MEASURING THE IMPACT OF CO-WORKER SUPPORT ON JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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***Abstract*:** The success of an organization also depends heavily on collaboration and knowledge sharing among team members. It is important that employees can count on the support of their colleagues, as this facilitates their functioning and coping with work demands, because the employee is one of the most valuable assets in an organization. Co-worker support plays an important role in the organization because an employee must cooperate and build a good teamwork with a colleague in order to achieve positive behavior among employees. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between co-worker support and employee behavior from an Islamic perspective as previous research has shown, co-worker support could have a significant impact on employee behavior in the workplace. In this study, a cross-sectional method was used. Data from 300 respondents working as government employees in Peninsular Malaysia were randomly collected and the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) was used to assess the quality of the measurement model and test the hypotheses for the study model. The results of the structural equation model confirm that co-worker support is positively related to job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. This result is an important recommendation for organization to understand the nature of employees and ensure the sustainability of the company in times of global economic competition.

Keywords: Co-Worker Support, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, PLS-SEM.

1. Introduction

In many organizations, work is gradually shifting from an individual focus, where tasks are completed alone, to a more team-based focus, where employees collaborate on projects. This shift leads to more interaction between employees, which can impact organizational outcomes and employee's performance. The influence of co-workers on each other is profound and the influence can even be greater than the influence of supervisors (Chiaburu, D. & Harrison, D., 2008). Co-worker support refers to the level of support, understanding and mentoring provided by colleagues (Tews et al., 2013). According to Nordat et al. (2019), co-worker support is the

willingness of employees to help other colleagues accomplish daily tasks, either in the form of instrumental or emotional support.

In Islam, the concept of co-worker support also corresponds to the understanding of *amal jama'iy,* which is defined as an action performed collectively by a group of people (Wehr, 1980). Religious practice greatly shapes attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Pargament, Magyar-Russell, & Murray-Swank, 2005; Regnerus & Smith, 2005) and affects work-related practices and employee behavior. Nor Azzah (2013) defines co-worker support as an act of knowledge sharing, mutual consultation, and mutual exhortation toward organizational goals to be achieved. This coincides with the words of Allah in the Qur'an (Surah al-Tawbah 9:71), explains that everyone is called to help in their lives. In the context of *amal jama'i,* the practice of teamwork includes physical and mental aspects performed by a group of people working together on a task and goal to achieve organizational objectives according to planned principles and systems (Azhar Alias & Mohd Nizho, 2015: Yao J, Qiu X, Yang L, Han X & Li Y, 2022). Therefore, it could be concluded that collective work in Islam involve collective responsibility that should be undertaken by all to ensure the success of the Ummah.

In this research context, co-worker support refers to team activities performed by employees to achieve organizational goals, such as collaboration, knowledge sharing, and maintaining good relationships among colleagues, as well as helping with work tasks. Currently, there are 1.6 million government employees in Malaysia (New StraitsTimes, 2021), and with such a large number of employees, the process of work implementation can become very cumbersome and requires extensive collaboration and support from all levels of employees within the organization. In such working conditions, it is important that employees can count on support from co-workers, which will facilitate their functioning and coping with job demands. This study investigates whether co-worker support might influence behaviors at workplaces among government employees. The main questions of this study are: what impact does co-worker support have on job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour? Consequently, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationships among co-worker support, job satisfaction and organizational relationship behaviour among government employees. The study aims to identify direct relationships between these constructs.

2. Literature Review

Job satisfaction is a behaviour that expresses satisfaction or the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs (Mitterer et al., 2019). An employee with high job satisfaction has a lower turnover intention, lower voluntary turnover, and higher productivity, leading to better organisational performance. Individual experiences and expectations, work environment, peer support, leadership style, workload, and communication level are important factors that determine job satisfaction (Mitterer et al., 2019: Mitterer, D. M., & Mitterer, H. E. (2023). On the other hand, organisational citizenship behaviours are defined as indirect behaviours, voluntary behaviours, or out-of-role behaviours that are not recognised by the formal reward system or work domain, such as helping the colleague who has a heavy workload, voluntarily attending the meeting, and avoiding problems that make the colleague uncomfortable (Organ 1988; Mohd Soffian Lee et.al., 2019; Asyakireen & Azman, 2019).

In Islam, employees who apply the attitude of *amal jama'iy* in performing a task by always practicing syura, cooperating, and helping each other will encourage the members of the organisation, which will give employees a sense of satisfaction and cultivate the nature of kindness within themselves (Nor Azzah, 2013; Ab Aziz et al. 2014). Every Muslim must be

responsible for trusting the task assigned to him or her by performing the work sincerely (Mastura & Mohd Shahril, 2018). Any work done in a team is high quality if each team member contributes his or her ideas and knowledge to complete the task with flying colours (Ab Aziz et al. 2014). This situation can in turn increase productivity and make the organisation more competitive. Co-worker support can improve employees' performance in task completion and create a supportive work environment.

Therefore, a reasonable effort must be made. Consequently, it is argued that co-worker support in the workplace leads to better results at the individual level and an improved ethical or cultural climate at the organisational level (Anwar et al., 2020), especially in times of economic competition. In line with Islamic values and principles, employee actions and behaviours require individuals to undertake all activities to gain Allah's love, forgiveness, and help (Bhatti, 2016).

3. Theoretical Framework

The role of co-worker support in relation to job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour is consistent with Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory. This theory explains that two main factors influence employees, namely the hygiene factor and the motivation factor. From the Islamic perspective, employee support with job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour consistent with the concept of self-satisfaction (Norhashimah et al., 2017). The concept of self-satisfaction by al-Ghazali is based on the belief and revelation that any action that is sincere and focused on God will be successful (Norhashimah et al., 2017). The strength of faith and revelation, which is the pillar of *nafs,* will enable a person to achieve self-satisfaction when faith controls itself by fulfilling responsibilities and tasks based on *itqan* and *ihsan* (Norhashimah et al., 2017; Mohd Suhardi et al., 2018). A review of recent literature on co-worker influence shows that employees who receive adequate and effective peer support in their daily work can have significant effects on job satisfaction and organisational citizenship behaviour (Eyupoglu 2016; Yao J, Qiu X, Yang L, Han X & Li Y, 2022). Therefore, the hypothesis proposed are:

H1: Co-worker support is positively related to job satisfaction.

H2: Co-worker support is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior.

4. Research Method

The flowchart of the research method in this study is shown in Figure 1.

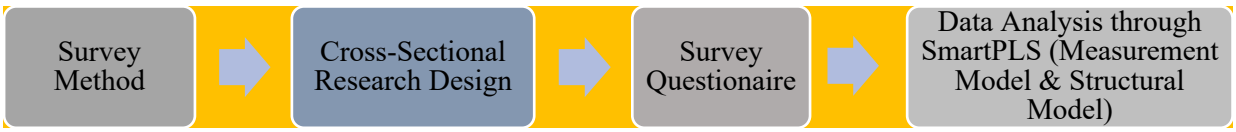


Figure 1: Study methodology flowchart

5. Sample and Data Collection

The study data were collected from public sector employees in Peninsular Malaysia. Using a purposive sampling design, 400 questionnaires were distributed to employees in different departments in the organization. In this study, questionnaire data were collected using random sampling because the top management of the organization had not provided a complete list of

employees for confidentiality reasons. From this list, only 300 (75.25%) usable questionnaires were returned to the researchers. The majority of respondents were female (66.7%), between 38 and 47 years old (41.3%), non-executive (62.0%), married (77.3%), and had a gross monthly income between 1000 and 2499 Malaysian ringgit (31.0%).

6. Measures & Data Analysis

The survey questionnaire was adopted from the co-worker support literature review. It consists of three parts. First, co-workers support includes six items adapted from Tianan Yang et al. (2015). Second, eight items on job satisfaction were adopted from El Din Mohamed (2016). Six items on organizational citizenship behavior were adopted from the organizational citizenship behavior literature (Colakoglu et al. 2010). All items used in the questionnaire are based on a Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (7)". The SmartPLS package was used to analyse the questionnaire based on the data analysis procedure of Hair et al. (2017). This package is used to access the measurement model (the relationship between constructs and their indicators) and test the structural model (the relationship between constructs for the direct effects model).

7. Results and Findings

7.1 Measurement Model

All factor loading values are greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017) with a range of 0.850-0. 892 (co-workers support), 0.7.25-0.831 (job satisfaction), and 0.712-0.796 (organizational citizenship behaviour) indicate that the measurement of the construct model had met its reliability criteria. The average variance extracted (AVE) values for coworker support are 0.754, for job satisfaction 0.610, and for organisational citizenship behaviour 0.572 and are greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017; 2019), indicating that the study construct meets standards for convergent validity. For example, the composite reliability values are greater than 0.8 (Henseler & Ringle, 2009), as a co-worker (0.948), job satisfaction (0.926), and organizational citizenship behaviour (0.889) show high internal consistency. In addition, the variance inflation factor (VIF) values are below 5.0, with the range value of co-worker support (2.956-3.886), job satisfaction (1.744-2.700) and organizational citizenship behaviour (1.632-2.313) indicating that the constructs do not exhibit collinearity problems.

In addition, the discriminant validity results using the heterotrait-monotrait correlation ratio (HTMT) for each construct are less than 0.85 (Clark & Watson, 1995; Henseler et al., 2015), so the construct of the study meets the prescribed criteria of discriminant validity (Barclay et al., 1995; Henseler et al., 2009). Therefore, this statistical result confirms that the constructs met the acceptable standards of validity and reliability analysis.

7.2 Structural Model - Outcomes of the Hypothesis Test

The results of the hypothesis testing revealed two important findings. First, co-worker support has a positive significant relationship with job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.250$; $t= 4.482$, $p=0.000$). Second, there is a positive significant relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour ($\beta=0.110$; $t= 2.214$, $p= 0.014$). Thus, hypotheses H1 and H2 are supported.

8. Discussion

This study shows that co-worker support is an important determinant of job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. Employees' ability and willingness to provide help, share their knowledge, and listen to problems can affect their performance and behavior in completing and accomplishing tasks. Co-worker support, both formal and informal, is a valuable resource in the organization. When employees feel satisfied and entertained with their task, they exhibit positive employee behavior, especially higher level of job satisfaction to the organization and positive organizational citizenship behavior (Rhoades, S. et al., 2012; Ong & Tay, 2015). The support of colleagues creates positive feelings that increase the ability of employees to cope with organizational challenges (Singh et al., 2019). In Malaysia public sector, co-worker support is used as one of the high-value human capital strategies to improve employee productivity and performance (Yao J, Qiu X, Yang L, Han X & Li Y, (2022).

Co-worker support is a fruit of the Islamic concept of brotherhood, which is characterized by love, respect, sincerity, compassion, empathy, and mercy. Four methods are adopted from the Quran, such as reflecting on the past, observation, demonstration, and asking questions. All of these methods express the full use of all the senses and abilities that Allah (s.a.w.) has given to human beings, such as seeing, hearing, and understanding. Supporting the employees leads them to act together to achieve their goal. This action leads to mutual cooperation and mutual responsibility. It is almost impossible for anyone to work toward a goal alone. Mutual cooperation among Muslims is also based on mutual responsibility for each other. This concept of shared responsibility is emphasized in Islam. In fact, an efficient environment where good support is practiced by employees as colleagues to share knowledge and skills can bring tremendous benefits to the organization.

Islam is a perfect religion and provides a complete guide for all human activities. It not only prescribes the beliefs and rules governing man’s relationship with his Creator, Almighty Allah s.w.t., but also lays down detailed guidelines for man's behavior in his relationships with his fellow human beings (Siddig Ahmad, 2019).

9. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between co-worker support and two aspects of employee behavior, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior, focusing on public employees. The results of this study will help the public sector improve organizational performance and create positive employee value consistent with employee support dimensions and practices. Three important implications emerge from this study. Regarding the theoretical contribution, the results of the direct effects model show that employee support improves job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. This result is consistent with the main ideas of Herzberg (1959) on the two-factor theory. This theory states that employees who receive both motivational and hygiene factors in their work can increase their job satisfaction, which eventually leads to positive citizenship behavior in the organization (Herzberg 1959; 1966; El Din Mohamed, 2016). Regarding the robustness of the research methodology, the questionnaire of the study has met the requirements of validity and reliability analysis. This can lead to obtaining accurate and reliable results.

In terms of practical contribution, this study can serve as an important guide for employers to improve support practices in the company, especially among colleagues in the company. Employee support can be done through an open learning system, guidance, and hands-on learning. The Quran itself is an eternal guide for people that promotes lifelong

learning as one of its divine teachings.

According to Siddig Ahmad (2019), people in this world cannot live in isolation or exist independently. They must support and complement each other to live successfully in this world. This concept is evidenced by the ayat that address human beings by using the plural form. Phrases such as "*O mankind" (ya ayyuha al-nas) and "O children of Adam" (ya bani Adam) occur more frequently than the phrase "O man" (ya ayyuha al-insan)* (Al-Quran) (Mastura A. & Mohd Shahril A.R. (2018). This shows that most of the teachings in the Quran were meant to be carried out by a group of people and not just one individual.

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