The impact of Supervisor Support towards Extra-Role Behavior

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Abstract: Effective supervisor support consists of two main features: emotional and instrumental support. Recent studies from the perspective of organizational climate which focus on the execution of such features among supervisors has a significant impact towards positive employee outcomes especially in their extra-role behavior. Even though this relationship has been widely explored, the role of supervisor support as a vital construct is still less discussed in the organizational climate literature. Therefore, this research was conduct to investigate the relationship between supervisor support and extra-role behavior. The data was collected using survey on 113 executives and non-executives from a telecommunication organization. The findings from the SmartPLS model analysis revealed that, extra-role behavior contributed to 31% variance on the proposed model. This shows that the ability of supervisors to provide emotional and instrumental support to employees has led to an increase in their extra-role behavior in the organization. The implications of this study in relation to theories, methodologies and organizational practitioners are also discussed.

Keywords: Supervisor support; emotional support, instrumental support, extra-role behavior.

I. INTRODUCTION

Supervisor support is one of the most important aspects in organizational climate model [1,2]. Supervisor support is often viewed as the aid given by supervisors through caring for the employees and appreciate their contributions to the organization [3,4]. With regard to organizational climate, supervisors who play an important part in the organizational hierarchy play a vital role in influencing employees' trust, attitudes and behavioral outcomes [5]. Thus, strong and consistent support from the supervisors will eventually benefit the employees' work motivation, work efficiency and reduce waste of resources [6].

Supervisor support is divided into two main components, namely emotional support and instrumental support [7,8]. Emotional support is where supervisors provide help to enhance employees' positive emotions in the workplace [9,10].

For example, showing respect, care, listening to their problems, providing words of encouragement and appreciation towards the employees [8,9,11]. Meanwhile, instrumental support is where the supervisors provide assistance through tangible aid and/or service when employees completing their task [7,10]. The examples include solving difficult tasks, giving constructive feedback on improving work skills and helping employees in building career planning [12–14]. Employees who receive high emotional and instrumental support can reinforce high level of congruence between their goals and capabilities [15]. Thus, by simultaneously analyzing the impact of these two types of supervisor support, the study gives insights on how emotional and instrumental support influence the employees' attitudes and behaviors.

In the era of the global industrial revolution 4.0 (IR4.0), the organization should keep up with the rapid changes in technology and its impact on customers [16,17]. The management should actively explore tremendous opportunities with complex tasks, as competitors will challenge new outputs by offering nearly similar goods and services that are unique at a reasonable price [16,17]. The success of the organization depends heavily on the commitment from all employees [18,19]. This is where the role of supervisor is important in providing emotional and instrumental support to the employees because this would encourage positive attitudes especially the extra-role behavior [6,20–23]. In the context of organizational climate, extra-role behavior is defined as employee's voluntary actions that are spontaneous, self-driven, which are not listed in job descriptions that indirectly contribute to the effectiveness of the organization [24,25].

Organizational climate has been regularly analyzed as a broad construct that includes many support sources including supervisor support [1,26]. Thus, even though the nature of the relationship between supervisor support and extra-role behavior has been extensively explored, the role of supervisor support specifically in multidimensional aspects and as a predictor of the stated behavior is still poorly discussed in the context of organizational climate [6,20–23]. Hence, this study focuses on two main objectives: first, to analyze the relationship between emotional support and extra-role behavior. Second, to analyze the relationship between instrumental support and extra-role behavior. Other components such as literature review, methodology, findings, discussion and conclusion will be further explained.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Relationship between Supervisor support and Extra-Role behavior

Supervisor support has two main elements, which are emotional support and instrumental support [7,8]. Emotional support is often refers to as reciprocal interactions of mutual obligations to enhance employees' positive emotions at work [9,10]. Whereby, instrumental support usually means providing assistance through tangible aid and/or service in employees' task [7,10].

The role of supervisor support as an important predictor of extra-role behavior is in line with the notion of Organizational Support theory [14]. This theory explains that when employees in the organization perceived the support given from their supervisor as beneficial, it may in return reinforce employees' positive attitudes and outcomes [1,14]. Besides, Path-Goal theory is also related to this study in which supervisors would perform specific behaviors that are best suited to the employees' needs and working environment so that employees will act in certain way to accomplish work activities [27–29]. The use of these theories in supervisor support model shows that, constructive and continuous support from the supervisor towards employees is often associated with emotional support [20,21,23] and instrumental support [6,22]. The spirit of both theories has obtained a strong support from perceived organizational support literature.

There are several recent studies on supervisor support which include emotional support and instrumental support conducted based on samples from different organizations. The studies involved perceptions of 234 teachers from high schools in Turkey, 211 employees from various organizations in China, 405 employees from sports center in Taiwan, 183 protégés from construction companies in Korea and 350 employees from telecommunication sector in Pakistan [6,20–23]. These studies show two important outcomes of the role of supervisor support in maintaining an effective organization. First, emotional support is working towards providing employees' with positive emotion. While instrumental support is done through providing tangible aid and/or service to the employees. The ability of supervisors to practice such supports have become important predictors of extra-role behavior among employees in the respective organizations. Therefore, the hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H1: Emotional support has a positive impact on extra-role behavior

H2: Instrumental support has a positive impact on extra-role behavior

Fig. 1 demonstrates the study model of the relationship between supervisor support and extra-role behaviour.
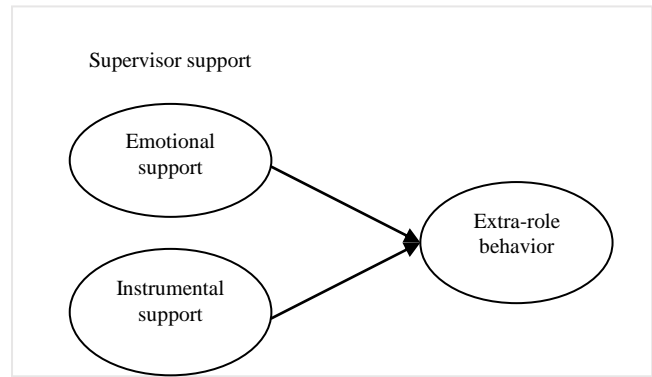

Fig. 1.:The proposed model

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Sample and Procedures

The respondents of this study were employees from a telecommunication organization in Malaysia. Structured questionnaires were utilized to collect cross-sectional data from the respondents and were translated from English to Malay language for a better understanding of the respondents. Back translation was also used to translate questionnaires from Malay language to English in order to increase the validity and reliability of the research outcomes [30,31]. The sample of this study consists of 113 respondents. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling technique. This technique was selected because the list of registered employees was not given to the researchers due to confidentiality reason. This causes the researchers to not able to randomly select the participants for this study.

B. Measures

Supervisor support was measured using the items adapted from the previous studies found in the perceived organization support literature [12–14]. Emotional support was measured using 4 items, which were adapted from 14. Instrumental support was measured using 5 items, which was adapted from 12,13. Meanwhile, extra-role behavior was measured using 3 items, which was adapted from 32 through the notion of organizational behavior literature. The constructs were presented using a 7-point Likert scale with 7 marking 'Strongly Agree' and 1 marking 'Strongly Disagree'.

C. Data Analysis

The Smart PLS software version 3.2 was used to analyze the questionnaire due to its ability to produce latent variable scores, avoid small sample size problems and estimate complex models scores [33,34]. The data was first analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis (measurement model) in order to measure the validity and reliability of the constructs and instruments. After that, structural model analysis was done to measure the hypothesized model in order to explain the significant relationship between independent variable and dependent variable if the *t*-statistic value exceeds 1.65 [34]. Next, R^2 value is used as an indicator of the overall predictive strength of the model through these criteria: 0.25 (weak), 0.50 (moderate) and 0.75 (substantial) [33,34].

Then, f^2 value is used to ensure the effect size of the independent variable in research model based on criteria: 0.02 (weak), 0.15 (medium) and 0.35 (strong) [33]. Finally, Q^2 value for dependent variable which is greater than 0 (zero) indicates that the research model has predictive relevance [33].

IV. RESULTS

A. Respondents' Demographic Profile

The majority of the respondents were female (59.3%), permanent employees (98.2%), non-executive (34.5%), 33 to 44 years old (38.9%), degree holders (52.2%), those who have served the organization between 15 and 25 years (33.6%) and those with a salary of RM7,000 and above (41.6%).

B. Measurement Model Analysis

Measurement model analysis was done to ensure the validity and reliability of each item and construct. In terms of reliability, the factor loading values for items in emotional support were between 0.781 and 0.854, instrumental support;

between 0.762 and 0.813 and extra role behavior; between 0.743 and 0.882.

The values, which were greater than 0.708 indicate that the measurement of the construct model had met its reliability criteria. In addition, the composite reliability values for emotional support was 0.899, instrumental support was 0.888 and extra role behavior was 0.846. The values which were greater than 0.708 signaling that the internal consistency for the research instrument was high [33]. As for the average variance extracted (AVE), the value for emotional support was 0.691, instrumental support was 0.614 and extra role behavior was 0.648. The values which exceeded 0.5 indicate that the constructs meet the acceptable level of convergent validity [33]. Furthermore, the output values of variance inflation factor (VIF) between independent variables (emotional support and instrumental support) and dependent variable (extra role behavior) ranged from 1.365 to 2.134 which were lower than 5.0 indicating that the constructs were free from serious collinearity problems [33]. These analysis results are demonstrated in Table I.

Table- I: Validity and Reliability analysis results

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading (>0.708)	VIF (<5.0)	AVE (>0.5)	CR (>0.708)
Emotional support (ES)	ES1	0.851	1.919		
	ES2	0.854	2.098	0.691	0.899
	ES3	0.835	2.134		
	ES4	0.781	1.764		
Instrumental support (IS)	IS1	0.791	1.801		
	IS2	0.779	2.017		
	IS3	0.813	1.897	0.614	0.888
	IS4	0.772	1.750		
	IS5	0.762	1.693		
Extra-role behaviour (ERB)	ERB1	0.882	1.653		
	ERB2	0.743	1.365	0.648	0.846
	ERB3	0.784	1.442		

Note: VIF= Variance Inflation Factor; AVE=Average Variance Extracted; CR= Composite Reliability

The discriminant validity of the measurement model is shown through the HTMT criterion (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio). The values range from 0.531 to 0.644, which were less than 0.90. These values (HTMT) indicate that the constructs had achieved discriminant validity criteria [33]. The results are shown as in Table II. In brief, it can be said that, the results of the measurement model confirm that the instruments have met the validity and reliability standards.

Table- II: Discriminant validity analysis through HTMT criterion

Constructs/ HTMT values	ES	IS	ERB
ES			
IS	0.636		
ERB	0.644	0.531	

Note: ES= Emotional support; IS=Instrumental support; ERB= Extra-role behavior

C. Structural Model Analysis

Table III illustrates that the presence of emotional support and instrumental support from the supervisors had contributed to 31% changes in extra role behavior. This outcome shows that supervisor support provides a weak support for the model [33,34]. Furthermore, the research hypotheses examined display two fundamental research findings: first, emotional support significantly impacts extra role behavior (β= 0.409; t= 4.454; p=0.000), thus H1 is supported. Second, instrumental support significantly impacts

extra role behavior (β= 0.211; t= 2.551; p= 0.005), therefore H2 is also supported. The findings confirm that the assessment of emotional support and instrumental support are important predictors of extra role behavior.

Bootstrapping and Blindfolding procedures were conducted to measure effect size (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2). The result from the effect size test reveals that

emotional support was 0.169 where the value was less than 0.35. This shows that the construct gives a modest impact towards extra role behavior [33]. Meanwhile the f^2 value for instrumental support was 0.045 where the value was less than 0.15. This means that the construct has a weak effect towards

extra role behavior [33]. In addition, the results of testing the predictive relevance of reflective endogenous latent variable show that the Q^2 for extra role behavior was greater than zero which was 0.178 [33] and this suggests that this construct has predictive relevance.

Table III: Structural Model Analysis Results

Relationship between Supervisor Support and Extra-Role behavior	β	Std error	t-value	p-value	BCI UL 5%	BCI LL 95%	f^2	R^2	Q^2
H1: Emotional support has a positive impact on extra-role behavior	0.409	0.092	4.454	0.000	0.258	0.561	0.169		
								0.306	0.178
H2: Instrumental support has a positive impact on extra-role behavior	0.211	0.083	2.551	0.005	0.083	0.358	0.045		

Note 1: BCI UL= Bias-corrected-interval upper level; BCI LL= Bias-corrected–interval lower level
Note 2: Significant at *t > 1.65 (One Tail Testing)

V. DISCUSSIONS

Based on the results, this study confirms that supervisor support does play its role as a crucial predictor of extra-role behavior. The supervisors in the respected organization have implemented proper and adequate supports through listening to employees' problems, appreciating their work contributions, giving constructive feedback and encouraging employees to improve their work skills. Thus, the ability of supervisor in executing emotional support and instrumental support have seen to give impact on extra-role behavior among these employees.

This study has addressed three important contributions. In terms of theoretical aspect, the findings of this study are consistent with the notion of Organizational Support theory [14] and Path-Goal theory [27,28] .These theories suggest that, positive perceptions from employees on support given by the organization through supervisors acting as the representative can lead to extra-role behavior [6,20–23]. As for the methodology contributions, the questionnaires used in this study have met the reliability and validity criteria. Extensive analysis was done by focusing on the impact and influence of exogenous variables (emotional support and instrumental support) on extra-role behavior. As a result, it can lead to accurate and reliable research outcomes.

Meanwhile, in terms of practitioner contributions, the findings can be used as basis of developing a guideline practitioners in improving their humanistic skills related to emotional support and instrumental support. Therefore, it is important for the management to consider several aspects. First, the management should implement continuous psychological courses such as Neuro Linguistics Programs (NLP) for supervisors to strengthen their relationship with employees and to tackle them psychologically according to different generations (Generation X, Y and Z). Second, the management should organize and distribute workloads according to appropriate supervisor-employee ratio based on their expertise, skills and interests. This can help supervisors to navigate the direction of the task based on the organization's objectives and build a good teamwork. Lastly, supervisors can develop emotional and instrumental support skills through regular discussions and feedback relating to work, and personal matters so that when both of them have a good rapport, employees could give their helping hands indirectly outside their job scope when it is needed.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several limitations that exist while conducting this study. First, using the cross-sectional research design had made the researchers to collect the data only once within a short period of time. Thus, the importance of the relationship between variables could not properly explained in detail. Second, this study does not discuss in detail the relationship between the dimensions of the variables. Third, the use of purposive sampling technique will not escape the issue of bias. The limitations mentioned may reduce the capacity in producing generalizability of the findings to other types of organizations.

Thus, there are several suggestions made to strengthen similar research in future. First, the use of longitudinal research design is believed to be more useful in describing the patterns of change and the direction of the magnitude of causal relationships between variables. Second, further research should explore the impact of supervisor support (emotional support and instrumental support) on other attitudinal outcomes such as engagement and turnover intention [35–37]. Lastly, in order to decrease the response bias effect, the researcher should distribute the survey to a larger sample size so that the research outcome will be more relevant and reliable.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study reveals that supervisor support has become an important predictor for extra-role behavior in the context of organizational climate. The ability of supervisor in executing and implementing both emotional support and instrumental support properly towards the employees has resulted in enhancing positive attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (in this case is extra-role behavior). This is where the proposed model significantly explained 31% of variance in employees' extra-role behavior. Therefore, in the current practice within workplace, the management should consider areas for improvement especially instrumental support to ensure the role of supervisor could effectively delivered to employees in future.

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