

# The importance of Supervisor Support for Employees' Affective Commitment: An analysis of Job Satisfaction

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**Abstract-** Supervisor support (SVS) has greater influence on employees' affective commitment. The purpose of the present study is to address the impacts of SVS on affective commitment of the employees of Malaysian private Telecommunication companies. Variables such as SVS and job satisfaction were proposed to enhance employees' affective commitment of their organizations. SVS, Job satisfaction and affective commitment were proposed as the independent, intervening and outcome variables respectively. The data of this study have been collected from a group of employees in the telecommunication Malaysian industry through questionnaire survey. The data were analyzed using SPSS. The findings revealed that SVS has significant relationship with job satisfaction and affective commitment. Likewise; this study suggested that SVS can improve the employees' affective commitment by presenting a significant relationship between SVS and affective commitment through mediation of job satisfaction.

**Index Terms-** Supervisor support, affective commitment and job satisfaction.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The notion of commitment has been defined as a "force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets" (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). There are three-component model of organizational commitment such as affective, normative and continuous commitment as proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991). This study however, exclusively focuses on affective commitment because "it is the most widely studied, the most generalizable across targets, and the most predictive of employee behaviour" (Morin et al., 2011, p. 718). Affective commitment to a given target can be broadly defined as an attachment to, identification with and involvement in that particular target (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001).

It is now well recognized that commitment is a multifaceted construct, which can be directed towards different constituencies located within and outside the organisation (Reichers, 1985; Becker et al., 1996). For instance, research has demonstrated that besides the global organisation (Meyer et al., 2002), employees can also develop affective commitment to the top management (Becker, 1992), supervisor (Becker et al., 1996; Clugston et al., 2000), work group (Vandenberghe et al., 2004; Snape et al., 2006) and customers (Siders et al., 2001). Among the various foci of commitment, the supervisor support is particularly important because supervisors are formally responsible for monitoring the performance of employees, are involved in decisions regarding pay and promotions that affect their employees and are increasingly made accountable for reducing turnover in their teams (Panaccio and Vandenberghe, 2011). Thus, affective commitment to the supervisor, which depicts a high quality relationship between employees and their supervisors (Cheng et al., 2003), is likely to have a significant bearing on employees' work related attitudes and behaviours. For example, research has shown that supervisory commitment is positively associated with job satisfaction (Chen, 2001), task performance (Siders et al., 2001; Becker and Kernan, 2003; Cheng et al., 2003) and organisational citizenship behaviours (Wasti and Can, 2008) and is negatively related to turnover (Vandenberghe and Bentein, 2009). However, despite the growing importance of supervisory commitment, relatively few studies have empirically investigated the consequences of this construct.

The present study seeks to address this gap by exploring the link between supervisor support and affective commitment through job satisfaction.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This part describes the theoretical background of the variables of the study such as supervisor support, job satisfaction and affective commitment.

### A. *Supervisor Support*

According to organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986), supervisor support (SVS) facilitates changes in employees' levels of affective commitment (Sadiya, 2015). Supervisor support is defined as employees' views concerning the degree to which their supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). As agents of the organization, supervisors are responsible for directing and evaluating employees' job performance. Thus, employees often view their supervisor's feedback as indicative of the organization's orientation toward them (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Levinson, 1965). Moreover, because employees are aware that their supervisor's evaluations of their job performance are often communicated to executives, who are seen as the representatives of the organization, the association between affective commitment and supervisor support is further strengthened (Eisenberger et al., 2002).

Supervisor support leads for employees to high commitment through job satisfaction and motivation. Shriesheim, and Stodgill (1975) came up with their tenet in the book of Personnel Psychology and they opined that Supervisor consideration refers to a leader behaviors concerned with promoting the comfort and wellbeing of subordinates. It is hypothesized that employees who believe their superiors are considerate leaders will perform high commitment than those who do not perceive that their managers as such (Johnston, M.W., Parasuraman, A., Futrell, C.M. and Black, B.C, 1990). De Cotiis and Summers (1977), Morris and Sherman (1981) and Zaccaro and Dobbins (1989) all found empirical evidence supporting the view of supervisory consideration. Supervisor consideration again refers to the degree to which supervisors are supportive, friendly and considerate, consult subordinates and recognize their contribution.

### B. *Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction refers to an employee's overall affect laden attitude toward their job (Witt, 1991). It is an internal state based on assessing the job and job-related experiences with some degree of favor or disfavor (Locke, 1976). SVS should contribute to overall job satisfaction by meeting socioemotional needs, increasing performance-reward expectancies and signalling the availability of aid when needed. High level of job satisfaction reveals real enthusiasm, good feeling and truly value the job, which leads then to high affective commitment. Findings suggest that employees with high level of job satisfaction physically and mentally are in a proper state. Job satisfaction is resulted from employees' perception that provided them with valuable content and context. The first step to get a valuable, satisfactory and also successful job is to find job environment matching the individuals' main interest. Job satisfaction is divided into two categories; internal and external satisfaction. External satisfaction is related to the factors such as payment, promotion, admiration and interaction with colleagues while employees' satisfaction with values, social status, position and professional responsibility indicate internal satisfaction. Individuals' assessment of their job and expression of satisfaction or dissatisfaction can be regarded as the general outcome of their job constituents (Robbins 1995).

### C. *Affective Commitment*

The current employee work environment is one in which at least two specific organizational commitment issues come to the forefront. One of those issues is that employees, including Telecom companies, work in a multiple-commitment world. The job itself, the company, and the profession compete for employees' loyalty. Employees may develop commitment to a boss or to professional company membership (Morrow & McElroy, 1993; Randall & Cote, 1991; Tyree, 1996). Employees may also experience different degrees of commitment to various companies' aspects such as organizational philosophy (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The second issue is that organizational commitment itself is viewed as a multidimensional construct and this researcher's focus is to explain the dimensions of organizational commitment.

John Meyer and Natalie Allen developed their Three Component Model of Commitment and published it in the 1991 "Human Resource Management Review." The model explains that commitment to an organization is a psychological state, and that it has three distinct components that affect how employees feel about the organization that they work for. The three components are; affective commitment (Affection for your job), continuance commitment (Fear of loss) and normative commitment (Sense of obligation to stay). However, due to brevity, only affective commitment is used at the present study rather than the other two components of organizational commitment.

Affection for employees' job occurs when they feel a strong emotional attachment to their organization, and to the work that they do (Meyer, Allen, &Smith, 1993). They will most likely identify with the organization's goals and values, and they genuinely want to be there. If employees are enjoying their work, they are likely to feel good, and be satisfied with their job. In turn, this increased job satisfaction is likely to add to their feeling of affective commitment.

### D. *Research theoretical framework*

A theoretical framework refers to the theory that a researchers choose to guide them in their research. Thus, a theoretical framework is the application of a theory, or a set of concepts drawn from one and the same theory, to offer an explanation of an event, or shed some light on a particular phenomenon or research problem. Figure 1 presents a research theoretical framework, which explains the relationship between supervisor support, job satisfaction and affective commitment.

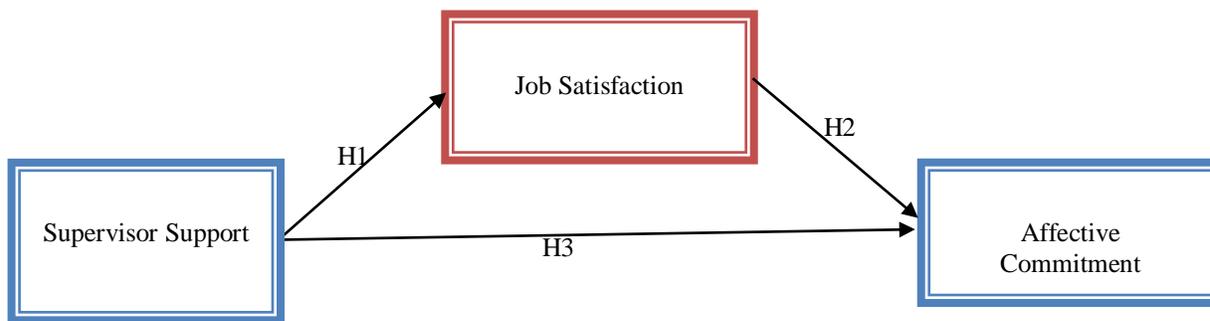


Figure 1: Research frame work

E. Hypothesis

The hypothetical model of the study is elaborated in the theoretical framework diagram which is shown in Figure 1 and these are proposed hypotheses of the study:

- H1: Supervisor support has a significant relationship with job satisfaction.
- H2: Job satisfaction has a significant relationship with affective commitment.
- H3: Supervisor support has a significant relationship with affective commitment.

III. METHODOLOGY

Data were collected through a questionnaire survey in Malaysian private telecommunications. Among the 274 employees who received the questionnaire, 109 responded to the items capturing our variables of interest as part of a larger survey. The response rate was 37 percent and is one of the average response rate for studies that utilized data collected from individuals. Average age was 40 years and 46.8 percent were male.

A. Measures

The questionnaire for supervisor support concerns about three main things in supervision of the employees such as respecting the views and ideas of the employees, collaborative approach in supervision and safe feedbacks. This study uses the scale developed by Palomo (2010) and the two items are ‘My supervisor is respectful of my views and ideas’, ‘My supervisor has a collaborative approach in supervision’ and ‘My supervisor gives feedback in a way that feels safe’. Job satisfaction is divided into two categories; internal and external satisfaction. The job satisfaction scale aims to assess whether an individual is satisfied with his or her job. This scale, developed by Wright and Cropanzano (1991), it is a two-item scale and it is targeting overall job satisfaction including internal and external satisfaction. Sample items include ‘All in all, I am satisfied with the work of my job’ (Internal JS; Position) and ‘All in all, I am satisfied with my pay (total wages and tips)’ (External JS; Payment). Affective commitment to the organization is measured using an organizational scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). Two items are selected from the scale in order to assess the affective commitment dimension, including ‘I would be happy to work at my company until I retire’ and ‘I feel like part of a family at my company’.

IV. FINDINGS

The descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to conduct the analysis. For hypotheses testing, the Pearson correlation coefficients were used. The first part of the analysis focused on the descriptive analysis of the respondents. At the end of gathering data, the reliability of the scales was analyzed. An analysis was performed in the study to ascertain the reliability of the measures by using Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient; 0.60 being the acceptable reliability coefficient level in terms of research standards as shown in Table I.

Table I: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach’s Alpha
supervisor support	.857
job satisfaction	.823
Affective commitment	.956

As it can be seen in Table I, the measures of the study are reliable because all the variables have an acceptable reliability coefficient which ranged from .823 to .956.

*A. Descriptive analysis of the respondents:*

Descriptive analysis of the respondents: The descriptive analysis focused on the variables such as gender, age, marital status and job status. Male responders represented 46.8% while female responders were 53.2%. Most of the respondents (33%) were aged between 25 and 29 years old, 18.3% of the respondents were between 21 and 24 years. Same percentages goes to those between 35 and 39 years old. 23.9% of the respondents were between 30 and 34 years old, 4.6% of the respondents were above 40 and 49 years old and 1.8% of the respondents were above 50 years old. Majority of the respondents were having job permanent and were married in a percentage of 86% and 83% respectively. While employees; who have contract jobs represented 16% and single staff were 17% of the total respondents.

Table II: Demographic Information

Variables	Percentage (%)
Gender	
Male	46.8
Female	53.2
Age (in years)	
21-24	18.3
25-29	33
30-34	23.9
35-39	18.3
40-49	4.6
Above 50	1.8
Marital status	
Married	49.6
Single	47
Job Status	
Permanent	67
Contract	33

*B. Inferential analysis of the respondents:*

The correlation data shows the relationship between the independent, intervening and dependent variables of study as shown in Table III. The table displays correlation coefficients between these variables. The correlation coefficients are a measure of the strength of the association between any two metric variables (Hair et al., 2003). The results of the Pearson correlation show that the dimensions of the independent variable and dependent variables were positively correlated to each other.

Table III: Pearson correlations between Variables

Relationship	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Hypothesis Support
SVS → JS	.480*	Yes
JS → AF	.624*	Yes
SVS → AF	.345*	Yes

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results of Table III demonstrated that there is significant positive relationship between supervisor support and job satisfaction at (r=.480; p=0.01) and the correlation is significant if the p=.01. The correlation shows that there is significant relationship between supervisor support and job satisfaction. Hence the alternative hypothesis is supported. Similarly, the results have shown that there is a significant high correlation between supervisor support and affective commitment (r=.345; p=.01), so the proposed alternative hypothesis is accepted. In addition, Table III shows that there is significant correlations between job satisfaction and affective commitment (r=.624; p=.01), so the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

V. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to analyse the relationship between SVS and job satisfaction also affective commitment. The study also analysed the relationship between job satisfaction and affective commitment. Therefore, three hypotheses were proposed in order to achieve the aim of the study. The first hypothesis proposed that there was a positive relationship between SVS and JS. Hence, this meant that an employee who is given good level of supervisor support in their jobs, the support will translate that high level of good perception towards their organization into getting involved in activities that are outside their job requirements. This means that due to

that high level of perception, they will reciprocate from the supervisor support to good job satisfaction (Isaks, 2002). Likewise, the proposed second hypothesis predicted that there was a positive relationship between job satisfaction and affective commitment. The outcome results has supported the prediction of the hypothesis and there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and affective commitment. This shows that when the employees get high level of good job satisfaction, their perceptions towards their company increase and this also increases their affective commitment. Likewise, the third hypothesis examined the relationship between SVS and affective commitment. It followed that the employees having good support from their supervisors, view their employers as being generally caring about their well-being, that type of attitude will influence their affective commitment in a positive way. Therefore, there was a positive strong relationship between these two variables in that the independent variable SVS had a positive influence on the dependent variable of affective commitment.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to analyse the relationship between supervisor support, job satisfaction and affective commitment. The adopted measures of this study have shown remarkable level of reliability as shown in Table I. Three hypotheses were developed; all of them were supported. Based on the findings of the study, the affective commitment and job satisfaction have a significant relationship with supervisor support. But the proposed hypothesis of organizational rewards and POS was rejected, which means there was no a significant relationship between organizational rewards and POS. Finally, job satisfaction and affective commitment have shown strong association between them.

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