

Is Perceived Organizational Support an Antecedent of Employee Behaviour?

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Abstract

Employee is one of the most valuable asset in an organization. It is important to provide support to the employee to ensure their welfare is guaranteed. This paper measures the impact of perceived organizational support on employee behaviour. Questionnaire survey data was collected from 114 respondents who are presently employed at a public organization in Malaysia. The partial least squares structural equation model (PLS-SEM) was used to test the hypotheses. There are four findings derived from the data, first: supervisor support negatively

correlated with organizational commitment. Second, supervisor support positively correlated with organizational citizenship behaviour. Meanwhile, third procedural justice positively correlated with organizational commitment. Lastly, procedural justice positively correlated with organizational citizenship behaviour. Theoretical and practical implications, as well as limitations, are discussed.

Keywords: perceived organizational support, supervisor support, procedural justice, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour.

1. Introduction

In this current era of globalisation, maintaining the welfare of employees is a matter that should be emphasised by an organization to ensure the progress and competitiveness. This is because employees are assets owned by an organization (Gabcanova, 2011) and employees who are competent and have high self-motivation in completing the tasks given are the most valuable assets (Imtiaz et al., 2018; Siddiqui, 2014). Support from the organization is one of the most important aspects of employees' performance. According to Eisenberger (1986) and Giorgi, Dubin & Perez, (2016), employees who receive the necessary support from the organization will show proactive behaviour, such as improvement in performance and job satisfaction as well as loyalty to the organization.

According to Eisenberger et al., (1986) and Ngang & Tengku, (2015), perceived organizational support viewed as the level of the assumption by employees that organization always provides support, attention and acknowledgment to the employees who work for them. Two main elements that are often discussed by researchers related to the notion of organizational support are supervisor support and procedural justice (Eisenberger et al., 2002). First, the support from the supervisor is the ability of the supervisor in looking after the welfare of employees and able to give appreciation to employees for the contributions that have been made (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Yadav & Rangnekar, 2015; Sadiya Mohamed & Maimunah, 2016). Second, procedural fairness which is the perception of employees in the existence of justice in the procedures used by the organization in determining any decision such as punishment or reward (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Lambert & Hogan, 2013; Dinc, 2015).

Recently, the world community has been shaken by the covid-19 pandemic in which the effects have greatly affected the world economic sector. The role of organizational support also plays an essential part in ensuring the safety of employees. For example, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health of the Ministry of Human Resources in Malaysia has issued workplace safety procedures which among the contents stated the role of organizations in efforts to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Every organization and employer must place priorities to the welfare of employees by providing a safe workplace such as conducting screening in the workplace as well as ensuring adequate hygiene and health care equipment (Ahmad, 2014). Besides, information, training and supervision related to Covid-19 should be provided and disseminated fairly and transparently among employees such as providing computers, tablets, mobile devices as well as the Internet to help an office to run smoothly, and to support employees regarding information and communication related to work (Wayne

et al., 2016; Pfano & Beharry, 2016).

Organizational support gives benefit to the employees' behaviour in terms of job performance (Sadiya Mohamed and Maimunah, 2016), organizational commitment (Colakoglu et al., 2010; Juraifa and Mafuzah, 2013), and turnover intention (Arshadi, 2011). Recent studies have found that organizational ability in practising support practices for employees shows a significant impact on organizational commitment (Mushtaq, Ellahi & Khan, 2019; Asyakireen et al., 2018; Ngatuni, 2019; Sadiya Ahmed & Maimunah, 2016) and behavior organizational citizenship (Zayed et al., 2020; Winarsih & Riyanto, 2020; Ali, 2019; Yadav & Gupta, 2017; Odor, Emesom & Ugbechies, 2019). From the perspective of organizational behaviour, organizational commitment is defined as an individual belief in the values and goals of the organization and intends to continue to maintain membership in the organization (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Teresia & Suyasa, 2008). While organizational citizenship behaviour refers to the behaviour performed by employees voluntarily without expecting any reward from management and it is not enshrined in the given task (Smith, Organ & Near, 1983; Magdalena, 2014).

Although the nature of this relationship has been extensively studied, the role of supervisor support and procedural fairness as predictor variables is given less attention in the literature review of organizational support perceptions. This condition is probably due to several factors. First, previous studies describe the internal characteristics of organizational support conceptually such as explaining the definition, purpose, function and importance (Ahmed et al., 2011; Sun, 2019). Second, correlations between organizational support and employee behaviour (turnover rate, job satisfaction, employee performance) are used as a single construct (Muhammad, 2014; Danish et al., 2015; Rahman & Karan, 2012). Therefore, this situation has attracted researchers to explore the nature of the relationship indepth.

This study has four objectives. First, to measure the relationship between supervisor support and organizational commitment. Second, to measure the relationship between supervisor support and organizational citizenship behavior. Third, to measure the relationship between procedural fairness and organizational commitment. Fourth, to measure the relationship between procedural fairness and organizational citizenship behavior.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1 The Relationship Between Supervisor Support and Organizational Commitment

Several recent studies conducted by previous researchers highlighted that supervisor support is a key determinant of organizational commitment. Among them, a study by Mushtaq, Ellahi & Khan (2019) using a sample of 220 employees of the banking sector, airlines and fast-food restaurants in Pakistan. Then, Asyakireen et al., (2018) distributed questionnaire among 142 staff organization who function for public election for Malaysia government located in Klang Valley. Next, study by Ngatuni (2019) with sample of 123 employees from various organizations covering public, private and non-governmental organizations in the Lake zone, Tanzania. Besides, a study conducted by Sadiya Ahmed & Maimunah (2016) involving a total of 274 employees of telecommunication companies in Malaysia. All the studies

mentioned above revealed that the ability of supervisor who gives attention to employees' welfare and being able to appreciate workers contributions will enhance organizational commitment among employees (Mushtaq, Ellahi & Khan 2019; Asyakireen et al., 2018; Ngatuni 2019; Sadiya Ahmed & Maimunah, 2016). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H1: supervisor support has a positive relationship with organizational commitment

2.2 The Relationship Between Procedural Justice and Organizational Commitment

A number of researchers in their studies have highlighted that organizational commitment are affected by procedural justice based on different sample. Among them, study by Imamoglu et al., (2019) that using 211 from 101 different firms in Turkey, Edeh & Ugwu (2019) used a sample of 183 teachers in Nigeria, Jehanzeb & Mohanty (2020) distributed their questionnaires among 379 bank workers located in five metropolitan cities in Pakistan, Manshor et al., (2016) using a sample of 384 SME employees in Malaysia. These studies exposed that if the superior or immediate supervisor in the organization is able to treat their worker with unbiased manners in terms of decision-making processes, it will enhance the level of organizational commitment (Imamoglu et al., 2019; Edeh & Ugwu, 2019; Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2020; Manshor et al., 2016). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H2: Procedural justice has a positive relationship with organizational commitment

2.3 The relationship Between Supervisor Support and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Issues of supervisor support as a predictor of organizational citizenship behaviour gained strong attention from many researchers. For example Uzun (2018) with sample of 234 teachers working in public high schools in Giresun city centre during the year of 2016, Kusuma, Wiyono & Lukitaningsih (2020) used 238 employee of private company operated in Yogyakarta, Asyakireen et al., (2018) that involved 142 employees of public election organization located in Klang Valley and lastly, Rabbani et al., (2017) involving 340 workers in the manufacturing sector in Pakistan. All analysis result based on different sample above, revealed that supervisor who always prioritize employee's needs and concern about their emotions and well-being may lead to the increase of organizational citizenship behaviour (Uzun, 2018; Kusuma, Wiyono & Lukitaningsih, 2020; Asyakireen et al., 2018; Rabbani et al., 2017). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H3: supervisor support has a positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour

2.4 The Relationship between Procedural Justice and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Several recent studies were conducted using direct effect model to study about procedural justice on different samples. For examples, perception of 373 non-managerial staff from nine government ministries in Kuwait city (Zayed et al., 2020), 70 respondent among teachers, administrative and support staff on vocational high school in South Tangerang area, Indonesia (Winarsih & Riyanto, 2020), 163 employees in Syarian Arab Red Crescent in Syaria (Ali 2019), sample of 204 hotel workers in India (Yadav & Gupta, 2017), 105 lectures of Delta State Polytechnic Ogwashi Uku in Nigeria (Odor, Emesom & Ugbechies, 2019). These studies found that when supervisors are able to implement fairness in decision making

process such as giving opportunities for workers to voice out their views, as then it may lead to the increase of organizational citizenship behaviour (Zayed et al., 2020; Winarsih & Riyanto, 2020; Ali, 2019; Yadav & Gupta, 2017; Odor, Emesom & Ugbechies, 2019). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H4: Procedural justice has a positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour

3. Theoretical Framework

The role of supervisor support and procedural justice are significant determinant of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour is in line with the idea of organizational behaviour theory. For example Social Exchange Theory by Blau (1964) explain that when individuals perceived the presence of positive action from others then he will reciprocate that action with positive behaviour (i.e. trust, loyalty, increase performance). In terms of supervisor support, the ability of immediate supervisor to show their support such as concerns about employee’s welfare then they will respond by showing positive attitude and behaviour (i.e. organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour). While, Adam (1963) Equity Theory posit the quality of relationship between supervisor and employee rely on principle of justice. This theory states that individuals will compare the input given (i.e. knowledge, expertise, contribution) either in parallel with the output (reward, performance appraisal, appreciation, job development) received by organization. When individuals feel that justice exists in the procedures used by the organization and information received about the procedure is adequate, then it may strongly evoke positive behaviour (i.e. organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour). Figure 1 demonstrates the study model of the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee behaviour.

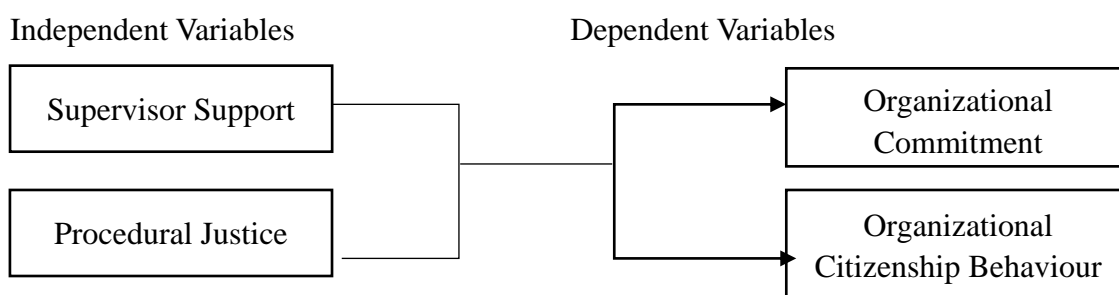


Figure I. Conceptual Framework

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

Cross-sectional design is used in this research. According to Cresswell (2008) and Sekaran & Bougie (2010), this method is commonly used because researcher can collect more accurate data, improve the quality of the data collected and can avoid bias elements. Back to back translation for questionnaire is used from Malay language to English and English to Malay in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Hence, to increase respondent understanding on question as Malaysia use Malay language as their first language (Cresswell,

2008; Now & Bougie, 2008). This study was conducted in Malaysian public institution. Next, the SmartPLS version 3.3.2 software was used to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument and test the research hypotheses (Henseler et al., 2009; Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., and Becker, J.-M. 2015; Hair et al. 2017). The statistical package provides many advantages, which includes providing latent variables scores, avoiding small sample size problems, estimating complex models with many latent and manifest variables and error terms, and handling both reflective and formative measurement models (Henseler et al., 2009).

4.2 Sampling

The purposive sampling method was used to collect the data. A purposive sampling method was chosen because the management could not provide a list of respondents to the researcher due to the organizations adopt a confidentiality policy. This situation does not allow researchers to select respondents using random sampling methods. Minimum sample size determined using the G*Power software (Erdfelder et al. 1996). Minimum sample size of this study is 43 respondents. Out of the 150 questionnaires distributed, a total of 114 were returned to the researcher.

4.2 Measurement Scales

All items used in the questionnaire were based on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree (1)” to “strongly agree (7)”.

4.2.1 Supervisor Support (SS)

SS was measured by five items adapted from Baloyi et al (2014). Examples of items are; “My supervisor gives clear instructions”, “My supervisor holds regular meetings with my workgroup”, “My supervisor gives feedback in a way that feels safe” and “My supervisor really cares about my well-being”.

4.2.2 Procedural Justice (PJ)

Five items of procedural justice questionnaire were adapted using the component of organizational justice from (Cropanzo, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007). Items used are; “No person or group is singled out for discrimination or ill-treatment”, “Decisions are based on accurate information” and “There is an appeals process or other mechanism for fixing mistakes”.

4.2.3 Organizational Commitment (OC)

Five items of organizational commitment questionnaire were adapted from organizational commitment literature (Colakoglu et al 2010). Some items are; “I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization”, “I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own” and “Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity”.

4.2.4 Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Five items of organizational citizenship behaviour adapted from Podsakoff et al. (2010). Example items are “I voluntarily help new employees settle into the job”, “I keep abreast of

changes in the organization” and “I attend meetings that are not mandatory, but important”

5. Result

5.1 Profile of Respondents

In term of the respondent profile, most of the respondents were female (59.6%), aged between 34-39 years (37.7%), non-executive (67.5%), work more than 5 years (33.3%), and a monthly salary of between RM 1001, RM 2499 (26.5%).

5.2 Measurement Model Analysis

Measurement model analysis was done to ensure the validity and reliability of each item and construct. In term of reliability, factor loading values for each item in supervisor support, procedural justice, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour are between greater than 0.700 which indicate that the measurement of the construct model had met its reliability criteria. The output values of Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) between independent variables (supervisor support and procedural justice) and dependent variable (organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour) are lower than 5.0 which indicates that the constructs were free from serious collinearity problems (Hair et al., 2017). The result for reliability are shown in Table 1 and Table 2 below:

Table 1. Factor Loading of the Instruments

Construct/ Item	Factor loading < 0.708
Supervisor support	
SS1 Cares about well being	0.769
SS2 Praises when do a good job	0.809
SS3 Gives enough time to practice the skills learned during training programme.	0.816
SS4 Holds regular meetings	0.764
SS5 Gives feedback	0.861
Procedural Justice	
PJ1 Job decisions are made in an unbiased manner.	0.932
PJ2 Collects accurate and complete information to make job decisions	0.944
PJ3 All job decisions are applied consistently across all affected employees.	0.928
PJ4 Employees are allowed to change or appeal job decisions made by the manager.	0.775
PJ5 When decisions are made about my job, my supervisor treats me with kindness and consideration.	0.910

Organizational Commitment	
OC1 This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	0.825
OC2 I feel obligation to remain with my current employer	0.887
OC3 This organization deserves my loyalty.	0.894
OC4 Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.	0.843
OC5 I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	0.794
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour	
OCB1 I help others who have heavy workloads.	0.789
OCB2 I am one of the most conscientious employees	0.832
OCB3 I respect company rules and policies even when no one is watching me.	0.805
OCB4 I am mindful of how my behaviour affects other people's jobs	0.857
OCB5 I do not waste time complaining about trivial matters	0.871

Source: Smart-PLS software

Table 2. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) of the Instrument

Construct	SS	PJ	OC	OCB
Supervisor Support (SS)			1.814	1.814
Procedural Justice (PJ)			1.814	1.814
Organizational Commitment (OC)				
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)				

Source: Smart-PLS software

Table 3 shows the result of convergent and discriminant validity analysis. For convergent validity, the value of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) which exceeded 0.5 indicated that the constructs meet the acceptable level of convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017). The Composite Reliability (CR) values for each construct are greater than 0.708 indicate that the internal consistency for the research instrument was high (hair et al., 2017). Furthermore, the findings of discriminant validity using Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) for each construct is less than 0.85 (Clark & Watson, 1995; Henseler et al., 2015), so the study construct has met the prescribed discrimination validity criteria (Barclay et al., 1995; Henseler et al., 2009). Therefore, this statistical result confirms that the constructs have met the acceptable standards of validity and reliability analysis.

Table 3. Convergent and Discriminant Validity Analysis

CONSTRUCT	AVE	CR	SS	CS	OC	OCB
SS	0.690	0.952				
CS	0.771	0.959	0.705			
OC	0.722	0.928	0.522	0.766		
OCB	0.646	0.901	0.646	0.782	0.592	

Source: Smart-PLS software

5.3 Structural Model Analysis

5.3.1 Results on the Hypotheses

Figure 1 shows the consumption of supervisor support and procedural justice on organizational commitment is 50.9 %. This outcome shows that perceived organizational support provides a weak support for the model (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler, 2010). Whereas, the research hypotheses of SmartPLS routes has shown that supervisor support has a negatively correlated with organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.028$; $t = 0.303$), thus H1 is rejected. Second, procedural justice positively correlated with organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.694$, $t = 5.568$). Thus, H2 is supported. This result shows that only procedural justice act as an important predictor on organizational commitment.

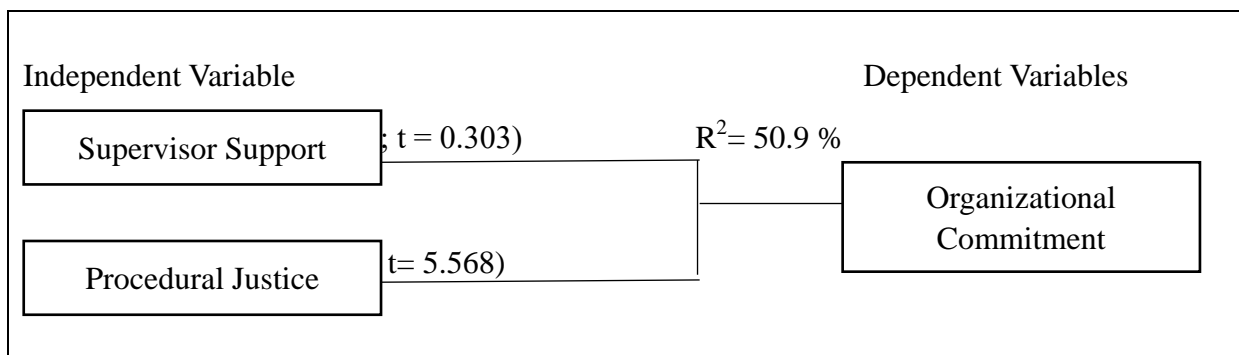


Figure 1. Outcome of hypotheses 1 and 2

Figure 2 showed that the impact of supervisor support and procedural justice had contributed 52.5% toward organizational citizenship behaviour. This outcome shows that perceived organizational support provides a weak support for the model [Hair et al., 2017, Henseler, 2010]. Smart-PLS path coefficient shown that supervisor support has a positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour ($\beta = 0.197$; $t = 2.035$). Thus H3 is supported. Second, procedural justice has a positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour ($\beta = 0.577$, $t = 5.568$), thus H4 is supported. The findings confirm that the assessment of supervisor support and procedural justice are important predictors of organizational citizenship behaviour.

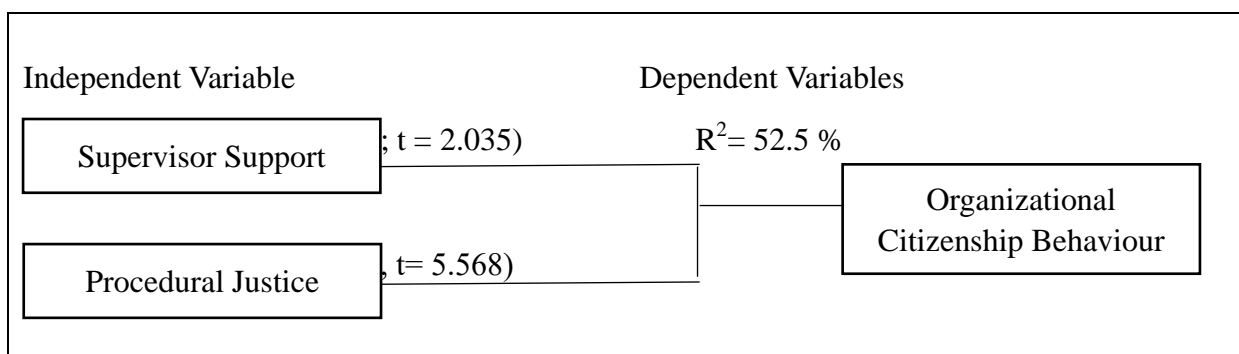


Figure 2. Outcome of hypotheses 3 and 4

Bootstrapping and blindfolding procedures were conducted to measure the effect size (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2). The effect size (f^2) of the independent variable in the research model based on criteria suggested by Hair et al. (2017) and Henseler (2010). 0.02 (weak), 0.15 (medium), 0.35 (strong) (Hair et al. 2017; Henseler 2010). The result from the effect size (f^2) test reveals that supervisor support gives weak impact towards organizational commitment where the value was 0.001 and organizational citizenship behaviour where the value was 0.045 which is less than 0.15. Meanwhile, the f^2 values for procedural justice shows a strong impact towards organizational commitment where the value was 0.540 and organizational citizenship behaviour where the value was 0.387. Both f^2 value was higher than 0.35 which means that the construct has a high impact towards organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. In addition, the results of testing the predictive relevance of reflective endogenous latent variable show that the Q^2 for organizational commitment was greater than zero which 0.204 and this suggests that this construct has predictive relevance (Hair et al. 2017).

Table 3. Structural Model Analysis

	β	SD	<i>t</i> -stat	<i>p</i> -value	f^2	R^2	Q^2
H1: supervisor support has a positive impact on organizational commitment	0.028	0.094	0.303	0.381	0.001	0.509	0.351
H2: procedural justice has a positive impact on organizational commitment	0.694	0.086	8.089	0.000	0.540		
H3: supervisor support has a positive impact on organizational citizenship behaviour	0.197	0.097	2.035	0.021	0.045	0.525	0.351
H4: procedural justice has a positive impact on organizational citizenship behaviour	0.577	0.104	5.568	0.000	0.387		

7. Discussion and Implication

This study confirms that perceived organizational support does play as an important factor in employee's behaviour (organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour). However, even though the path coefficient (R^2) is high, new findings showed that supervisor support negatively correlated with organizational commitment. This is because the support that they received from supervisor did not meet their expectations thus it affected their commitment towards the organization. Moreover, there are other factors that influence employee commitment on the organization such as co-worker support, a modern and comfortable working environment and demographic factors.

The implication of this study can be divided into three major aspects: theoretical implication, the robustness of research methodology, and contribution to practical (organization). In term of theoretical implications, this study shows that the social exchange theory is in line with the results. An employee who received a prominent and efficient support from the organization will reciprocate into positive employee behaviour which in this case, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. Future research should explore how perceived organizational support might influence another construct such as job satisfaction, employee service quality and performance. The methodology of this study shows the use of the survey questionnaire was able to provide deeper insight into the research where questionnaire gives the respondent a space to answer the questions comfortably and honestly. The selected questionnaires data exceeded a minimum standard of validity and reliability, this leads to a production of accurate findings. In regard of practical contributions, this study provides a chance for the HR practitioner and a management to identify and practice effective organizational support practices to ensure that employee receives sufficient support in accordance their task and to increase their positive employee behaviour.

8. Limitation

Limitations are also unavoidable in this study. This study only focuses on public departments only, therefore the findings of this study are not suitable to be generalized to other sectors or organizations. This study also uses cross-sectional study methods. Therefore, data is only collected once. The researcher recommends future studies to conduct longitudinal studies to see the effectiveness of support practices before and after employees receive such support. In addition, this study uses purposive sampling as the organization adopts a confidentiality policy which in turn will create a bias in the answers given by the respondents.

9. Conclusion

This study confirms that perceived organizational support does act as an important variable of employee behaviour in general. This results also show a new finding that supervisor support does not act as a predictor on organizational commitment. This study further suggests that the ability of the manager to properly implement external recruitment source will strongly induce subsequent positive employee outcomes. Therefore, these positive results can motivate employees to maintain and enhance organizational competitiveness in this era of flied global economy.

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