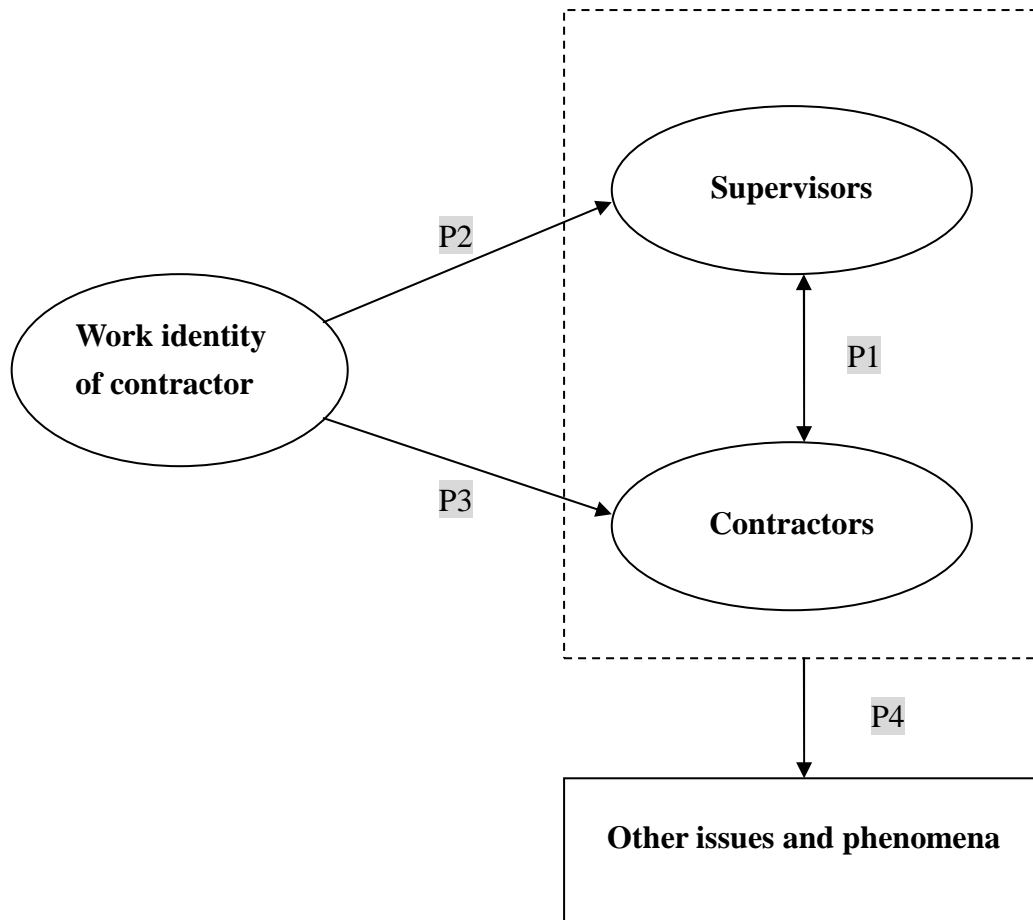
phenomenological research and might not appropriate to use quantitative methods to collect the information because it could be so structured that the informants could not choose what to say or how much.

2. The subjects of this study were set to pair a contractor and his or her immediate supervisor to make a synergistic analysis therefore qualitative design was thought to be more feasible.

3. Because prior quantitative researches lack information from contractors' and their stakeholders' personal confessions; also, little prior qualitative studies provides two-way viewpoints or relevant aspect, especially from supervisors' up-to-down way to contracted subordinates. Thus, this study used qualitative method to add deeper viewpoints for assisting prior studies.

Framework of the Study

The framework of this study was constructed based on research purposes and questions. Research data was obtained from three paired contractors and supervisors from three companies all belonging to information technology industry. Information was collected from interviews to identify the perspectives from two different standpoints and positions of contractors and their immediate supervisors. Based on purposes of this study, concepts were constructed as a research framework and illustrated in Figure 3.1 which makes it easier to comprehend the research theme, how the identity of contractor influences individuals and interaction of parties, and raises other issues.



→ *Arrows of influence*

Figure 3.1. Framework of This Study

Participants

According to literature review, a large portion of companies in information technology industry in Taiwan use nonstandard work arrangements, like contractors. Different from other industries, there are relatively more contractors working as workers with professional knowledge or skills in technology industry, such like engineers. After the discussion with an

assistant manager of human resource department, who has also studied contractors deeply, the research subjects were decided to exclude general clerical contract workers. Therefore the researcher aimed to search for contractors with relatively professional knowledge skills in technology industry. Three pairs were successfully interviewed and each pair of them was respectively from companies in technology industry. By collecting the information of work experiences from contractors and supervisors with two-way contrast along with perspectives and problems they have encountered, suggestions were expected to be provided to contractors and supervisors, especially those who work in technology industry and possess relatively professional knowledge or skills. The following is the criteria set for the target interviewees:

1. Contract workers with professional knowledge or skills in technology industry and have worked for the client organization for at least 6 month.
2. Contract Workers' immediate supervisors

Consequently, there were totally three pairs of interviewees whose backgrounds are shown as Table3.1. Three companies were all with certain size and well known in Taiwan that interviewees from them can be representative within technology industry in Taiwan. The first pair (Pair 1) comes from a company in which the major business is secure software research and development. The contractor of Pair 1, named C1 in short, and the supervisor (S1) belong to information service department and respectively serves as a computer engineer and the lab administrator supervising five subordinates. The second pair (Pair 2) is a system integration technology company in which the contractor (C2) is a programmer and the supervisor (S2) is a four-people team leader of research and development department. The third pair (Pair 3) works in an electronic hardware and equipment organization in Hsin-Chu science-based Industrial Park. The contractor (C3) is a research and development engineer responsible for new product development, upgrade, or modification. His supervisor (S3) is a supervisor engineer to whom there are five engineers reporting.

Table3.1. also shows the interviewee basic demographic information from which it can

be clearly seen that, in addition to all in technology industry, three contractors are of almost the same age, and all interviewees are male. Additionally, three supervisors belong to the basic-level manager, such like team leaders and supervisors. Thus, it tends to have little differences within interviewees by which potential factors are avoid and the participants can be representative and be helpful for the reinforcement of the value of this study.

Table 3.1. *Profile of interviewees*

Interviewee	Department	Gender /Birth Year	Work Duration In This Dept.	Job / Position title
Pair 1	Secure software development (Taiwan locally owned business)			
S1	Information Service(IS)	M	18 months	Lab Administrator (Senior Testing Engineer)
C1		M(1982)	16 months	Computer Engineer
Pair 2	System integration technology (Taiwan locally owned business)			
S2	Research and Development(RD)	M	15 months	Team Leader (Senior Programmer)
C2		M(1982)	11 months	Programmer
Pair 3	Electronic hardware and equipment (Taiwan locally owned business)			
S3	Research and Development(RD)	M	22 months	Supervisor Engineer
C3		M(1981)	15 months	RD Engineer

*Gender (M/F): M=male, F=female

Procedure, Reliability and Validity

In addition to the former sections which elaborated the conceptualization of this study and the introduction of research subjects, the overall data collecting and analyzing strategy was discussed in more detail below through which the researcher gathered qualitative data and used them as foundation for analysis.

After all interviews were conducted, the recorded files were keyed in the computer as

written documents and are translated into English by the researcher. As something was found to be worthwhile for deeper analysis, the researcher used e-mail or MSN to re-contact and inquire interviewees for further information. After all the data were thought to be complete, the data were analyzed by giving codes to the manuscripts drawn from interviews. Finally, the procedure of this research, illustrated in Figure 3.2, ended up with discussing conceptual findings and recommendations.

The procedure of this research can be divided into eight parts and begins with the aim or research theme followed by reviewing relevant literature for deeper understanding of the topic. And then, based on the literature, the research purposes, and questions, research subjects for interview were selected by the criteria. The next step was to draft interview questions which were adjusted and really build up in the following step through meetings with experts in academic and practical human resource fields. The sixth was to conduct interviews followed by the seventh, eighth, ninth, and the tenth; to analyze data, to generate research findings, to submit conclusion and recommendations, and to complete the research.

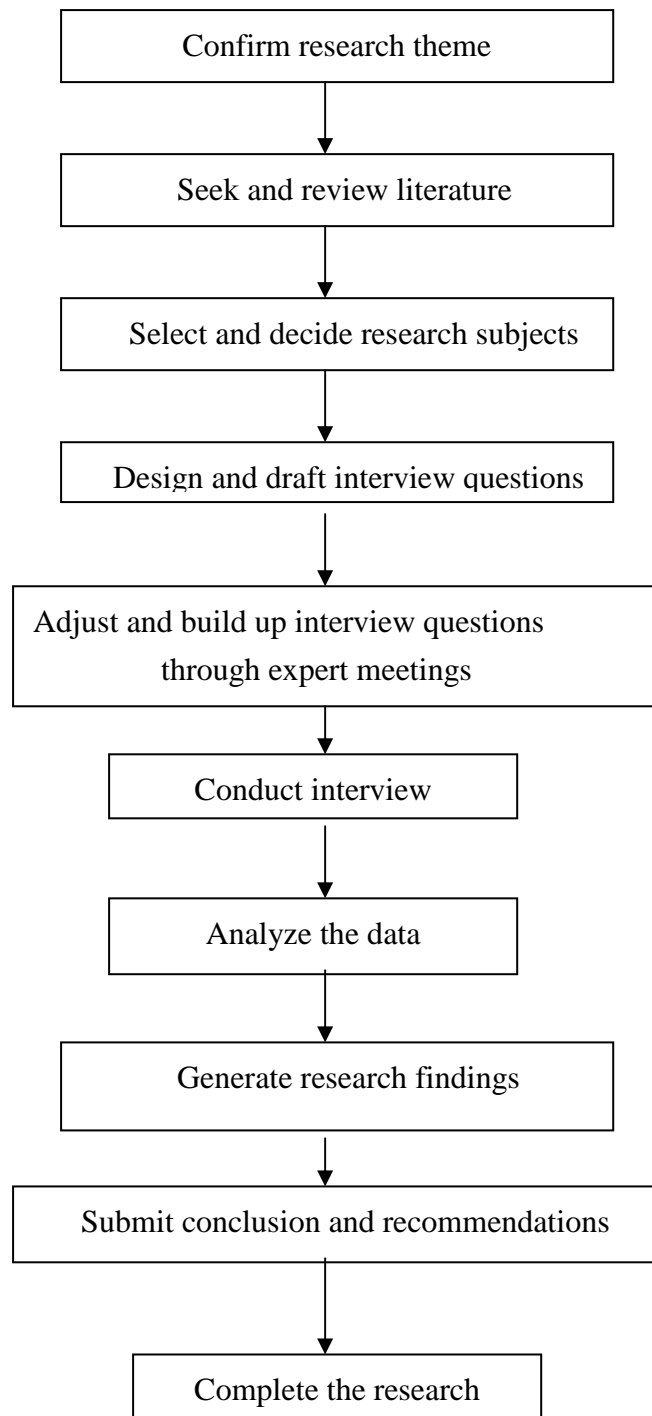


Figure3.2. Research Procedure

To analyze the quality of this qualitative research, the following statements are particularly submitted as extra supportive points to thicken the description on the research design in addition to former elaborations on participants selecting and the overall procedure.

Pre-interview

Before the actual interviews were carried out, an experimental interview was conducted. The interviewees are from human resource department of a well known technology corporation in Taiwan. The interviewed contractor serves as a training and development specialist in the department and the supervisor is a director. From this pre-interview, the researcher learned about potential factors that might influence a supervisor's perspective toward the contractor in addition to his contracted identity, such like job functions. That implied the researcher to carefully select actual target subjects and avoid too many differences among interviewees. Besides, the information the contractor provided gave the researcher a rough picture of what future actual contractors may respond. Thus, performing a pre-interview test provided the researcher with experiential logistics from actual procedural implementation and also facilitated a more systematic approach to actual data collection and analysis.

Persistent Expert Consultation

Meanwhile, the process of building up an actual interview questions involved discussions with several experts on human resource field. The interview questions were firstly viewed by an assistant manager of human resource department in a famous bank in Taiwan. This expert has also studied on nonstandard employment, especially contract programmers. He suggested that the theme of this study is feasible and interesting, especially the part of supervisors' up-to-down perspective toward contractors. In Taiwan, there are little prior researches related to this part, he said. Another statement he made is that subjects

should be carefully selected and aimed at either all general clerical workers, like customer service workers, or contractors with relatively professional knowledge and skills. Technology industry is really worthwhile to be the field for exploring particularly in Taiwan, he added. Those suggestions from the practitioner were adopted afterward because they were thought to be helpful for the increase in value of this study for practical field. Besides, the research questions were also examined by two academic experts to make sure that those questions are most likely to satisfy and correspond to research purposes and questions. What is the most important is that one of the experts kept monitoring the overall process from the very beginning of this research, including the contact processes in gaining permissions of interviews. Additionally, at the beginning of this study, the theme was to analyze the triangular relations of contractors, regular workers, and supervisor, plus issues on blended workforce. However, after a committees meeting, the focus of the study was suggested to adjust a little. One of the committee suggested, for example, the researcher can aim to explore how a supervisor provides support to a contractor for him or her to quickly and efficiently work on track; and, the part of the relation between contractors and regular workers can be omitted or mentioned casually and selectively because blended workforce has existed in most organizations for years. Therefore, the researcher was consequently inspired to study mutual work experiences of contractors and supervisors, including their two-way perspectives. As what Guba and Lincoln (1989) said, **dependability** can be identified as the qualitative parallels to reliability. In qualitative researches, the reliability test can be conducted to prove the quality and appropriateness of the inquiry process. Therefore, this study tends to fulfill the requirement of dependability and presents certain level of quality.

Two-times Coding and Expert Review

According to Mertens' (1998) saying, the conformability audit can be conducted in conjunction with the dependability audit. Thus, the former two ways, pre-interview test and

expert meetings, involve in the research process and explicitly show the logic that the researcher used to interpret the data can attest the conformability audit in a way. To be more convincing, coding was conducted twice during the analyzing process. The first time coding was conducted right after manuscripts completed. Couples days latter, the researcher implemented coding again and made a contrast with the results from the first time to examine the consistency and avoid the researcher's possible subjective judgments in the first-time coding. What' more, not only the data synthesizing process was all the time monitored by experts, the data source, interview transcripts were also reviewed by an expert to confirm that the conclusions can be supportive. Therefore, this study reaches **conformability** audit which is identified by Guba and Lincoln (1989) as objectivity.

Process Document and Multiple Methods

The quality of this study can be also attested by two of the strategies for enhancing **credibility** which, in qualitative research, asks if there is a correspondence between the way the respondents actually perceive social constructs and the way the researcher portrays their viewpoints (Mertens, 1998). Firstly, the researcher documented the process of change and monitored the developing construction from the beginning of the study which can be understood through this chapter, for example, the researcher's changing and adjusting process on the research aims under experts' suggestions. In this way, **progressive subjective** which is one of the strategies for credibility is used. The other strategy is **triangulation** by which the researcher checked information from three methods, including interview, observation, and document review for the consistency of data. Through the use of these two strategies, credibility audit is attested with certain level.

Data Collection

The method of data collection was based on a semi-structured interview instrument developed through documents review. Before the interview, a brief questionnaire was sent to interviewee contractors for the convenience of collecting basic background information, such like age, job title, work duration, etc.

Questionnaire before Interview

Based on the concern that there might be potential factors influencing the informants' feedback to interview, there were totally six questions constructed in this questionnaire to inquire contractors' basic background, including age, educational background, work duration before the current job, work duration of present work, job title, and welfare provided by the client organization. Assembling the collected information from this pre-interview questionnaire, results are listed as following:

1. Age: C1 and C2 were both born in 1982, and C3 was born in 1981.
2. Educational background: C1 graduated from a college; C2 and C3 have master's degree.
3. Work duration before the current job: All of them had no work experiences previously.
4. Work duration of present work: C1 has worked for this client organization for 16 months; C2, 11months, and C3, 15 months.
5. Job title: C1 is a computer engineer, C2 is a programmer, and C3 is a research and development engineer.
6. Welfare provided by the client organization: C1 and C3 have holiday bonus for the three important Chinese holidays, but C2 reports none.

Interviews

Interview method was preferred in this study to achieve the purpose of exploring mutual work experiences of contractors and their immediate supervisors. The researcher used individual interview format to inquire each participant's perspective and feelings through their sharing of work experiences with each other. Interviews were conducted by one to one and face to face during dinner time and took averagely forty minutes to one hour in each conversation. Face to face and one by one interviews are appropriate for exploring individual insights of the small research population. After each face to face interview, the researcher used e-mail and MSN to have a further understanding on something found ambiguous or worthwhile.

Significantly, all the interview questions were reviewed by experts beforehand, and by which the draft interview questions were, first, adjusted to be more simplified and accurate; second, following the suggestions from the human resource expert of the famous bank, this research is more likely to make contributions to the practical field; third, questions were classified by one of the experts to make sure that questions are corresponding to research purposes and to help guide the subsequent data analysis process. To be more comprehensible, examples are listed as following:

Questions for contractors

1. "What advantages and challenges do you think the identity of contractor brings about in your personal and work life?" is classified as *perspective*.
2. "Please describe your supervisor's management style over you." is classified as *interaction*.

Questions for supervisors

1. "What do you think about the role of contractor in the client organization?" is classified as *perspective*.

2. “Is there any difference in your supervising over regular workers and contractors? Please describe it.” is classified as *interaction*.

Additionally, all the questions were used with semi-structured method to make this research more likely to focus on the aimed issues and allow for flexibility at the same time. The actual manipulation was that with each broad inquiry accompanied several detailed questions or questions brought up depending on the situation of interviewing process. Taking one interview question of contractors as an example as following.

Example: Do you think there is any difference in your supervisor’s interaction with contractors and regular workers? Please describe it.

1. What are the situations respectively in workplace and in private?
2. In what ways does your supervisor usually convey information to you? Do you think the information lucid and sufficient?
3. What are the influences the identity of contractor causing on your communication with the supervisor, such like convenience or difficulties?
4. What do you think about your relationship with your supervisor? Is it harmonious or not?

Observation

In the meantime of interviewing, the researcher observed the way interviewees talk to inwardly gauge their personalities which is considered as an important factor in this research because it affects individual way of thinking and interpersonal behaviors. Based on the observation, the researcher had rough pictures on each interviewee’s personality. C1 (the contractor of Pair 1) was so energetic and outgoing that the researcher did not have to pay much effort to work the conversation up. But he was easily go distraction and digression during the interview. C2 was relatively shy and restricted. In the appointment with him, the researcher was late for twenty minutes and finds the interviewee waiting in the front door of

the meeting place, did not make any call to inform his arrival to me. C3 is a friend of the researcher that made him feel easy to talk about what he thinks of. He is a hard working and smart person who always know what to do in his life. As to supervisors, they were thought to talk in an official way and answer the questions similarly like they have been set before. What is particularly worth mentioned is that S2 tended to answer the question by question which was not much like a conversation. S1 answered questions one by one as well but with more sufficient feedback and make responses in a more active way. Generally speaking, they were somehow reserved and serious. S3 was relatively talkative though officially also. The researcher felt free and easy to talk to him. When the researcher addressed some opinions, S3 provided feedback actively. He was a good listener and was apt at communication.

Subsequently, after all interviews finished, recorded files were transformed into word documents and transcribed into English by the researcher; also, notes on observation were gathered. The following step was to conduct analysis on those data.

Data Analysis

The process of data analysis was arranged from general to specific, and was initiated with the gathering and understanding of the background information of interviewed contractors, including age, educational background, work duration before the current job, work duration of present work, job tile, and welfare provided by the client organization.

As to the main analysis for the interview results, there were three stages involving in the process. The first is **coding**, which enabled the reduction of data and helped uncover and extract meaningful information of the phenomena. Key information from the manuscript was labeled or coded in a relatively short sentence or terms. Table 3.2 is an example of coding.

Table 3.2. *An example of coding*

Manuscript	Code
J: What advantages or difficulties do you think to be a contractor?	Unstable
C2: ...I think it would be less steady to work as a contractor. Sometimes I'm afraid that I might lose my job suddenly...There are no any other benefits that I can receive from the client organization unlike regular workers. What's more, my parents always nag on my job as a contractor and urge me to look for a permanent work....	Less sense of job security Little benefits Comparing mentality Expectations from the family

**J: the researcher*

The second stage was **categorizing** which was to cluster and form concepts. By merging data which share similar meanings or scope into categories, the researcher can make a cross-team comparison, and further form a rough concept.

The third stage of data analysis was **identifying themes** by which the researcher made connections within categories identified according to interviewees' responses and the researcher's interpretation. The connections within categories can result in theme. To be more comprehensible, the example of analyzing framework is shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3. *An example of analyzing framework*

Theme	Category	Code
Interaction	Supervision	Rewards and Punishments
		Empowerment
		Instructing
	Performance	Supportive behaviors
		Work attitudes
		Job performance
		Reporting
	Friendship	Extra efforts
		Off-job activities

The next step was to construct concepts and generalize findings through the relationships between codes and themes. Figure 3.3 illustrates the whole process of data analysis.

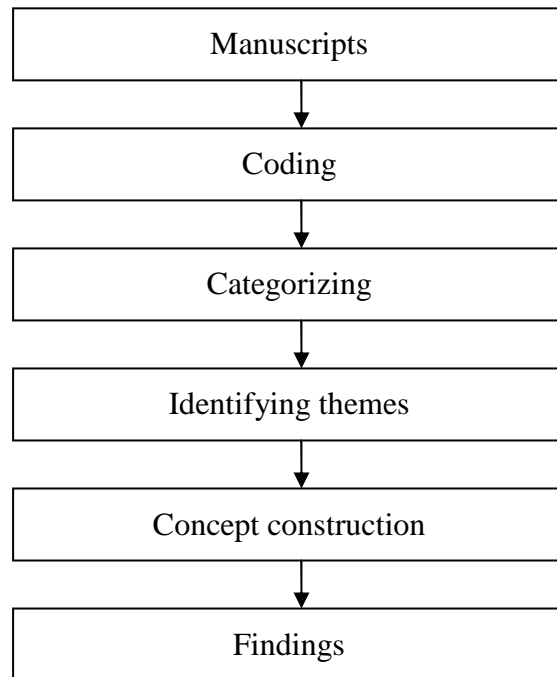


Figure 3.3. The Process of Data Analysis

CHAPTER IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data collected and analyzed, there are three main topics being induced: the first section, **the identity, contractors, and supervisors**, includes the influences of the identity of contractor brings about on individual perspectives and perceived problems in personal and work life; the second section focus on effects on **the interaction between contractors and supervisors** in which there are two main parts, supervision and friendship; and the third section is the discussion on **other related issues**, phenomena, or realities being discovered.

The Identity, Contractors, and Supervisors

To discuss the influences the identity of contractor causes respectively on contractors and supervisors, especially perspectives on their own initiative or problems they meet because of the existence of the identity of contractor, this section can be divided into two parts which are the identity of contractor with separately contractors and supervisors.

The Identity and Contractors

From the results of data analysis, what influences the identity of contractor brings about on contractors can be discussed in two dimensions in which one focus on individual perspectives or personal life and the other is about the effects on contractors' experiences in present workplace.

To begin with contractors' general viewpoints toward the identity of contractor and influences in personal, three interviewed contractors report similar reasons why working as contractors and their will. C3 makes a particular clear statement about that:

...I think the reason why I work as a contractor can involve several points. First, of course, the job content must be of my preference. If I don't like the job content, I don't think I would easily accept the identity as a contractor. Second, time is also one of my concerns because there were no other suitable jobs when I had an urge to work. Further, to speak frankly to be a contractor can help a person who never worked to accumulate experiences. Otherwise, I think, generally speaking, people won't like to work as a contractor all the time in the corporation.

Corresponding to what C3 said, C1 and C2 also mentioned similar reason, like "...That was my first time looking for jobs, I was so afraid that I couldn't find any..." said C1. Reluctantly, C2 addresses "...At that time, I've sent a lot of resume but only two corporations accepted. Comparing to the other corporation, I would rather work in this one so I became a contractor..." It can be clearly seen that three interviewees work as contractors with **not really active will**. Thus to induce, people work as contractors due to reasons like no previous work experiences or fear of being out of job rather than having preference on contract work originally.

In the interviews, several questions on difficulties or concerns with regard to personal attitudes and life are inquired. Based on the data, interviewees mostly do not feel too much obstacles or challenges in personal life to be a contractor. In addition to the most common problem, **the sense of unsteady**, which is referred from the dialogue with C1, "...we contract once for three months.", in this inquiry what mentioned frequently by all interviewees is **expectations from family and friends**. For example, "...what's more, my parents always nag on my job as a contractor and urge me to look for a permanent work." says C2, which is also indicated by C1 and C3,

"Yes, sometimes my friends would query why I want to work as a contractor which is so unstable and blah blah...I've already feel tired to explain the reasons. Anyway, just go with it!"
"...parents would definitely hope me to work steady; you know the way the older generation might think. They, of course, don't like the identity of contractor."

In S3's sharing on one of previous experiences, this problem is also mentioned,

...Previously, there is a contractor decided to leave the organization due to the pressure from family who always said "you'd better look for a formal job for any sake!" He then started to look for new jobs for such a while and finally he found and left from here.

It is thus evident that expectations from family or friends can cause powerful pressure or difficulties on contractors.

Toward the identity, three contractors submit a conclusion that is they **dislike** and do not want to work as contractors again if there is any possible that they have to leave the companies they work for now. When the researcher asks about those contractors' future planning on their career, all of them indicates that they will target openings with standard employment relationship. What C1 says is also agreed with C2 and C3,

...to speak frankly, I haven't thought that much about it ...but, though it's also okay now, I would focus on permanent work in future search for jobs. After all, the older I am, the more sense of stable is needed. It is no possible to work still as a contractor when I'm thirty year-old!

To make a brief conclusion here, contractors with knowledge or skills accept contract work initially because of other reasons like urge for jobs or no work experience but their original preference for contract work. Difficulties or pressures, like sense of instable and family's advices, are met and result in their dislike for the identity of contractor.

To zoom in on how the identity influences contractors in the workplace, their attitudes and perspectives particularly related to their work environment are explored by the collected data. In economic, three interviewees feel it acceptable with their **salary**. C3 is particularly satisfied with his wage and addresses,

I think the wage I get from the client organization is probably beyond average level within business, plus bonus for three important holidays in Chinese which generally provided by client

organizations. But, there is still a big difference while comparing with the regulars, for example, we contractors cannot join the lottery in the *wei ya. When everybody is excited talking about how happy they are to win big price, I don't have any sense of participation. At this time, you would particularly feel like an outsider...

**Dialect, observance of the 16th day of the 12th month in the lunar calendar when every business owner entertains all employees at a dinner party*

Corresponding to one of the sets of challenges the *HRfocus* (2006) has pointed out: issues on compensation, there are indeed this problem. Though those three contractors do not feel unequal toward their salary, it is definitely that they would compare with the regulars in other compensation, "...There are no any other benefits that I can receive from the client organization unlike regular workers. " C2 makes complains to the client organization. According to the information gathered from the questionnaires, C1 and C3 have basic bonus for three important Chinese holidays but C2 gets none. To work as contractors with special knowledge or skills, it is most likely that their job content is similar with the regular ones' with a mere difference between them, work experiences. That matches what Cheng Zhi-Yue (1998) said, there would be a phenomenon that working on the same task but with different compensation. Under this circumstance, it is inevitable that contractors would have a **comparing mentality** toward regular workers.

In the process of querying, **job stress** of contractors is also mentioned. C1, in a happy tone, says "no...not at all! People feel stressed because they want to. If you don't think about it, there exists no stress." C2 also makes a response on this question, "I think the level of stress is not high because I can adapt well." confidently the way he talks. On the contrary, C2 makes an extremely different statement,

As a contractor, I feel like I have to work particularly harder and quickly complete my tasks because the identity is highly unstable. I'm afraid that if I didn't do things well, I might be fire anytime because of the employment relationship that doesn't guarantee the employed period!

Additionally, maybe my supervisor sees me performing well and helps me become a permanent afterwards!

To comment on contractors' job stress, it is most likely that job stress has much to do with personality. On observation notes, it is documented that C1 is energetic and outgoing, always talking in a happy tone, that can be a manifestation to suppose him an optimistic person. C3 is labeled as a smart person who always has a clear picture on what to do. This kind of people tends to be think in rational ways and less likely to feel overwhelmed by work. However, C3 is relatively shy and restricted. He might still feel stressed with other reasons even when he becomes a permanent worker.

From C2's statement above, it can be clearly seen that contractors have **expectation for becoming permanent workers** in present client organizations. C1 and C3 also show their desire for this but both of them indicate how difficult to fulfill this wish as well,

“Basically, there are still several contractors who entered this company far earlier than I. They have worked here for two or three years and haven't become permanent workers. Do you think there would be an opportunity for me?” says C3.

“I know that only there is an opening we contractors can become permanent workers following organizational system. As what I know, it's hard to release openings here so the hope is slim.” says C1.

Though contractors are striving for regular positions in the client organization with slim hopes, they still want to stay in the present company as long as they can. The data show that there is a high-level **retaining inclination** of contractors with reasons that they can adapt the environment well and also because of the reputation of the client organization. C1 indicates, “T is a company of rather big size and well known internationally. And I heard that employee benefits are quite good!”

In overall, what's also particularly worth mentioned is that all interviewed contractors

show that they are happy actually in the present work environment mainly because they get along with their supervisors and team members quite well. But then, C2 indicates,

I seldom talk to my supervisors or colleagues...everyone is busy working on their own and look a little bit serious, sometimes we eat together in the lunch time. The relationship is so-so with nothing special but acceptable. Anyway, to accomplish missions is the most important...

The researcher asks “Do you think it has something to do with your personality?” right after C2 makes this statement and he responds, “Hmm...you can say that.” Thus, it is most likely that personality is an essential factor to influence contractors’ attitudes toward their interpersonal consequences. Based on the observation notes, C2 tends to be shy and restricted which makes him fit in the present workplace. Personality and job fit are more likely to decide whether a contractor is happy or not in the client organization than the identity of contractor. On this topic, C1 makes a conclusion, “I feel happy to work here.” “What is the main reason?” asked the researcher, and he answers “It’s because of the friendship within team members. We are happy together.” The labeled as hard-working, smart and talkative one in the observation notes, C3, also responds to the question “... so, do you feel just like fish in water for your job?”

Yes, because this job content is just of what my professional specialty. As well, I think the supervisor is easy to get along with and it’s also not bad to get together with team members. The whole working environment is not bad. I can basically adapt to it though the identity is still different...

From the statement above, it can also be seen that contractors still know deep inside that they are different from regular workers. Apparently express by C1, “...every time I speak out to friends that I’m a worker of T Company, I feel like lacking in confidence to say that.” Contractors notice their difference on the identity with regular workers and tend to be loosely connected to the client organization they work for. That represents contractors’ **identity**

recognition is most likely outsiders in the client organizations.

This section of the identity and contractors describe how the identity influences contractors, not only in general viewpoints, but also problems and mentality in either personal life or at work due to the existence of the identity. Table 4.1 shows how those findings are constructed.

Table 4.1. *The identity and contractors*

Theme	Category	Code
The identity and contractors	Will	Reasons for becoming contractors
	Influences in personal	Sense of unsteady Expectation from family and friends
	Influences at work	Dislike for the identity Identity recognition Salary Little benefits Comparing mentality Job stress Expectation for becoming regular workers Retaining inclination

The Identity and Supervisors

In terms of the identity and supervisors, this section would begin with the discussion on supervisors' common thought on the role of contractors and be followed by the other part, what problems perceived by supervisors due to the existence of the identity of contractor. Table 4.2 which shows how the data is analyzed can help quickly understand the content of this section.

Table 4.2. *The identity and supervisors*

Theme	Category	Subcategory	Code
The identity and supervisors	Common thoughts	The role of contractor	Cost saving
	Influences	Supervising problems	Workload lowering Channel for potential regular workers Activation Pressure of transforming contractors into regular workers Avoid demarcation Retaining Help development

In the interviews, the researcher directly asks supervisors about what do they think the role of contractor is in the client organization. Inevitably, to enable **cost saving** is the most essential and always mentioned in prior. Taking S1’s statement as an example,

Companies have limitation on head counts, especially when the economic environment is depressed like the current state. Head counts would reduce. At this moment, comparing with regular workers, contractors are helpful for saving company labor budget.

“...to **lower overall workload** is another important contribution contractors make.” S1 continues. In the trend of organizational downsizing, how to efficiently complete tasks with limited labor budget is quite important. Contractors are welcomed under this circumstance to ease regular workers’ job density. S3 makes a comment on this,

...if there is a long-term contractor coming into the department, regular workers may started

thinking about how to cooperate with this contractor to help complete a large amount of tasks. After all, now every company uses labors in a very trimmed way so everybody's workload is a little bit over. Therefore, contractors would be welcomed at this moment."

S2 also mentioned a little on that,

"...the company wants to save cost and to take care of coming business as well. Hiring contractors is just the way to fulfill this need. Here comes one more contractor to engage in cases, regular workers would feel relaxed in a way.

Another important role of contractors in the client organization is that they represent a transition which is the period of observation on the possibility for contractors to become regular workers. S3 indicates,

Actually, when we are recruiting, the requirements for contractors are the same with regular workers, like educational background, and there is always a high demanding on the quality. So, if the contractor is good at everything we need after the observation, then we will transform him into regular workers.

"Basically, to use contractors is **a channel for looking for good regular workers** because you can fully examine whether this person is really qualified during the process of working together." S2 says. In deed, advantages of cost and recruiting in Hall's (2006) five-reason statement on using nonstandard work arrangement are attested also in this study.

What is particularly interesting is that S1 and S3 agree that contractors play a role of **activation** in a team or department. In their points of view, the participation of contractors in the group can enable the diversification and sometimes harmonize the working atmosphere and easing tense. S1 make a clear statement on that,

Our company mostly consisted of rather younger generation, especially contractors who are of the 1980's. They are flexible and full of various ideas. Sometimes when we regular ones eat together, we would invite contractors to join us so everybody gets along with each other quite well. Contractors, actually, result in a harmonious effect on team members.

In addition to those viewpoints above, two challenges caused by the identity of contractor are met in supervisors' standpoint. S2 indicates that the first problem comes to his mind is how to do to **avoid demarcation** between regular workers and contractors. "I gauge contractors' mind...after all, they are of different employment relationship in nature, and they might feel like outsiders." With The same concern, S1 say,

...contractors know what their identity is and get little benefit in the client organization so they might think about whether they can gain recognition here or not. I think that's what they might concern so...at this time, you might have to think how to eliminate their concern about that.

The challenge on avoiding demarcation might connect to the other two difficulties facing supervisors, which are the **pressure of transforming contractors into regular workers** and **retaining**. S3 makes a complete and clear statement on this topic,

When it comes to challenges, I think retaining is one of them. Because contractors also have expectations on their future, if you can't let them become regular workers in two or three years, it might be rather challenging in retaining. Because they might think "am I going to work as a contractor continually?" it is, after all, kind of less justifiable in the identity...We have to consider how to provide more space for contractors to accumulate experiences here and get advanced. That is also another challenge on job arrangement.

In the end of this statement, it can be seen that **how to help contractors develop and get advanced** in the present position is also a challenge for supervisors.S1 also mentions,

...we evaluate individual potential for developing. If we think this one is potential, we have to know how to cultivate him. Otherwise, he might want to see around in other companies then we might lose him...

Actually, challenges mentioned are connected with each other and can be seen as serial with a central concern that good contractors are hoped to stay in the client organization as long as

they can or transform into regular workers through supervisors' efforts on eliminating demarcation and helping developing.

The Interaction between Contractors and Supervisors

As to the influences on the interaction, which stands for two-way-effect consequences of contractors and their supervisors with the factor of the work identity of contractor, this section can be divided into three main parts with a bit discussion on their friendship. The first one is issues on supervisors' supervision; second, contractors' attitudes and behaviors in relation to interact with supervisors.

When supervisors are asked about whether there is difference as they supervise subordinates with contract and regular identity, all of them answer "No" firmly. Yet, from the dialogues with them, it can still be found some differences in certain issues. Firstly, S1 and S2 acknowledge that there would be definitely differences in **rewards and punishment** for contractors and regular workers in degree or level due to organizational policy. For example, says S1,

Based on the organizational policy, there must be different in rewards and punishment over regular workers and contractors. That is the nature of contract work; contractors have their own regulations to follow on the contract.

"How about your own ways to reward or punish contractors? Could you describe?" the researcher question closely, and S1 makes an response continuously,

To speak frankly, I treat my subordinates with no any differences. When it comes to rewards, I at most commend the contractor for his well performance either in public or via group email to let everybody know about that. As to punishments...how to say...if he did something wrong on job, I would correct him in oral. If there is something to do with work attitudes, I would think that he

is not fit in this job or organization and make him leave. That's the most serious punishment.

To integrate with S2's and S3's response about that, it seems that supervisors reward and punish contractors with no other particular ways. They make oral commend the most frequently and emphasize contractors' work attitudes in which if there is something unacceptable or inappropriate, they would lay off this person.

With regard to **empowerment**, S1 and S3 express that they are supervisors trying to release as more space for contractors to work as possible. "To empower is easy and must, but what I'm afraid is that the contractor himself is not capable enough to be empowered!" The same concept is expressed by S1 who evaluates the contractor ability first. In C1's and C3's standpoints, they both think they work with empowerment. Taking C3's saying as an example,

I think he treats other regular workers in the same way, to speak frankly, he tries to act impartially, I can feel it. And, I think he adopts an open-up way. When he assigns a task, he wouldn't say much or set limitation. You just do it freely and try your best.

As to **the way of instructing**, three supervisors indicate that they assign task or case directly to contractors to let them do their best. If they have any questions or opinions on the task, they can come and talk to supervisors directly. "Usually he comes to me in personal and tell me about my case" says C2. To assign task or case in oral is the most frequent way supervisors use in these three pairs of interviewees. "Anyway, if you got any questions, just ask him directly," says C1 "...but sometimes he doesn't make himself understood." continued C1. C2 and C3 also have this kind of problems. C2 says "I often didn't quite understand what he instructed. I always try to find out solutions by myself." As well, but with his understanding, C3 says, "Maybe it's because supervisors are always busy, he can't always explicitly provide me sufficient information about tasks. I will, then, ask him or

check the whole case with him to make sure.” It is apparently that to instruct all in oral might cause errors or contractors’ confusion.

As contractors are new comers in the client organizations, it intrigues that by what means supervisors enable contractors work on track quickly. By the data collected, S1 and S3 utilize mentoring by assigning an experienced contractor to take care of the new comer. Additionally, irregularly talking to contractors one by one to follow their mentality is what S1 and S3 do in person to support contractors. On the contrary, S2 express little **supportive behaviors** provided to contractors. “He directly assigned me a case which has been done before for me to practice. Though it’s kind of difficult but is effective to speak frankly.”

To begin with **the ways of reporting** in the part of contractors, C1 and C3 express that their supervisors are good listeners who accept and pay attention to what contractors have pointed out. C3 says,

He would like us to express any opinions helpful for the organization no matter good or bad. He always accepts and takes them into consideration. That really makes me feel respected.

“He listens! And I also always submit my opinions directly in the meeting every week.” C1 indicates.

When the researcher query about overtime work, three contractors express that they don’t feel necessarily that they have to work overtime though other regular workers do. What’s the most important is to complete the task, if necessary; it is okay for them to work overtime. Additionally, while asked with the question on job involvement, C1 replies directly “About seventy or eighty percent!” Hard working as C2 and C3, high level of job involvement is reported. Thus contractors’ **work attitudes** are basically mission-oriented and highly involved.

As to one of the concerns in three-sets challenges in *HRfocus*(2006) on how non-standard workers perform, three supervisors also have their response. “What do you

think about contractors' **performance** in general?" the researcher asks. "Excellent! And even better than regular workers." says S3 and is agreed by S1 and S2.

According to Social Exchange Theory, human interaction can be conceptualized as business transactions in which people exchange resources in hopes that they will earn profits (Blau, 1964). When employees feel they are being treated fairly, by getting a raise for example, social exchange theory dictates that the employee reciprocates, and Organ (1988) suggested that organizational citizen behavior is one likely avenue for employee reciprocation. C3 shows exactly the central concept of social exchange theory,

If there are no other particular things to deal with, I would get off duty and go home on time. That is I do what my job contents require. If I'm willing to pay extra efforts on what is not my job; that is because of my supervisor.

The researcher also inquire about **off-job activities** of contractors and their supervisors, C1 has lunch with a group of contractors in work days and sometimes join dinner party held by the invitation of supervisors and regular workers. C2 eat along all the time and has no other activities with supervisors off job. C3 work effectively and happily with his supervisor but has no other activities off job. Frankly speaking, to deduce the friendship between supervisors and contractors only by whether there are frequent gatherings or off-job activities might jump to conclusion to carelessly. However, generally speaking, three pairs report peaceful and harmonious relationship either at work or off job. Table 4.3 shows categories and codes of this theme.

Table 4.3. *The interaction between contractors and supervisors*

Theme	Category	Code
Interaction	Supervision	Rewards and Punishments
		Empowerment
		Instructing
	Performance	Supportive behaviors
		Reporting
		Work attitudes
		Job performance
	Friendship	Extra efforts
		Off-job activities

To synthesize findings in this section, it can be deduced that contractors act and perceive mostly depending on how supervisors act and perceive toward them. Based on the ways supervisors instruct and contractors report, it implies that the job information exchange way between supervisors and contractors is straight forward. In the overall interaction, the case of pair 3 represents a typical example of right supervisors with right subordinates. This kind of association can bring about efficient work results. As to pair 2, mutual personality can cause a peaceful work environment but relatively restricted and silent. Potential conflicts or unhappiness might exist. Pair 3, with an energetic and amiable contractor who tends to think in the bright sight all the time, the interacted consequences can be harmonious. To make an initiate conclusion, personality is most likely to influence the interaction between supervisors and contractors than the existence of the identity of contractor.

Other Related Issues and Phenomena

This section includes issues on blended workforce which are not of the central of findings but worth mentioned. Those issues are classified into two main parts: Regular workers’ attitudes from contractors’ and supervisors’ points of view, and suggestion from supervisors. The discussion in this section helps this study have an integral lineament on the exploration of nonstandard employment issues. Table 4.4 shows the category and codes of these issues.

Table 4.4. *Other related issues on blended workforce*

Theme	Category	Code
Other related issues on blended workforce	Regular workers’ attitudes	Competitive and comparing mentality Sense of superiority
	Supervisors’ suggestions	Educating regular workers Individual talk with contractors Set a good example with supervisors’ own conduct

Regular workers’ attitudes

Not only contractors are ones possess comparing mentality, in the interview with C3, an event is mentioned which indicates regular workers’ **competitive and comparing mentality** with contractors.

My supervisors give me a chance to participate an activity, something like engineer association which is a kind of outer training. I’m not sure if it is because of my identity...but, there are some voices from regular workers in this department, complaining why me who to participate in that activity. Maybe they think contractors don’t deserve so much extra benefits; What’s more,

they are mostly experienced in this company than I and haven't received treatments like that from their supervisors I guess.

The other issue is submitted by C1 who work as a computer engineer and provide inner service on informational system or computers. C1 complains about the way regular workers inquire job-related questions or ask for support in a commanding tone. C1 gauges that it is because of regular workers' **sense of superiority** with regard to the difference on the identity.

Supervisors' suggestions

At the end of interviews with supervisors, they are consulted with the question "How to effectively supervise contractors or blended workforce?" and main suggestions are gathered by their sharing of experience. "Firstly, you have to set a good example with your own conduct" says S3 and continues "

but basically I really don't regard them as any different from the bottom of my heart so I don't prepare particular ways to deal with it. If I must say, I think contractors themselves have to be highly flexible and of high-level adaptability. Of course, regular workers' attitudes are particularly important. As a supervisor, you have to avoid subordinates to have incorrect concept.

S1 says that he always tries to provide advices for contractors through private conversation to eliminate the worries of contractors. No matter what, to do it from the leader himself is the most effective way. C3 makes a touché, "I think everything depends on how the supervisors look upon you. If he regards you as merely a contractor, you won't have any chance to get developed."

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this chapter, each issue on findings is discussed with purposes and propositions of this research in an integrated way to make a conclusion. Furthermore, the researcher also proposes some points to facilitate further improvement and encourage future researches on nonstandard employment area. At the end of this chapter, the researcher share the experience of this research process and reflection made after the study finished.

Conclusion

Based on findings of this research, there is firstly an understanding on how the identity of contractor brings about influences on contractors and their supervisors, including their perspectives and problems facing them.

Second, supervisors' supervision over contractors and regular workers is found to be not really different. Supervisors suppose if differences exist, it is because of organizational policy, contract regulation, or other kinds of supervising style, etc.

By responding to the third purpose to discover what influences the identity of contractor brings about on the interaction between contractors and their immediate supervisors, findings related to this part can be deduced that contractors work under peaceful and harmonious interaction with supervisors. Additionally, contractors might perform even better than regular workers and pay extra efforts for the organization if the supervisors utilize appropriate supervising style with correct attitudes toward contractors.

To fulfill the forth purpose, some related issues are also discovered. From contractors' and supervisors' points of view, the attitude of regular workers is essential with regard to the integral lineament of the topic on nonstandard employment. It is a pity that regular workers'

sense of superiority is still attested to exist. Through supervisors' suggestions, it is expected that this circumstance can be mend.

To conclude, no matter how the surface interaction between contractors and supervisors is, contractors are tightly connected to supervisors in a way. Because they have expectations on their supervisors, such like becoming regular worker, adequate empowerment and supports for advancing and developing. Those expectations are mostly decided by supervisors, and the results can determine contractors' attitudes and behaviors on this job.

Practical Implication

Nonstandard employment relationship has already generally utilized in various kinds of arrangements and the form of hiring contract workers paid by contract agencies is particularly common in Taiwan. Thus, through the sharing of contractors' and supervisors' perspectives and work experiences with regard to this nonstandard identity, some phenomena and realities are found accompanying implications for practitioners, including four points shown as follows respectively for contractors, supervisors, regular workers, and client organizations.

1. Contractors: Strengthen capability and develop flexibility

Since the new labor pension system has started off in 2005, corporations utilize contractors in droves to lower the coming large amount of labor cost. There are no longer numerous so-called lifelong secure jobs or positions nowadays. On the contrary, openings of flexible workforce arrangements are increasing. As a contractor, the worker has to keep advancing his or her own professional skills or work capability so that more opportunities will come along. Besides, contractors are suggested to possess high level of adaptability for different organizational cultures or management styles. Being flexible is the best way to work as successful contractors.

2. Supervisors: Educate regular workers and avoid discrimination in workplace

Supervisors should endeavor to educate regular workers with correct attitudes toward contract workers through either communication or leading by personal example. Building up a happy and cooperative working environment and making the utilization of contractors create as much value as possible are what supervisors encouraged to do in supervising blended workforce.

3. Regular workers: Be open-hearted to diversity and keep learning

With regard to the speedy change of the era and the society, workers nowadays should always be prepared to accept new and diverse things. Working in the blended workforce environment is one thing they have to adapt; thus, friendly and equal treatment without discrimination for contractors is what an up-to-date worker should behave. Keep learning and avoid standing still is just the way to eliminate the sense of being threatened on jobs.

4. Client Organizations: Establish related policies and clearly demarcate job content

Client organizations have to understand that distinct segments exist with different expectations and different needs. Though it is not necessarily the client organizations have to take care of short-term contractors' needs and expectations, for skilled and professional contractors that the organization might want to retain, those are concerns that could not be ignore. Client organizations are suggested to at least make a clear demarcation on job content and scope which is the main voice from contractors.

Suggestion for Future Research

This study aimed to contribute to the understanding of how the identity of contractor influences individual perspectives and interaction, especially skilled contractors and their supervisors. In the future, there will be an increasing number on contractors with professional knowledge and engage in core jobs in the client organization. However, existing researches in

Taiwan are mostly focus on general quantitative investigation on clerical or customer service contract workers. Future researchers are suggested to endeavor to discover deeper insights and truth on the area of contract workers through qualitative researches.

According to the findings of other related issues on contractors, regular workers' attitudes can also be an interesting and meaningful topic for future researchers to explore. The identity effects on the triangular relations within contractors, regular workers, and supervisors is especially encouraged for researching, but it might take extremely prolonged time to complete.

Since this study inquires how the identity might affect contractors and supervisors, like mutual interaction, future researchers can inversely make efforts in discovering potential factors that influence the interaction between these two subjects. Because skilled or knowledge contract workers will be inevitably widespread in every corporation in the future, any future research with regard to related issues would be of value in a way.

Additionally, future researchers who use this study as reference resources are suggested to pay attention to some essential limitations of this research. First, the sample of this research is relatively limited with only three pairs, six interviewees, due to the inconvenience and difficulties on gaining access and permission. That might result in weakness on representability of the sample. The other limitation is that the interviews are conducted in Mandarin but the data collected and analyzed will be shown in this study in English. There may be a language gap between the primary data and the interpreted version and causes an obstacle to present informants' response completely explicitly.

Reflection

Through the whole process of conducting this study, the researcher considers the period of searching for interviewees as the most challenging part because there is still only small

portion of corporations utilizing contractors on skilled and knowledge work in Taiwan. Furthermore, it is hard to gain permissions from supervisors to carry out interviews for one reason that supervisors are busy and the other is the current lay-off boomer which represents a sensitive time for talking about issues on contractors. Consequently, there are only three pairs of interviewees successfully interviewed which cause a limitation for this research.

Additionally, it is hard to completely and perfectly attest the quality of qualitative research. The researcher might have to spend a large amount of time and efforts on thoroughly exploring social phenomena in a certain context by using multiple methods, documenting and describing persistently, and eliminating subjectivity, etc. In spite of the difficulties, doing researches with qualitative method is rather interesting because themes always have something to do with social phenomena, human perception and insights which are regarded by the researcher as topics of high-leveled value.

When it comes to the current issue on lay-off boomer, one of the interviewed contractors, the programmer, is laid off not long after the interview. The researcher is informed with this by the programmer himself and feels sorry for him because his concern on the instability of contract work just comes to be true. The researcher has reflected over this event for a while, what is the most important is that workers must have full understanding on the nature of contract work itself: flexibility, the most frequently praised character of it accompanied with instability for sure. Workers have to examine personal condition, like needs and expectation before work as a contractor. For client organizations, even if saving labor cost and using workforce efficiently is imperative under the circumstances of economical depression, more punctilious personnel planning is encouraged before releasing openings. Take advantages of what contractors can bring to corporations with correct ways and attitudes. Do not regard them as vendors available all the time and dismissible at will. At the meantime of pursuing profits, organizations which regard human as the centrality can be constant winners.

REFERENCES

- Abernaty, D. J. (1998). Blending the workforce. *Training & Development*, 52(6), 78.
- Alison Davis-Blake, J. P. B., & George, E. (2003). Happy together? how using nonstandard workers affects exit, voice, and loyalty among standard employees. *Academy of Management Journal*, 46(4), 475.
- Bednar, R. J., & Quigley, G. P. (2007). The blended workforce. *Government Executive*, 39(7), 68.
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. NY: John Wiley.
- Broschak, J. P., & Davis-Blake, A. (2006). Mixing standard work and nonstandard deals: The consequences of heterogeneity in employment arrangements. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(2), 371.
- Burgess, J., & Connell, J. (2006). Temporary work and human resources management: Issues, challenges and responses. *Personnel Review*, 35(2), 129-141.
- Connell, J., & Burgess, J. (2002). In search of flexibility: Implications for temporary agency workers and human resource management. *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, 28(4), 272.
- Daniel, L. (2006). Using TEMPS in HR. *HRMagazine: On Human Resource Management*, 51(2), 62.
- Foote, D. A. (2004). Temporary workers: Managing the problem of unscheduled turnover. *Management Decision*, 42(7/8), 963.
- Forde, C., & Slater, G. (2006). The nature and experience of agency working in Britain: What are the challenges for human resource management? *Personnel Review*, 35(2), 141-158.
- Good contracting: Key to success in using contingent workers.(1997). *Getting Results ...for the Hands - on Manager*, 1-3.

- Guest, D. (2004). Flexible employment contracts, the psychological contract and employee outcomes: An analysis and review of the evidence. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 5-6(1), 1.
- Hall, R. (2006). Temporary agency work and HRM in Australia: "cooperation, specialisation and satisfaction for the good of all"? *Personnel Review*, 35(2), 158.
- Johnson, J. (2004). Flexible working: Changing the manager's role. *Management Decision*, 42(5/6), 721.
- More contingent workers are a blessing and sometimes a challenge for HR.(2006). *HR Focus*, 83(1), S1.
- Mertens, D.M. (1998). *Research methods in education and psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nollen, S., & Axel, H. (1996). *Managing contingent workers: How to reap the benefits and reduce the risks*. NYC: American Management Association.
- Organ, D. W. (1988). *Organizational citizenship behavior: The good soldier syndrome*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Olsen, K. M. (2006). The role of nonstandard workers in client-organizations. *Relations Industrielles*, 61(1), 93-119
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Roper, G. (2005). Managing employee relations. *HRMagazine: On Human Resource Management*, 50(5), 101.
- Stern, P. N. (1980). Grounded theory methodology: Its uses and processes. *Image*, 12, 20-23.
- Ward, K., Grimshaw, D., Rubery, J., & Beynon, H. (2001). Dilemmas in the management of temporary work agency staff. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 11(4), 3-21.

PubMed. Retrieved Jan 20, 2008 from URL:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?db=pubmed&uid=11894680&cmd=showdetailview&indexed=google>

Peter Suber, "Glossary of First-Order Logic." Retrieved Jan 17, 2008 from URL:

<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/courses/logsys/glossary.htm#r>

Wikipedia. Retrieved Jan 17, 2008 from URL:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friendship>

Original work in Chinese

成之約（1998）。淺論派遣勞動法之現狀。 *就業與訓練*。(16)，6，17-21

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire before Interview and Interview Guideline

論文題目：

合約員工身分對合約員工及其直屬主管之影響

敬愛的先進：您好！

在 您百忙之中，還打擾 您，敬請 海涵。有鑒於組織為了追求人力運用的彈性，對於合約員工的運用已日形重要，相對地也衍生了許多相關的重要課題。基於實務界對於此等議題的關切，本人指導的研究生陳心怡，希望透過研究探究其中的重要內涵及相關經驗，期能將結果貢獻給實務界。為此，懇請 您能接受此研究的訪談。此訪談不會佔用 您太多時間，其主題絕不涉及個人或公司私密資料，其結果亦將僅供學術分析之用，並不會揭露受訪者或其單位之名稱。研究者在完成此研究結果後，將專程為 您奉上研究摘要一份，敬供 卓參。如蒙 同意受訪或有相關疑問，請直接以電子郵件與研究者聯絡(cream1122@hotmail.com)。為讓 您更瞭解此訪談的主要內容，特附上一份訪談大綱，敬請 指教。特此

敬祝 身體健康 事業成功

註：合約員工係指由人力資源公司給付薪資報酬，但於要派公司任職服勞務之員工。

國立台灣師範大學國際人力教育與發展研究所所長

賴志樞

敬致

研究生 陳心怡

訪前簡要問卷

---合約員工適用---

請於下列符合之項目中打勾或填入適當答案：

- 一、您的年齡？_____
- 二、您的最高學歷（已取得畢業證書之最高學歷）？
- 1.國中及以下 2.高中職及以下
- 3.大專院校 4.碩士博士
- 三、在這份工作之前，您曾經以合約員工的身分在其他公司任職過嗎？
- 1.有，歷時_____年_____月
- 2.沒有
- 四、您服務於目前要派公司的期間共計_____年_____月
- 五、您在目前服務的要派公司之職稱為_____
- 六、您所屬要派公司提供您的福利有？
- 1.績效獎金 2.年節、年終獎金
- 3.員工旅遊 4.教育訓練
- 5.其他（請說明_____）

——問卷到此結束。萬分感謝您協助填答！——

訪談問題大綱

---合約員工用---

請問您成為合約員工的原因為何？

2. 您會因為本身合約員工的身分而認為自己有別於其他正職同僚嗎？請舉例。
3. 請問您擔任合約員工在工作上所遇到的困難為何？請舉例。
4. 請問您對未來的工作期望為何？
5. 您認為合約員工這個身分分別在個人與工作上為您帶來那些好處及壞處？
6. 請描述您主管的管理方式。
7. 您認為您的主管跟您(合約員工)與正職員工的互動方式有何差別？請舉例。
8. 您對您的主管在工作上有何期待？請舉例。

訪談問題大綱

---主管用---

註：本訪談中，合約員工係指由人力資源公司給付薪資報酬，但於要派公司任職服勞務之員工

1. 您的部門導入合約員工的原因為何？
2. 您個人認為合約員工為您的工作單位帶來哪些好處與挑戰？請舉例。
3. 您認為合約員工在要派公司所扮演的角色為何？請舉例。
4. 您認為您與合約員工和正職員工的互動方式是否有差別？例：溝通。請描述。
5. 您認為合約員工的加入或存在，讓您在管理上面臨那些困難？例：賦權拿捏與責任歸屬、員工心理照料、以及獎懲與留任等。
6. 您管理正職員工與合約員工的方式是否有差別？請描述。
7. 您對合約員工常採用那些激勵的做法？請舉例。
8. 您認為要如何有效管理一個混合型人力結構(合約員工加正職員工)/合約員工？

APPENDIX B

訪談問題

---合約員工用---

A. 個人看法與面臨之問題

1. 請問您成為合約員工的原因為何？

1-1 您是在何時得知這份工作是以合約員工的身份來擔任？

求職中／面試後／任職中

1-2 您希望未來在目前服務的公司轉換為正職員工嗎？為什麼？

1-3 您喜歡(或不喜歡)這個身分嗎？

2. 您會因為本身合約員工的身分而認為自己有別於其他正職同僚嗎？

2-1 為何這樣認為？

2-2 那您會因為合約員工的身分而影響您遵守公司規範的程度嗎？請舉例。

3. 請問您擔任合約員工在工作上所遇到的困難為何？

4. 您認為合約員工這個身分分別在個人與工作上為您帶來那些好處及壞處？

5. 請問您對未來的工作期望為何？

5-1 您會希望繼續以合約員工身分工作還是儘快以正職員工身分工作？

5-2 其他計畫：希望從事部分工時工作、想要自己創業、不想工作？

B. 與主管共事相關問題

6. 請描述您主管對您的管理方式。

6-1 您主管在您初進入公司時給您的那些支援或協助？其協助與您的期望有落差嗎？您

認為她怎麼做可以讓您最快進入工作軌道？

6-2 您認為主管給您足夠的權力與自由去執行您的職務嗎？

6-3 您的主管會給您額外工作嗎(如:加班)?您如何應對？

6-4 您的主管都如何獎勵您?犯錯時又如何糾正您? 請分享小故事

7. 您認為您的主管與您(合約員工)和正職員工的互動方式是否有差別?請描述

7-1 正式工作場合與私底下分別是如何?

7-2 您的主管都如何傳達訊息給您? 您認為資訊足夠嗎?對方是否有所保留?

7-3 合約員工這身分對您與主管的溝通上產生那些影響? 困難或便利

7-4 您認為你與主管的關係是和睦愉快或疏離緊張?

8. 您對您的主管在工作上有何期待?

C. 其他

您認為關於身為合約員工還有什麼其他需要補充的事項呢?

訪談問題

---主管用---

A. 個人看法與面臨之問題

(Warm up)

請問您的職稱為何？在貴單位工作歷時多久？在此單位之前曾經管理過合約員工嗎？

可否談談印象較深刻的經驗？

1. 您的部門導入合約員工的原因為何？
2. 您個人認為合約員工為您的工作單位帶來哪些好處與挑戰？（例：對正職的影響）
 - 2-1 對正職員工產生那些正負面影響？例如離職傾向增加、影響士氣或舒緩工作壓力
3. 您認為合約員工在要派公司所扮演的角色為何？
 - 3-1 是未來可能的正職員工嗎？

B. 與合約員工共事相關問題

4. 您認為您與合約員工和正職員工的互動方式是否有差別？請描述
 - 4-1 正式工作場合與私底下分別是如何？私下聚會多合約員工或正職？
 - 4-2 您都如何傳達訊息給您的部屬（合約員工）？資訊給予是否有受限？
 - 4-3 您與部屬的溝通上是否因對方為合約員工而產生任何影響？困難或便利
 - 4-4 您認為你與合約員工的關係是和睦愉快或疏離緊張？
 - 4-5 您認為影響您與合約員工關係的潛在因子是什麼？
5. 您認為合約員工的加入或存在，讓您在管理上面臨那些困難？

5-1 例如：賦權拿捏與責任歸屬，獎懲與留任等

6. 您管理正職員工與合約員工的方式是否有差別?請描述

6-1 合約員工初入貴單位至今,您提供給對方那些協助或支援?

6-2 您對合約員工和正職員工在工作及規範遵守的要求上是否有所不同?

6-3 您覺得合約員工和正職員工在工作表現或投入程度上有無差別?

7. 您對合約員工常採用那些激勵的做法?

8. 您認為要如何有效管理一個混合型人力結構(合約員工加正職員工)?

8-1 例如：使雙方合作、增加生產力、維持或提昇工作滿意度、消除員工心理負面想法等之具體作法為何?

8-2 如何使合約員工在最快時間內進入工作軌道?或適應環境?

8-3 您會如何教育正職員工看待合約員工?

C. 其他

您認為關於合約員工議題還有什麼其他需要補充的事項呢?

APPENDIX C

Observation Note

Contractors

C1: Energetic and outgoing; the researcher does not have to pay much effort to work the conversation up. But he is easily go distraction and digression during the interview.

C2: Relatively shy and restricted. In the appointment with him, the researcher is late for twenty minutes and finds the interviewee waiting in the front door of the meeting place, does not make any call to inform his arrival to me.

C3: A friend of the researcher; feels easy to talk about what he thinks of. He is a hard working and smart person always know what to do in his life.

Supervisors

They all talk in an official way

S1: Answering questions by questions without digression; make responses in an active way and with sufficient feedback.

S2: a quiet person; tend to answer the question by question which is not much like a conversation; somehow reserved and serious.

S3: Relatively talkative though officially also; provides feedback actively as well. The researcher feels free and easy to talk to him because he was eating and conversed with me during the interview.