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Impact of Management Support on Employee Commitment in Hotel Sector

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of managerial support on the employee commitment of employees working in Hotel industry of Malaysia. The study utilizes regression model to assess a survey data collected from 415 respondents working in different areas of Malaysia. The results indicate that managerial support is positively and significantly related to employee commitment. Moreover, the findings of the study also reveal that managers must pay more attention to support employees in their routine activities to achieve comparative advantage over its competitors. This cross-sectional study is limited to a very specific geographical area, therefore, a future study with a wide geographical and organizational setting is recommended.

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1. Introduction

Tourism is a major source of forex and has the capacity to boost opportunities, but the rapid increase of turnover in the hotel sector in particular and in the hospitality sector in general has worsened the growth of the entire hotel sector (Mastar, Darus, & Shamsudin, 2016). The turnover of employee is mainly linked to the lack of employee commitment (Ekhsan, 2019; Stanley, Vandenberghe, Vandenberg, & Bentein, 2013). Retention of highly committed employee has been highlighted as a daunting task in the hospitality industry of Malaysia (Syed Haider, 2017). As the hotel workers have a vital role to play in communicating directly with customers (Jeangjai & Pathanasin, 2020), therefore, the perception of consumers in the hotel industry is primarily established during a service meeting (Yang, 2010). Research has shown that unsatisfactory service experiences arise from the inability of obverse workers to provide reliable service and fulfilling

customer requirements (Xu et al., 2018). This unsatisfactory service experience of customers is usually arise due to absence of employees commitment with the organization (Jeangjai & Pathanasin, 2020).

According to Eraqi (2006) tourism managers now recognize the importance of hiring and retention of highly committed employees for ensuring the quality of service delivery in a market that is under competitive pressure. The managers must extend their maximum support to their employees so that they are able to face the challenges by building a stable psychological atmosphere and establishing a community of trust within the organisation, which in turn will boost employee commitment (Khalid, 2020). Managerial support is the ability of managers to meet the schedules and responsibilities of employees and extending support that help employees handle their jobs and make them easier (Saridakis, Lai, Muñoz Torres, & Gourlay, 2020). Successful managers make good impacts on employees within an organisation and that results in enhanced employees commitment (Terzi & Derin, 2016). The main objective of this study is to explore the relationship between managerial support and employee commitment on the basis the Social Exchange theory of Blau (1964) in the hotel industry of Malaysia.

2. Literature review

2.1 Managerial Support

Managerial Support (MS) refers to the interpersonal association between the supervisor and an employee within an organization (Conway, 2011). Availability of these kind of assistance is directly associated with the growth, encouragement and retaining of skilled personnel (Ahmad, Bilal, & Bibi, 2020). In addition, the reciprocal partnership between manager and employee enables smoother and more joyful work to improve employee productivity at the workplace and the degree of organisational commitment (Zhao & Zhou, 2008). MS can be very significant for the decision on turnover in a situation where an interpersonal association is of primary concern (Ovadge & Muogboh, 2009). Poor management can result from vague perceptions of the employer and lack of knowledge on the job, which may impede the employee commitment of workers who cultivate the idea of leaving the organisation (Ahmad et al., 2020). Furthermore, the relation of effective commitment and supervisor support becomes strengthen when the performance of employees is evaluated by the supervisor and these evaluation reports are communicated to the executive who are representatives of the organization (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002).

2.2 Employee Commitment

Porter, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974) explained Employee Commitment (EC) as “the strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization”. A highly dedicated employee works harder and displays a strong contribution to the company (Ahmad, Abdul Majid, & Mohd Zin, 2015). Similarly, Morris and Sherman (1981) propose that commitment is a compromise among outputs and inputs. The employee’s commitment will surface an employee receives more from the organization than he or she spends or contributes. Likewise, Dockel, Basson, and Coetzee (2006) express that committed employees are functioning efficiently on behalf of the organization and remain with the organisation for longer periods of time. The committed and devoted workforce has a more positive role to play in the organisation, and workers feel that they have more respect for their organisation and that they really appreciate the objectives of the organisation (L. Meyer & Janney, 1989).

Extensive research has been done to investigate the association between the level of EC and

job satisfaction in various perspectives. The outcome of research of Agustiningsih, Thoyib, Djumilah, and Noermijati (2016) have shown that remuneration is core elements of work satisfaction. The study found that remuneration was a powerful element of individual commitment. Furthermore, the systematic study on human resource management (HRM) in tourism industry published by Kusluvan, Kusluvan, Ilhan, and Buyruk (2010) highlighted numerous factors that lead to organisational commitment of employees such as pay, job satisfaction, working climate, HRM activities, team cohesion, career growth, work itself, and interaction with colleagues. Moreover, social exchange theory (SET) is among the most comprehensive theological and in particular, socio-psychological concepts in use that defines exchange as a mechanism of social change and harmony among groups (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). It was among the most influential philosophical concepts used to explain commitment and also to recognize the determinants behind the employee behaviours (Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995). This theory is also used to understand the connection between employees and employers in the context of organizational commitment (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005). SET considers that if employees feel valued and benefited from the organization, they reciprocate via good efforts, dedication and positive attitude. Employees who are more eager to their profession display more enthusiasm and commitment to their organization (Mossholder, Settoon, & Henagan, 2005)

2.3 Relationship between Management Support and Employee Commitment

Many studies have found the supervisor's support as one of the most significant factors affecting commitment (Adu, Li, Mohammed, Antwi, & Boamah, 2019; Khalid, 2020). Watson (2009) argues that employees who receive more support from supervisors show more commitment to their organization than those who receives less support from supervisors. Moreover, supervisors' decisions have an impact on commitment (J. P. Meyer & Espinoza, 2016) and the negligence of subordinates' contributions by the supervisors will lead to low confidence level among the staff. According to Ahmad et al. (2020) the employee would have a good attitude towards their organization when the employer provides ample support in return. Social exchange theory (Balu, 1964) provided that if management shows serious concern for the advancement of its employees, the workers would reciprocate in similar way, which will maintain a positive working relationship by linking personnel to the organisation objectives. Employees who perceive that their manager are qualified, competent and trustworthy are more likely to support the organizational values and objectives (Cannella, Finkelstein, & Hambrick, 2008). Pleasant connections among supervisors and workers enhance the worker's willingness to remain longer in the company and hence increase commitment (Cannella et al., 2008; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H1: *There is a positive and significant relationship between MS and EC.*

3. Methodology and Analysis

The Population of this study includes all the employees working in the hotels located at Sabah, Sarawak, Terengganu, Kedah, Malacca, and Negeri Sembilan regions of Malaysia. The data was collected through a survey questionnaire. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed randomly. Out of which 430 questionnaires were received back, while out of 430, fifteen questionnaires were discarded due to missing values more than 35%. The response rate was found to be 83 percent. Managerial Support was measured with 5-items scale of London (1993), while the employee commitment was assessed by a 9-items scale of Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure each item on both scales, where 1 represented strongly disagree and 5 represented strongly agree.

3.1 Reliability Analysis

The Cronbach's alpha has been shown in Table 1, the value of all for the measurements are higher than 0.70. Therefore, all the scales are found reliable for carrying out further process (Nunnally, 1978)

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability

Variable	Alpha Reliability
MS*	0.718
EC**	0.809

*Management Support, ** Employee Commitment

3.2 Correlation Analysis

The correlation outcome has been shown in Table 2 demonstrate a positive and significant correlation between EC and MS ($r = 0.744$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 2 Correlation

	EC	MS
EC*	1	
MS**	.744**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To further test the strength of the positive relationship between MS and EC, regression analysis was used. The outcome of the model including R values, ANOVA and coefficients are shown in the following table 3. The regression test results show that managerial support significantly and positively affect commitment of employees working in hotel industry of Malaysia. The results explain a variance of 55.3% in employee commitment with a $\beta = 0.744$, $F = 248.81$, $t = 15.77$, $p < 0.001$. R^2 value 55.3% means that a one unit increases in managerial support causes increase of 0.553 units in employee commitment and hence on the basis of regression outcomes we accept the hypothesis that MS positively and significantly affect employee commitment.

Table 3: Results of Regression Model (Dependent Variable: EC)

Dependent variable: EC and Independent variable: MS	
R value	0.744
R Square value	0.553
Beta Value	0.744
T value	15.77
F value	248.81
Sig.	.000

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to assess the impact of MS on EC of employees working in hospitality sector of Malaysia. The findings of our study are consistent with the results of previous studies indicating the positive relationship between MS and EC (Dick & Metcalfe, 2001; Khalid, 2020). This suggests that if staff were to receive the required support from the managers, employees would show positive behaviour towards their organisation in exchange. As a result, MS is indeed one

of the main factors influencing employee commitment. The results further support the SET, which suggest that an employee create and maintain social relation on the basis of mutual benefits and hence managerial support enhances employee commitment.

Once organizations have fulfilled the expectations and values of the employees, their commitment increases and they become willing to remain with the organization for longer period of time (Tansky & Cohen, 2001). Similarly, more recently a study conducted by Khalid (2020) also concluded that managers in the workplace can enhance the commitment level of their employees by showing respect and extending support to them.

5. Implications

The outcomes laid the precedent for certain managerial implications and theoretical consequences relating to MS and EC. The study was designed to find clarity on the previous unclear outcome of the investigation and further measures were taken by the present investigator to address the shortcomings found in earlier analysis. The findings of the research reinforce the idea that MS is of primary importance in enhancing the participation of staff which comprises the practical relevance of the research for practitioners and decision makers. It suggests that as workers receive sufficient MS from the employer; this will actually increase the level of commitment of employees.

6. Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study has some limitations. The data was collected from a limited number of hotels through a self-administered questionnaire. The findings of this study may not be generalized. It is suggested that more employees working in the hotel sector of the country may be included in sample to validate and generalize the findings of the current study. Moreover, this study was a cross sectional, so, it is suggested that in future, time series studies be conducted by considering the seasonal and non-seasonal impacts on the link between managerial support and employee commitment in hotel industry of Malaysia. This study concentrated on the service sector. Future research studies are suggested to be carried out in both service and manufacturing sector simultaneously to gauge the true nature of these concepts. Finally, future research may include other variables like employee engagement, work overload, job embeddedness and training and development. The interplay between these variables is suggested to be checked.

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