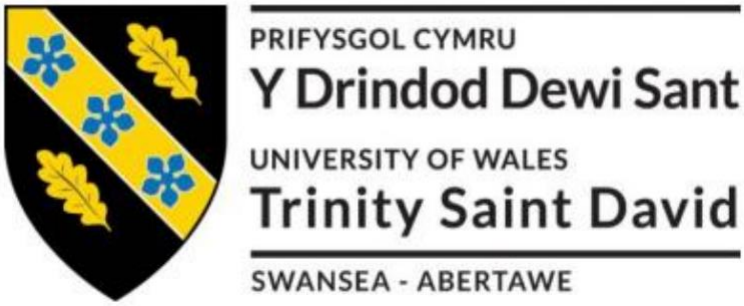

The Impact of Organisational Culture and Leadership on Innovation and Transformation: A Case Study of China Pang Dong Lai Trading Group

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Executives Summary

The success of an organisation is contingent upon the existence of appropriate theoretical frameworks and behavioural models. The field of organisational behaviour provides a theoretical framework for understanding various aspects of the organisation, including employee roles, leadership, organisational behaviour management, and organisational culture. Employees, as a constituent part of the organisation with a relatively large number of employees and subjective thinking ability, play an important role in achieving organisational goals and obtaining a good external reputation.

This study is divided into five sections, which are outlined below. The first section is concerned with the exposition of the research purpose of the paper. The second section presents a comprehensive literature review pertaining to organisational culture and leadership, with a view to analysing the significance of organisational culture and leadership as evidenced by previous studies. The third section primarily analyses the guiding direction provided by Theory X and Theory Y and Stakeholder Theory in the leadership transformation of Pang Dong Lai. The fourth section of the paper presents a case study of Pang Dong Lai. This paper expounds the specific behaviour of Pang Dong Lai's management transformation from the perspectives of employees and customers, and analyses the changes made by Pang Dong Lai to the two key stakeholders of employees and customers after the transformation. The feedback received from the employees and customers has been overwhelmingly positive. The fifth part of the study summarises the viewpoints of this paper and puts forward the difficulties and possible limitations of some offline retail enterprises represented by Pang Dong Lai in the transformation of organisation and management.

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Introduction

The retail industry has historically been a conventional commercial sector. However, with the gradual development of the Internet, online shopping has emerged as a significant mode of consumer purchasing. This transformation has had a significant impact on the business and financial outcomes of offline retailers. This has led to a significant challenge for retailers, who are now faced with the dilemma of how to retain consumers in the offline space and achieve business growth. As a nation that has witnessed a rapid development of its express delivery industry, China has been particularly impacted by the shift towards online shopping, which has had a significant impact on the offline real economy. Among offline retailers, Pang Dong Lai, located in a second-tier city in Henan Province, has emerged as a notable entity. The company's success can be attributed to its unique corporate culture and management methods, which have garnered significant public attention. The company's commitment to quality and reputation has been instrumental in attracting and retaining consumers, contributing to its notable growth and success. This has led to its emergence as a notable exemplar among offline retailers. This paper will discuss the results of Pang Dong Lai's management style transformation from two aspects of organisational culture and leadership and propose the key links that other retailers need to pay attention to when making similar transformation. The objective is to furnish these retailers with ideas and references to assist them in their own transformation.

Background

Chinese consumers' consumption behaviour has changed significantly with the rise and rapid development of the Internet and the express delivery industry. Online shopping platforms (e.g. Taobao, JD.com, Pinduoduo) have attracted the most attention from consumers (Zhou, et al., 2021). The same goods, lower prices and door-to-door delivery services are rapidly encroaching on offline retailers. Compared to other industries, offline supermarkets are more directly and obviously affected. Carrefour, China's first foreign supermarket, was sold to China's Suning Group in2019 (Zhang & Hardaker, 2021), and global supermarket chains such as Walmart and Lotte Mart are reducing the number of stores in China (Wong, Easley, & Tang, 2023). At the same time, China's local supermarket chains, such as Yonghui Life, RT-Mart and Hema, have also launched online shopping services while operating offline stores (Han, Wood, Coe, & Alexander, 2023). But this has not helped their sales or profits as measurably. Most supermarkets still choose to close a certain number of offline stores to limit losses. Amid the slump in the offline supermarket industry, Pang Dong Lai, a regional supermarket, has become popular on the Internet because of its employee benefits and excellent shopping experience. People are willing to pay for long-distance transport to shop locally. Its unorthodox management has also drawn attention.

Pang Dong Lai (Xuchang City Pang Dong Lai Trading Group Co., Ltd) was established in March 1995. The company's headquarters are situated in Xuchang City, a third-tier city in Henan Province. The company's business scope encompasses the fields of food, daily necessities, and other related sectors. The founder of Pang Dong Lai, Yu Donglai, commenced his entrepreneurial endeavours in a grocery store and subsequently evolved the enterprise into a department store, a supermarket, and the current group model (Yang L. , 2023). Initially, Yu Donglai did not engage in any systematic learning of the intricacies of organisation and management, and his

decision-making regarding the expansion of his business territory was primarily informed by his perception of the surrounding environment. It is evident that he initially expanded within the area with which he was familiar, and did not expand rapidly after the enterprise developed well. Instead, he diversified into new areas within his original locale, expanding beyond the initial grocery store. He also began to prioritise customer experience and employee satisfaction (Hu, 2023). Consequently, the enterprise evolved into a distinctive business group within China. The group's distinctiveness stems from its unique approach to employee and customer relations, which deviates from the norm in the industry.

Literature Review of Organisational Culture and Leadership

Leadership

The behaviour of organisations is a very topical issue since the companies have become more flexible (Wood, Wiesner, Morrison, Factor, & McKeown, 2024). The leadership in the organisation would be influence the organisational behaviours (Waite, 2014).The leadership basically rely on the personality, life and working experience, management ability, and the personal charm (Nusair, Ababneh, & Bae, 2012).

The organisation leader type can be classified as three types: Goal-oriented, Involving, and Engaging (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2005; Igbaekemen, 2014; Tran, 2021). The goal-oriented focus on the certain direction and the leader plays the maintain role in the whole process (Kumar, Jin, & Liu, 2024). Involving is concentrated on the direction, but the members could be the part of the decision-making process (Schaufeli, 2021). Engaging leader behaviours are trying to help others reach their goals (Rahmadani & Schaufeli, 2022). The leader more concentrated on developing others' abilities than the organisation developing direction. Organisations need to find potential opportunities to improve their services and compare with their competitors to maintain their advantages.

Organisation Culture

Organisational culture plays an important role in making divisions independent, and employees identify with it (Solomon & Brown, 2021). In a good organisational culture, there are no unimportant departments, no employees and customers that can be ignored. All people are important components in the organisation. Effective organisational culture can unite all members with a common value system and enable members to grow within the organisation, which is conducive to forming a stable

organisational structure and membership system and increasing the stability of the social system (Wijethilake, Upadhaya, & Lama, 2023).

Different organisations may have different cultural contents for their business, but almost all of them include the basic characteristics of organisational culture: 1. Adaptability. Ensure that the organisational culture is acceptable to most employees, even if employees come from different regions, countries and even different cultural backgrounds. At the same time, it ensures that the organisation has the ability and methods to adapt to changes in the external environment and adjust accordingly to maintain the dominant position of the organisation in the competition (Su, Baird, & Munir, 2023). 2. Pay attention to details. Organisational culture needs to emphasize the importance of details in production and services. Both employee work and management appraisal require quantifiable criteria, which are usually composed of a lot of details (Zeb, et al., 2021). 3. Result orientation. The organisation should focus more on the completion of goals and results, and not too much on the perfection of the process. Organisations need to set clear goals for employees to work hard, and the process is used as the content reference in the assessment, but the main goal is the result, which is conducive to improving the competitiveness of the organisation (Tortorella, Fettermann, Fogliatto, Kumar, & Jurburg, 2021). 4. People-oriented. Organisational content should focus on the people who constitute the smallest unit of the organisation, pay attention to the needs of employees, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders, and improve employee satisfaction and customer experience (Liqiu, 2022). Furthermore, employee satisfaction is also an affirmation of corporate culture. Employees express their recognition of the company culture with more efficient work efficiency. If they are not satisfied, their work motivation will be damaged, which will be indirectly transmitted to users and cause bad experience for customers. This further verifies the statement that satisfied employees will bring satisfied customers (Hansemark & Albinsson, 2004; Naseem, Sheikh, & Malik, 2011; Pu, Sang, Ji, Hu, & Phau, 2024). 5. Team orientation. Organisational culture should

emphasize wholeness and the importance of teamwork and the achievement of collective goals. The organisation shall promote team spirit, encourage cooperation between departments and necessary information sharing, and enhance the sense of belonging of the overall team (Hassan, Abdulkarim, & Ismael, 2022). 6. Integrity. Organisational culture should also follow basic ethical standards. A corporate culture of integrity is conducive to standardizing the behaviour of employees and management, establishing a good corporate image, enhancing the internal and external credibility of the organisation, and contributing to the sustainable development of the enterprise (Hald, Gillespie, & Reader, 2021). The basic characteristics of organisational culture are the basis for maintaining the stable development of enterprises. Although the six factors mentioned above are essential elements of organisational culture, not all of them are taken into account. Different types of organisations have their own elements that they are more concerned with. Leaders choose them according to the situation (Su, Baird, & Munir, 2023). Correspondingly, there is also research that suggests that organisational culture should not just follow the framework of existing elements, but that leaders can create their own cultural content that is more appropriate to the current needs of the organisation. (Bell, Chan, & Nel, 2014; Mansouri, Singh, & Khan, 2018; Syukri, Malik, & Sandra, 2025).

Common organisational cultural frameworks can classify as clan, task-oriented, market, and hierarchical (Langfield-Smith, 1995). The clan type originally refers to the organisation founded by people with blood ties and relatives, who hold middle and senior managers in the organisation. Externally hired experts and ordinary employees are in the middle and lower levels of the organisational structure, and it is difficult for them to get promoted through their own efforts. Clan-based organisations emphasize family-style teamwork and sense of belonging, and leaders usually play the role of parents, caring more about the development of employees and interpersonal relationships within the organisation (Zhang & Liu, 2006). Organisational culture is often based on shared values and trust.

The core orientation of task-based organisational culture is to complete specific task objectives. All resources can be flexibly adjusted according to task requirements. Such an organisational culture is highly flexible and can quickly adapt to environmental changes. Market-oriented organisational culture is relatively similar to task-oriented organisational culture, but the main difference lies in its orientation focusing on external competition and market demand (Mavondo & Farrell, 2003). The purpose of all resource adjustment is to achieve performance targets and pursue profit maximization (Carlos Pinho, Paula Rodrigues, & Dibb, 2014). Hierarchical organisational culture emphasizes order and authority. There is a clear division of labour for tasks, there is a strict management hierarchy, and the decision-making power is concentrated in the top managers (Orieno, Udeh, Oriekhoe, Ndubuisi, N. L., & Ndubuisi, 2024).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a comprehensive index to measure the satisfaction degree of employees in working environment, work content, salary and welfare (Asatiani, Hämäläinen, Penttinen, & Rossi, 2021). It includes not only the material gain, but also the psychological health of employees. This is a very important part of the organisation. Satisfaction will improve employees' work efficiency and provide customers with high-quality services (Mardikaningsih & Putra, 2021), that is, satisfied employees will bring satisfied customers and good organisational evaluation. This is conducive to the organisation to occupy an advantage in the market competition and improve revenue.

The factors affecting employee motivation and satisfaction can be divided into two categories: health factors and incentive factors (Herzberg, 1968; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 2011). In instances where health factors, encompassing aspects such as remuneration, working conditions, company policies and management methodologies, prove inadequate, employees are likely to experience dissatisfaction (Kotni &

Karumuri, 2018). However, the presence of adequate health factors does not guarantee employee satisfaction. Conversely, motivational factors, encompassing work achievement and external recognition, have been demonstrated to directly enhance employee satisfaction and work motivation. (de Oliveir, et al., 2023)

The concept of the work environment encompasses both physical and social dimensions (Aripin, Matriadi, & Ermeila, 2024). The presence of a safe and comfortable working environment, coupled with the cultivation of positive interpersonal relationships, has been shown to enhance employee satisfaction (Basalamah & As'ad, 2021). The existence of reasonable career development opportunities, in conjunction with an inclusive and fair management style, has been demonstrated to engender an increase in employees' trust and sense of belonging. This, in turn, has been shown to engender an improvement in job satisfaction (Putra, et al., 2022). It has been demonstrated that the provision of opportunities for the exercise of personal abilities and interests by employees is conducive to enhancing job satisfaction. The presence of challenges in the work content has been shown to have a positive impact on employee satisfaction. A workload that achieves an appropriate work-life balance also significantly increases employee satisfaction (Waworuntu, Kainde, & Mandagi, 2022).

Compensation and benefits are divided into two parts: compensation and benefits, which are the basic needs of employees in their work, and its fairness and adequacy will directly affect employee satisfaction (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Compensation is mainly based on the position and work content of the employee. Usually with the employee promotion or job transfer change (Tessema, Tesfom, Faircloth, Tesfagiorgis, & Teckle, 2022). Benefits are more based on the organisation's care and attention to employees. The basic benefits are the same even if the position is different. There is a strong correlation between compensation and benefits and employee satisfaction. Scientific and reasonable welfare system can make employees feel the care and attention of the enterprise, improve their job satisfaction and loyalty to the enterprise,

stimulate their work enthusiasm and creativity, form a good organisational culture, and maintain the positive trend of the positive development of the organisation (Tessema, Tesfom, Faircloth, Tesfagiorgis, & Teckle, 2022).

Employees' needs can be divided into needs of achievement, needs of power and needs of Affiliation (McClelland, 1965) . Employees want clear and achievable goals and valuable feedback on their performance in achieving them. Employees can get the right to solve problems at work, and the organisation has a clear promotion system, which can motivate employees to work and gain management authority. Employees hope to be a member of a harmonious team, to trust and help each other in the team, and to feel the needs of the team for themselves (Roberts & David, 2020).

Empowerment Theory can explain that leaders in democratic organisations are willing to transfer part of their power to stimulate employees' enthusiasm and initiative (Spreitzer, 1995), so that employees can have more autonomy in work, gain a sense of belonging to the organisation psychologically, and increase their contributions to the organisation. It can stimulate the internal motivation of employees in the organisation and work harder for salary and self-value (Spreitzer, 1995). It also improves employee satisfaction. Having power can make employees feel that they are important members of the organisation, and it is the performance that the organisation trusts and respects them (Mardanov, 2021).

In order to better realize their own value, employees are more willing to stimulate their creativity. When empowering employees, managers should consider many aspects. Ensure that employees have a clear understanding of the purpose and meaning of their work. Emphasis should be placed on improving the skills of employees through training. Managers should give employees the right to make free decisions within the scope of their responsibilities, so that employees feel that they are in control of the power and that they are part of the organisation (Davidescu, Apostu, Paul, & Casuneanu, 2020; Chan, 2019; Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Using power

correctly and responsibly, regardless of whether the result is good or bad, cannot take back the power already given, and helps to increase employees' confidence (Stamolampros, Korfiatis, Chalvatzis, & Buhalis, 2019).

The Challenge Among Leadership, Organization Culture, and Job Satisfaction

The challenges that organisations face do not have to come from outside, but arise in part from the conflicts and problems that exist within the organisation itself, which become challenges that the organisation has to face when the external environment deteriorates (Lake, Martin, & Risse, 2021)**.** In organisations the influence of leadership and organisational culture on job satisfaction is important and direct. (Lin & Huang (2021) explained that identification with the organisational culture is a very important part of job satisfaction. However, the cultural content of many organisations does not fit the organisational structure and causes negative emotions among employees (Mesfin, Woldie, Adamu, & Bekele, 2020). Especially when managers themselves do not agree with the organisational culture and refuse to exercise their power according to the rules, employees will choose to stand against the organisation and take objective and effective actions to express their dissatisfaction. For example, refusing to provide services to customers or providing poor services, as well as large-scale dismissals, resulting in damage to the organisation's interests or inability to continue operations. Some researchers suggested a friendly organisational culture (Liu, Tsui, & Kianto, 2021; Mikušová, Klabusayová, & Meier, 2023; Lin, Gu, Gillani, & Fahlevi, 2024). The main purpose of this kind of friendliness is to exchange the perspectives of managers, employees and customers, to provide services or make rules from their own perspective when they are in the other position. However, it is almost impossible for managers to relinquish power, and it is difficult to attach importance to employees from the manager's identity. Customers are the source of profit in the leader's plan. To please them, they will not hesitate to make employees give up their rights, including working overtime to serve customers. Under no circumstances can they deny what customers say and apologise to customers without

any reason, even if the fault is not theirs (Wang, Jin, Zhou, Li, & Yin, 2020). Squeezed employees cannot vent their dissatisfaction to their bosses, they can only take it out on the customers, creating a vicious circle. What should have been a virtuous circle of triangles has been split by management into a conflict between employees and customers. Achieving balanced satisfaction among employees, customers and leaders is the key challenge for organisations (Talukder & Galang, 2021; Carr, 2025).

Theoretical Concepts About Organisation Culture and Leadership

There are many theories of organisational management. However, for some managers who have not specially studied organisational management, Theory X and Theory Y (McGrego, 1960) are the organisational management theories they can learn from life experience. Starting from the basic nature of human beings, it considers both the enthusiasm and inertia of employees in organisational management (Lawter, Kopelman, & Prottas, 2015).

The sources of work motivation are discussed in Theory X and Theory Y. Motivators for working are divided into two types: positive and negative (Fahem & Menad, 2024). Theory X represents negative, which believes that people do not have the motivation to take the initiative to work, and work brings negative emotions to people. People avoid work in life, have no long-term expectations for work, and are unwilling to take responsibility, which requires managers to adopt a stricter management method. Theory Y represents the positive part. Assume that people do not inherently hate work and are willing to be responsible at work. Some people also use their imagination and creativity in their work (Ha, Huyen, & Huong, 2023). Therefore, managers should not be limited to establishing strict systems and punishments to manage employees, make the rewards and punishment balanced (Figure 1).

Figure 1Balance the reward and punishment

Under certain circumstances, different leadership types may lead to different organisational cultures. According to the different attitudes towards employees, it can be divided into two main types: authoritative type and democratic type (Erdem, 2021). Authoritative leaders have the highest decision-making power in the organisation. The internal level of the organisation is relatively obvious, taking the completion of tasks as the main goal, and not caring about the attitude of employees. Democratic leadership usually focuses on teamwork, and in order to maintain team stability, it will actively enhance employees' sense of participation and belonging. Stimulate employees' potential by clarifying tasks and reward mechanisms, pay attention to employees' development and needs to increase team cohesion and satisfaction, and some leaders enhance team cohesion through personal charm (Aloisio, Coughlin, & Squires, 2021).

For a long time, the internal organisational structure of Chinese private enterprises presents a pyramid-style hierarchical organisational culture (Figure 2), which is similar to the clan type in structure. That is, the enterprise owner is at the top of the pyramid and has the final decision-making power over the operation and management of the enterprise (Hensmans, 2022). The close relatives of the business owners are in the middle and upper part of the pyramid, responsible for the major decisions of the business; Distant relatives and close friends are in the middle of the pyramid, responsible for the management of the main departments of the enterprise. The hired external professional management and technical personnel are in the middle and lower part of the pyramid and are responsible for the management and guidance of front-line production and operation (Ates, McKiernan, & Sunner, 2023; Yu, Jia, & Qi, 2023). The average employee is at the bottom of the pyramid and is engaged in specific production and business activities.

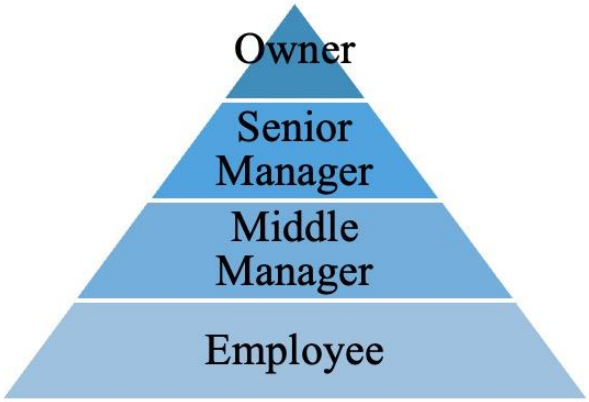

Figure 2Chinese private enterprises present a pyramid-style hierarchical organisational culture

In the early stage of enterprise development, due to the small scale of the enterprise, the discourse power of the enterprise owner has a strong cohesion within the kinship, and the kinship will also form affinity within the enterprise, making all employees consciously comply with the decision of the owner, and forming a corporate culture in which one person makes all the decisions (Purser & Cabana, 1998; Bika & Frazer, 2021). However, as the scale of the enterprise continues to expand, the internal environment, external environment and economic activities of the enterprise become complex, and this management mode will limit the development of the enterprise. Enterprise owners who are used to making decisions by themselves cannot adapt to more detailed division of labour and positions of departments, coordinate information communication of enterprise economic activities, and do not respond quickly enough to market changes, resulting in contradictions and conflicts between employees and departments, reducing employee satisfaction and identification with the company's enterprise management, and thus reducing loyalty to the enterprise (Morris & Santos, 2024). As a result, enterprises are inefficient, their revenue falls or even go out of business. Gary Hamel (1996)criticizes the pyramid structure. This structure limits the innovation ability and adaptability of enterprises, as well as the ability development of employees, leading to low efficiency and lack of employees' sense of participation (Laloux, 2014), and reducing their possible contributions to enterprises (Hamel &

Zanini, 2020) .

Stakeholder Theory is worth considering when discussing leadership. Freeman (2010) believes that in business activities, leaders need to consider other related parts of the business, such as employees, customers, suppliers, government departments and so on(Figure 3) (Fobbe & Hilletofth, 2021). Although these stakeholders are not directly related to the main business, they may still bring some business influence (Ghanbarpour, Crosby, Johnson, & Gustafsson, 2024). In the retail industry where Pang Dong Lai is located, the direct stakeholders include employees, customers and suppliers. Typically, the industry believes that customers are the most important stakeholders and that winning customers wins competition. Therefore, they have made a lot of efforts and attempts in how to attract customers, retain customers and promote customers' consumption desire.

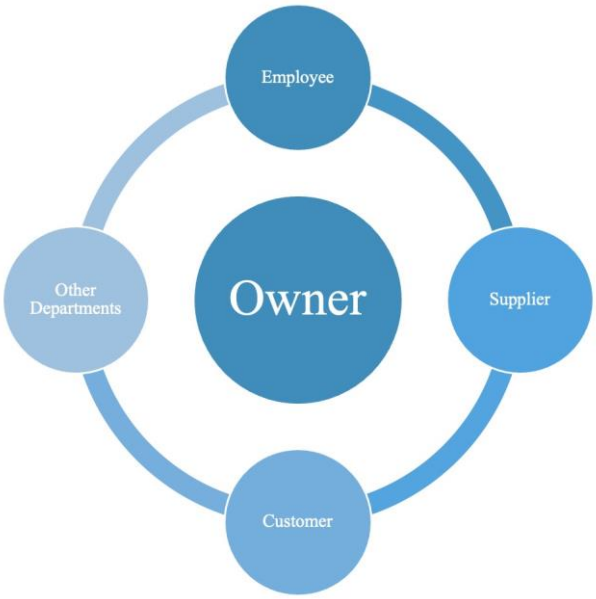

Figure 3Stakeholder Around the Organisation Owner

Pang Dong Lai has made its own changes in this regard. It sees its employees as its core assets. Focus your culture on employee satisfaction. Take the initiative to think about what rules of reward and punishment will positively guide employees to work. The goal is to improve employees' motivation and efficiency while keeping them enthusiastic at work. After a period of transformation and adjustment, Pang Dong Lai

has gradually explored a set of its own corporate culture that allows employees to have a sense of happiness, identity and belonging. At the same time, Pang Dong Lai did not ignore customers as an important stakeholder. It takes customer satisfaction as its goal, and in addition to providing goods to meet customers' needs, it also attaches importance to customers' shopping experience. Do your best to let customers do from the heart like fat east. When Pang Dong Lai's management achieved this goal, it found that employee satisfaction was a step ahead of customer satisfaction. In other words, satisfied employees will serve satisfied customers. Therefore, Pang Dong Lai adheres to the core of its employee-oriented and people-oriented organisational culture and carries out the transformation of management mode on this basis.

Pang Dong Lai’s Management Transform

Pang Dong Lai's initial management strategy was implemented during the early stages of Chinese private enterprise development. The implementation of a pyramid-level management structure was a key aspect of this period (Yu, Jia, & Qi, 2023). This model entailed a high degree of autonomy for owners in the operation and management of enterprises. However, as the industry became increasingly competitive, Pang Dong Lai's management team sought to transition to a democratic clan-style of management. Notwithstanding this transition, the fundamental principles of reward and punishment remained unaltered. The reward part is directed towards employees and customers, while the punishment part encompasses management and employees (Wang A. Z., 2024).

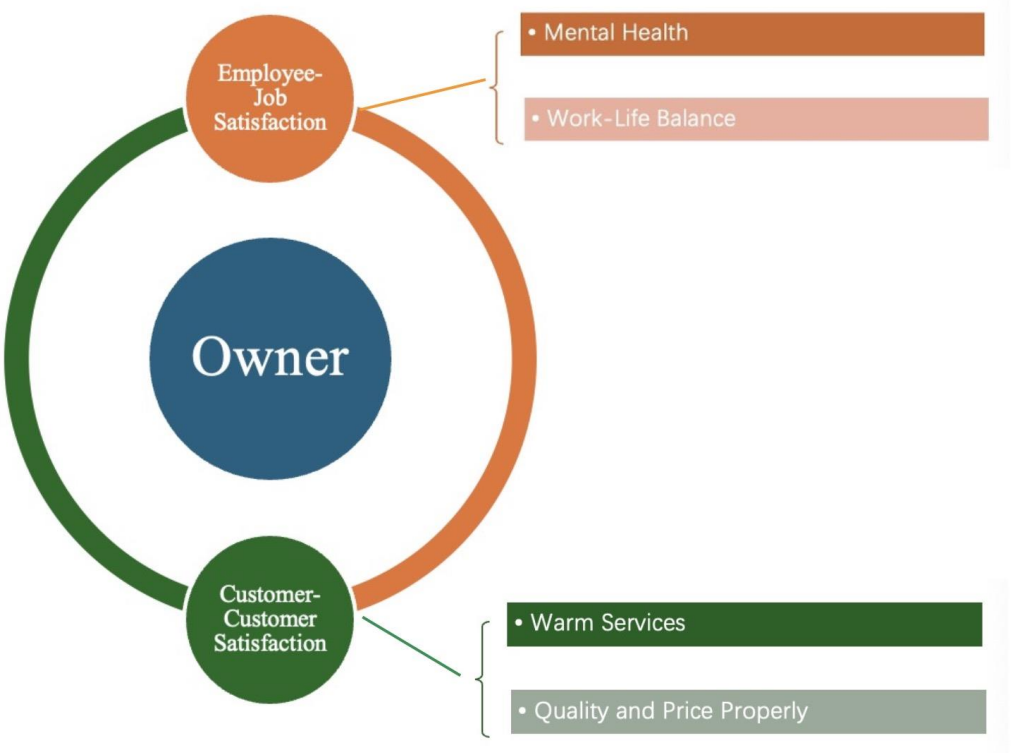

Figure 4Pang Dong Lai's Core Stakeholders

Employee Side

In contrast to the employee handbooks of other supermarket operators, which tend to be more extensive in their staff rules, the employee handbook of Pang Dong Lai includes a requirement for employees to accept punishment. In addition to the need for warm and thoughtful customer service, the inspection content will be refined. For instance, it is essential to understand customer needs and select appropriate goods for customers from the perspective of customers, rather than forcing them to buy or sell. It is imperative to ensure sufficient change is available at the cashier. It is imperative to note that drivers and other individuals present in the vehicle are prohibited from smoking while the vehicle is in operation. Employees who demonstrate an ability to adhere to their designated roles, propose innovative service methodologies, or exhibit resilience in the face of adversity, may be eligible for commendation and bonuses from the management group.

Pang Dong Lai's vacation system is distinct from that of other comparable enterprises in China. The working hours of employees at Pang Dong Lai are approximately 6.5-7 hours per day. In accordance with the stipulations of Chinese labour legislation, the standard working day is defined as eight hours, and employees are entitled to the same level of rest time as that observed during weekends. Furthermore, during the Spring Festival, stores are closed for a period of five days, allowing employees to engage in familial reunions. The company also adheres to a system of regular maintenance, closing every Tuesday for repair, and does not adjust its schedule to coincide with major holidays. Furthermore, employees are entitled to between 150 and 180 days of vacation per year. This includes 40 days of paid annual leave and 10 days of unhappy leave.

On 19 June 2023, at the Pang Dong Lai (Xuchangmen store), an argument ensued between a customer and staff members over the rapid purchase of discounted goods by numerous customers in the supermarket. This altercation was captured on video

and disseminated online, rapidly attaining widespread circulation. In response, on 20 June, the East initiated the first investigation into the incident, and a second survey was conducted on 24 June. Pang Dong Lai subsequently issued a comprehensive eight-page report on the incident, providing a detailed account of the events that transpired. The report also acknowledged the presence of deficiencies in the service process and resulted in the disciplinary action of demotion for relevant management personnel for a period of three months, as stipulated by the regulations. In addition, the company presented gifts and a financial compensation of 500 yuan to the customers as a gesture of apology for the service issues experienced. Pang Dong Lai also expressed the belief that customers have the right to voice their concerns when their rights and interests are violated, but that they should refrain from publicly blaming employees at the scene. This practice constitutes a grave infringement on the emotional well-being and dignity of employees. Consequently, Pang Dong Lai resolved to offer 5,000 yuan in spiritual compensation to the affected employees, along with 500 yuan in gifts to each of the other employees who participated in the on-site mediation. The promotion of fairness and justice is instrumental in safeguarding the dignity and rights of all individuals.

In 2023, Pang Dong Lai announced the establishment of the Grievance Award. The objective of this initiative is to motivate employees to adhere to the principles of rectitude. The financial rewards associated with this programme are contingent upon the extent of the grievance, ranging from 500 to 30,000 yuan. Furthermore, in 2024, Pang Dong Lai incorporated a new policy of ten days of "unhappy leave" for employees. This policy was designed to address instances where employees experienced discontent and were reluctant to attend work. The implementation of this leave necessitated the approval of management, with the objective being to promote employee well-being and enhance customer service.

Customer Side

It has been demonstrated that customers who propose solutions to problems or management methods that should be improved during the shopping process can also receive rewards from the management group. Furthermore, Pang Dong Lai provides customers with a variety of services (Yang , Bai Jing, & Xie, 2024).

Cancel shopping festivals. In the context of a proliferation of shopping festivals and time-limited discount promotions, Pang Dong Lai Supermarket was the first to announce its decision to abstain from such measures to promote customer consumption. Pang Dong Lai's rationale for this decision is that short-term discount promotions encourage customers to make unnecessary purchases driven by price, resulting in a waste of their time and expenditure. In contrast, Pang Dong Lai has opted for a different approach by maintaining the prices of daily necessities at a relatively low level throughout the year. This strategy is intended to encourage consumers to develop a habit of rational consumption, thereby increasing their frequency of visits to the store. This, in turn, is expected to result in a direct and indirect increase in the number of customers visiting the store.

Expand the scope. Pang Dong Lai has innovated within the prevailing rules of the industry. In the specific context of China's retail industry, it is a commonly observed norm that the return of goods due to quality issues or customer dissatisfaction should be facilitated within a period of seven days following the initial purchase. Pang Dong Lai's decision to extend this timeframe was met with approval by its customers. This represents a departure from the practices of offline retailers, who typically do not offer price adjustments for promotions or provide similar benefits in proximity to the promotional date. However, more stringent restrictions are imposed on specific product categories. Pang Dong Lai has expanded the scope of prices that are now covered to include gold and other precious metals. This strategic move has effectively encouraged customers to make purchases at Pang Dong Lai when presented with the

option, thereby fostering a favourable reputation and generating positive publicity. Pang Dong Lai's actions demonstrate a commitment to customer satisfaction, evidenced by their actions in providing practical benefits to customers. Furthermore, when customers proffer suggestions for the enhancement of operations and management, Pang Dong Lai offers tangible rewards, including monetary compensation, gifts, and vouchers, to those who ultimately adopt the suggestions. This incentivises customers to proactively communicate with management regarding issues or areas for enhancement, as opposed to the more prevalent tendency of reserving their feedback and potentially seeking alternative retailers.

Pang Dong Lai's management transformation is predicated on the two key stakeholders of employees and customers, with an attempt being made to analyse and think from the perspective of the two. Employing contemporary management methodologies for the purpose of enhancing their own profitability, the company has also garnered a reputation that surpasses that of its industry competitors.

The Impact of Pang Dong Lai's Management Philosophy

The evolution of corporate culture at Pang Dong Lai is inextricably linked to the broader developments of society and the company itself. The evolution of its corporate culture is characterised by a transition from an initial focus on meeting basic financial needs to a more nuanced approach, emphasising the creation of financial resources, the cultivation of civilisation, and the distribution of happiness. This evolution can be seen in the company's motto, which has shifted from a focus on financial gain to a more ethical and inclusive stance, emphasising fairness, freedom, happiness, and fraternity. This evolution signifies the transformation of Pang Dong Lai from a modest enterprise focused on quality and affordability to a substantial entity with a commitment to its employees, customers and the broader community. The company's core values, which emphasise the prioritisation of customers, employees, and suppliers, underscore its commitment to inclusive and sustainable

growth. The company's approach to supplier selection involves the establishment of standardised supplier management standards, an introduction process, and a contract management process. The standard of the supplier staff's attire, the quality of the goods supplied, hygiene, and other related factors are all detailed in the requirements. Concurrently, a scientific and reasonable settlement system has been adopted, ensuring the establishment of stable and rapid cooperative relationships with suppliers. The objective is to offer the lowest possible prices for goods of the highest quality, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the suppliers. The suppliers, in turn, regard their selection as a badge of honour, a mark of distinction that enhances their own competitiveness.

Employee Side

Pang Dong Lai's management approach places equal emphasis on employee and customer satisfaction. The former is prioritised over the latter in management, on the basis that satisfied employees will be better able to serve customers, and that this customer satisfaction will in turn lead to employee satisfaction. In the context of customer satisfaction, the organisation prioritises the enhancement of employee satisfaction. The recognition of customer praise serves as a source of employee motivation, potentially leading to tangible rewards. This, in addition to the encouragement of employees to provide thoughtful service to customers, contributes to the overall enhancement of employee satisfaction.

Within the organisational culture of Pang Dong Lai, the focus of management attention is on the integration of professional activities and personal domains in employees' lives. The organisation pays close attention to the leisure activities of its personnel. The organisation of events such as staff weddings, birthday parties, and significant annual festivals is a testament to this commitment. The establishment of designated spaces for physical fitness, entertainment and educational purposes is also recognised as an integral facet of the company's ethos. The organisation also

prioritises the health and well-being of its workforce (Bao, 2025). Employees and their family members who are sick can see a doctor free of charge at the staff clinic and purchase medications at cost. A novel initiative has been introduced, namely the closure of stores on Tuesdays, a practice that challenges the prevailing unspoken norm in China's retail sector of maintaining store closures during daytime hours. This initiative is accompanied by a new policy entailing the allocation of 20 days of paid leave annually for each employee. Furthermore, middle and senior managers will also be subject to a fine of 5,000 yuan each time they work 40 hours a week and do not leave the company immediately after work.

It is apparent that the way Pang Dong Lai administers the daily management of its employees exhibits a high degree of flexibility in the execution of both rewards and punishment. The purpose of this flexibility is to motivate employees to perform their duties effectively, thereby creating a favourable work environment that enables them to achieve an optimal work-life balance. The underlying philosophy underpinning this approach is to ensure that employees derive maximum benefit from the company's offerings, with the welfare of its personnel constituting the fundamental starting point. Consequently, these measures are not intended to engender resentment among employees, but rather to affirm the company's commitment to implementing welfare provisions, thereby ensuring that these benefits are not merely theoretical, but tangible and accessible to all employees.

Customer Side

Pang Dong Lai has become synonymous with the city in the local context, contributing to an enhancement in the satisfaction of the local populace. The establishment provides services that are customer-centric in nature. For instance, self-service pet storage facilities are located at the entrances of supermarkets and car parks, facilitating the management of pet-related items. Additionally, a designated area is allocated for mother and baby, with amenities such as an indoor disinfection

cabinet, warm milk, and other necessary tools. In the seasoning section, magnifying glasses and reading glasses are strategically placed to cater to customers with poor eyesight, ensuring an inclusive shopping experience. The baking area features paper models of various cakes, providing a visual aid for customers. Moreover, the cooked food area offers complimentary cutlery and paper towels, enhancing the convenience of customers. In the vegetable section, the origin, storage time, and cooking method of each item is clearly labelled, promoting informed decision-making. In comparison with other competitors, the service offered by Pang Dong Lai is distinguished by its commitment to meeting customer expectations regarding temperature control, rather than merely facilitating transactions. In instances where a product has been marked as unavailable due to depleted stock levels, the staff at Dong Lai promptly initiate contact with the customer to provide a prompt explanation, thus demonstrating their commitment to customer satisfaction. This approach underscores the notion that staff members at Dong Lai view customer satisfaction as the primary motivator and sense of achievement in their professional endeavours (Liang, 2024).

After the transformation, Pang Dong Lai's corporate culture focuses on people-oriented and happy life as the goal. The way he and his competitors manage innovation is that he gives people power within their responsibilities. Employees have autonomy in solving problems for customers and can make flexible decisions according to the specific situation at the time, replacing the original decision-making process of hierarchical reporting. Make decisions and get customer satisfaction feedback in time. At the same time, pay attention to staff training and development. To make employees better use of power, Pang Dong Lai provides employees with crisis solving skills training, so that employees could solve related problems independently. At the same time, personal value is emphasized. It will not ignore facts for the sake of customer satisfaction, and ensures the basic rights of employees, so that employees feel the meaning and value of their work.

The Challenges of Pang Dong Lai

Pang Dong Lai's decision to adopt contemporary managerial practices for the transformation process is indicative of a strategic realignment within the company. The efficacy of this approach is contingent upon the proprietor's perspicacious discernment of the evolving landscape within The Times. The transformation entailed a shift from the conventional management style that was prevalent in the industry towards a more contemporary approach that resonated with employees. This adaptation was meticulously tailored to align with the specific organisational context. The corporate culture and leadership were adapted to align with the prevailing circumstances. Subsequent adjustments will be made as circumstances evolve. The most important core ideas in all changes are employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction and corporate culture. This approach ensures that the core tenets of the corporate culture are preserved throughout the iterative refinement of management methodologies, thereby safeguarding the continuity of Pang Dong Lai's business philosophy and contributing to its eventual emergence as a distinct symbol within the industry.

It is imperative to recognise the significance of this transformation for other enterprises contemplating a change in their conventional organisational structure. The transformation of management mode should be based on the core culture of the enterprise, conforming to the requirements of The Times. The corporate culture should be uncomplicated yet consistent with the fundamental principles of development. This approach facilitates the retention and ongoing development of personnel following the implementation of a revised management structure.

Conclusion

For its transformation, Pang Dong Lai opted for a more modern management style. Its success depended on the owner's accurate judgement of the times. He changed the management style used in the industry to one that was more modern and popular with employees and adapted it to the company's own situation. The corporate culture and the management style of the executives were adapted to the prevailing situation. In the later stages of operation, we will continue to adjust according to changing circumstances. Employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction and corporate culture are the key ideas behind all changes. This ensures that the corporate culture is inherited and not changed by the iterative transformation of management style, which allows Fat Dong Lai's business philosophy to be carried forward and ultimately become a different symbol among its peers.

Pang Dong Lai's transformation reminds other traditional organisational structures in the company considering transformation. The transformation of management style should be based on the organisation's core culture, which meets the requirements of the times. The corporate culture should be simple but in line with the basic laws of development. This makes it easy to maintain and develop even after management style transformation.

Limitation

The decision of Pang Dong Lai not to expand its store network in China suggests an awareness of the limitations of this management approach in practice. Firstly, the clan organisational structure can highlight its advantages in small-scale applications. However, as the size of the organisation increases, the attention of managers becomes more limited, and the organisational structure evolves towards a more hierarchical arrangement. And the clan management model emphasises the utilisation of existing organisational values and management methodologies. However, in the event of a change in ownership, there is a possibility that there may be alterations to the organisational culture and business model of Pang Dong Lai, which could potentially impact the enterprise's sustainable development. The successful transformation of Pang Dong Lai is primarily contingent on the establishment of a humanised corporate culture and the cultivation of a high level of recognition among employees of the corporate culture. It must be acknowledged that establishing a comprehensive model of this nature is an arduous task, necessitating a significant investment of time from both managers and employees. Consequently, Pang Dong Lai may encounter challenges in maintaining the integrity of its corporate culture when seeking to expand its market presence and human resources in disparate regions, potentially impacting the enterprise's reputation and brand identity.

Secondly, while the satisfaction of employees and customers may guarantee satisfaction among a certain segment of the population, it is unlikely to be applicable to all stakeholders. However, it should be noted that in this process, Pang Dong Lai has incurred a considerable cost, and the continuous operation of a high welfare investment model may result in a reduction in revenue and a diminution in competitiveness in the market.

Thirdly, the management philosophy of Pang Dong Lai is predicated on the premise that employees are the organisation's primary asset, resulting in a high degree of

reliance on the workforce within its managerial structure. A significant attrition rate among personnel can adversely impact the quality of services provided by Pang Dong Lai, signifying deficiencies in its managerial approach and organisational culture. Consequently, it is imperative for Pang Dong Lai to consistently foster employees' recognition and their sense of belonging to the corporate culture. Nevertheless, this subjective concept is susceptible to external influences, and the relationship between customer satisfaction and employee performance is not straightforwardly quantifiable, potentially resulting in employees exerting effort without commensurate acknowledgement, thereby affecting their job satisfaction and their identification with the enterprise, and ultimately potentially leading to their resignation and subsequent loss.

Recommendation

It is imperative that organisational management mode undergoes appropriate transformation in tandem with the development of The Times and the evolution of the organisation. In the process of transformation, it is essential to consider the sentiments of the original members of the organisation. The development of corresponding rules and skills is also paramount to facilitate employee adaptation to the new management mode. Concomitantly, adherence to the enterprise's core culture is imperative, entailing the elimination of obsolescent content and the incorporation of novel content, aligning with the enterprise's developmental objectives. This approach ensures the preservation of the enterprise's original culture and brand reputation during the transformation process. Furthermore, employees are recognised as the core assets of enterprises, and it is therefore vital to establish a foundation of confidence and identity in employees towards the enterprise in order to ensure stability and competitive qualifications and capabilities in the face of external competition.

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