

The Role of Perceived Supervisor Support and Perceived Organisational Support on Organisational Citizenship Behaviour in Auxiliary Police Services at a Public University: A Pilot Study

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Abstract

Organizational citizenship behavior refers to voluntary actions that are not part of official duties and are not directly rewarded, but can increase the effectiveness of functions in the organization, such as helping colleagues and participating in extra tasks. Although this behavior is often studied in various professions such as teachers and nurses, less attention is paid to auxiliary police officers, especially at universities. Campus auxiliary police officers play a unique role in maintaining security in an increasingly complex campus environment. Therefore, supervisor and organizational support are critical to ensure employee enthusiasm and active participation in the organization. The purpose of this study is to conduct a pilot study regarding the perception of supervisor support, the perception of organizational support, and organizational citizenship behavior in a public college in Malaysia. Content and surface validity analysis of the instrument resulted in several adjustments to the items used. The reliability test of the instrument revealed that all constructs in the study had a high degree of reliability (above 0.70) and excellent internal consistency for each item. The data from the pilot study provide reasonable evidence of the accuracy of the instrument.

Keywords: Perceived Supervisor Support, Perceived Organisational Support, Organisational Citizenship Behaviour, Auxiliary Police Services, Pilot Study

Introduction

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is critical to study as it is a key measure of organizational success and encompasses not only performance but also employee well-being and commitment to organizational goals (Andrade & Neves, 2022). OCB encompasses voluntary actions by employees without the expectation of a formal reward (Potipiroon & Faerman, 2020; Organ, 1988). These actions include supporting colleagues, participating in extra activities and taking initiatives to improve work processes, all of which increase organizational effectiveness (Choong et al., 2020). Given their importance, encouraging active employee engagement and initiative is crucial. Employees may be incentivized in various ways, such as fostering a supportive work environment, providing informal recognition and offering opportunities for professional development (Kim et al., 2019). This incentive serves not only to achieve short-term goals, but also to promote an organizational culture of mutual support and commitment. In this way, the organization may not only increase overall performance, but also make employees feel valued and dedicated to the organization's goals.

Recognizing the benefits of OCB, numerous studies have focused on areas such as education Oubibi et al (2022) and medicine (Côté et al., 2021). However, research on OCB in Malaysian auxiliary police services is still limited. The focus on auxiliary police services is increasing due to their unique role in maintaining security in organizations, especially in universities (Vardalis & Waters, 2011). The complex environment of a college campus presents ever-changing security challenges. Auxiliary police services are not only responsible for physical security, but also for terrorism prevention and emergency management. In Malaysia, there are three main auxiliary agencies: Auxiliary Police officers, security guards, and the Malaysian Volunteer Corps, more commonly known by its Malay acronym RELA, operating under the Ministry of Home Affairs (Ismail et al., 2023). Each of these groups play a crucial role in maintaining safety and security within various organisations, including educational institutions.

The main role of the Auxiliary Police in public universities is to safeguard property and prevent crime within their areas of responsibility, while simultaneously maintaining a peaceful and safe campus environment. Additionally, the Auxiliary Police in public universities ensure good relationships with external agencies such as the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM), the Malaysian Road Transport Department (JPJ), the Fire and Rescue Department of Malaysia (JPBM), and the Immigration Department of Malaysia (JIM). Their responsibilities are multifaceted, ranging from engaging with young individuals and preventing crime to enhancing police-community relations and ensuring campus security. They are also tasked with conducting patrols, responding to emergencies, and identifying speeding motorists (Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Selangor, 2022). The promotion of OCB in the auxiliary police services requires the support of all organizational partners. This is because it is difficult to develop civic behavior in a personnel-intensive sector, and it is not impossible that the organizations will not achieve their goals without some kind of support. This shows the importance of organizational support, especially from line managers, in rewarding employees' extra efforts, providing them with opportunities for professional development and creating a pleasant and supportive work environment. Employees who receive this support are more likely to actively participate in activities that benefit the organization.

In the literature on OCB, particularly in the service sector, this study examines perception of supervisor support and the organization as important predictors of encouraging OCB to achieve positive outcomes (Lee & Jun, 2024; Morales-Sánchez & Pasamar, 2020). Given the importance of these variables, this study examines the role of perceived supervisory and organizational support for OCB in auxiliary police services in Malaysian public universities, a relatively under-researched area. The first part of the study focuses on a pilot test conducted with auxiliary police services at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris in Malaysia. The main purpose of the pilot test was to determine the time required to complete the questionnaire, ensure the clarity of the questions and instructions, and validate the measurement items (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). A content validity test was conducted prior to the pilot test to ensure the validity of the questionnaire. The instrument of the study measures the perception of supervisors and organizational support as independent variables and OCB as dependent variable. This study includes a literature review, methodology, results and discussions on the validity of the questionnaire instruments and the pilot test, limitations and future directions, and conclusions.

Literature Review

The study of OCB often draws on several theoretical frameworks, including social exchange theory Blau (1964) and organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Social exchange theory suggests that employees engage in OCB as a reciprocal response to favorable treatment by the organization, while organizational support theory suggests that perceived organizational support fosters employee emotional commitment and loyalty, leading to increased OCB.

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to informal actions of employees that are not part of their formal job description but positively influence the success of the organization (Bateman & Organ, 1983). OCB encompasses voluntary activities that go beyond standard job requirements (Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Podsakoff et al., 1990). This behavior encourages employees to act on the basis of their own initiative and sense of responsibility rather than only in response to explicit instructions (Ajlouni et al., 2021). OCB is often associated with high standards of service quality because it involves better planning strategies and effective problem-solving measures that benefit both employees and managers (Basu et al., 2017). To effectively promote OCB, organizations must cultivate a supportive work environment. This includes informal recognition, opportunities for professional development and fostering a collaborative and friendly work atmosphere.

Perceived Supervisor Support

Perceived supervisor support refers to employees' assessment of the extent to which their supervisors value and recognize their contributions within the organization (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2002). According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), supervisor support is seen as a form of social exchange in which employees who are mentored and supported by their supervisors develop a sense of loyalty and feel obligated to reciprocate by continuing to contribute to the organization. In addition, supportive leadership by supervisors enables employees to perform their tasks without fear of negative consequences, which can significantly reduce work-related stress and increase psychological well-being (Kyei-Frimpong et al., 2022). Consequently, employees often interpret the supportive behavior of their

supervisors as a sign of general support from the organization, thus fostering a positive attitude towards the organization.

Perceived Organisational Support

Perceived organizational support means that supervisors prioritize the well-being of their team members and ensure that they have sufficient resources to effectively manage work demands and responsibilities (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Karim et al (2019) assert that perceptions of perceived organizational support reflect the extent to which the organization values employee well-being and recognizes their contributions. It is crucial to recognize that these perceptions have a significant impact on employee engagement in work-related tasks and activities. Moreover, employees' evaluations shape the perceived quality of organizational support, indicating that the organization not only acknowledges their contributions but genuinely cares about their well-being (Khair et al., 2024). Therefore, it should go beyond basic needs, encourage loyalty to the well-being and success of the organization, and promote a culture of caring and engagement.

Methodology

This study is based on data collected from respondents serving as auxiliary police officers at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris. The selection of respondents resulted from the recent conversion of the college's security personnel to auxiliary police services. The use of probability sampling, specifically simple random sampling, facilitated the selection process. Hair et al (2014) guidelines recommend that the sample size for pilot research can range from 5 to 30 respondents, while Cooper and Schindler (2006) recommend a broader range of 25 to 100 respondents without prescribing statistical calculations. In line with these recommendations, this study chose to collect data from 31 respondents belonging to the auxiliary police service of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris.

A series of questionnaires were distributed, accompanied by a letter describing the objectives of the study, the assurance of confidentiality, the voluntary nature of participation and the questions on the variables studied. All 31 questionnaires sent out were successfully evaluated and analyzed to create profiles of the respondents. A pilot study was also conducted to test the reliability of the measurement scale using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Prior to the pilot study, which was used to collect survey data and measure the reliability of the scale, initial steps were taken to validate the questionnaire instrument and a pilot study was conducted to assess its face validity. Consequently, the research project extends from May 2023 to June 2023, starting with the validation of the questionnaire and culminating in the implementation of the pilot study.

Measurement of Variables

The questionnaire is divided into four sections. In this questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a particular statement on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Part A contains respondents' socio-demographic data, such as gender, age, religion, race or ethnicity, academic qualifications, position and work experience. Part B measures organizational citizenship behavior using the Williams and Anderson (1991) assessment, which consists of seven questions. Sample statements used to measure organizational citizenship behavior include "*My attendance at work is above the norm*." Part C: Perception of supervisor support is assessed using Pearce, Sommer, Morris, and Fridger's (1992) assessment, which consists of seven questions. Examples of statements

used to measure supervisor support feedback are: *“My supervisor is considerate of subordinates’ feelings”*. Part D: Perceptions of organizational support are measured using Eisenberger et al (1997) instrument, which consists of eight question items. Examples of statements used to measure feedback on supervisor support are: *“My organization strongly considers my goals and values”*.

Findings and Discussion

Following the selection of questionnaire items from previous research, the expert references approach was used in this study to assess the validity of the questionnaire instrument (Frey, 2014). In this context, expert references were generated through content validity to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the information provided. This process helped to ensure that the questionnaire could be understood by the sample and ensured consistency of content and format for assessment and measurement. For this questionnaire survey, three highly knowledgeable and experienced experts were selected to review the instrument. These experts were selected to provide a balance between academic expertise and practical industry experience to ensure a comprehensive and authoritative assessment. Based on their feedback and suggestions, refinements were made, including changing the language style and restructuring sentences to improve clarity and consistency with the experts' recommendations.

A pilot study was then conducted to determine the time it took for the respondents to complete the questionnaire, to check the clarity of the questions and instructions, and to validate the measurement of the items (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). Schwab (2011) suggests that pilot research may involve two steps: the face validity and the reliability of the measurement scale of the items at the required level. Therefore, this study considered the two steps recommended by Schwab (2011) during the pilot phase of the questionnaire survey. The two pilot experiments conducted in this study are described below:

Face Validity Test

Three interviewees from the auxiliary police service of the Sultan Idris College of Education were used to assess the face validity. First, the purpose and objectives of the eye-tracking validity study were explained to the respondents to ensure that they could answer the research questions at their own pace. On average, respondents took approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire, indicating that it was brief and understandable to all participants. After completing the questionnaire, respondents gave their feedback. Some minor changes were suggested, such as the inclusion of bilingual items to accommodate respondents who are more proficient in Malay than English. The respondents' feedback and suggestions are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Feedback from Respondents

	Comments/Suggestions	Results
1.	Please highlight the title on the front page of the survey to facilitate respondents in understanding the research purpose.	The proposal is accepted
2.	There are several words that are not well understood if in Malay	Questionnaire use bilingual
3.	Increase the font size for each construct	The proposal is accepted

Reliability of the Measurement Scale

The reliability of the organizational citizenship behavior rating scale, perception of supervisor support, and perception of organizational support was tested using the Cronbach's alpha test. Thirty-one respondents from the auxiliary police service of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris participated in the survey. A visual inspection of the data confirmed that no answers were altered or values were missing. An initial analysis of the socio-demographic data of the respondents revealed that most auxiliary police officers at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris are male (67.7%) and between 20 and 25 years old, with an average age of 20.97 years. The majority are Muslim (87.19%) and identify themselves as Malays (80.6%). More than half (54.8%) have obtained the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM). Most of the respondents are constables (51.6%) with 16 to 20 years of experience (29.0%). These socio-demographic data are important for understanding the study participants and interpreting the results (see Table 2).

Table 2

Socio Demographic Respondents

Information		Frequency	Percentage	Std. Deviation
Gender	Male	21	67.7	
	Female	10	32.3	
Age	20 to 25 years	13	41.9	2.097
	26 to 30 years	2	6.5	
	31 to 35 years	2	6.5	
	36 to 40 years	5	16.1	
	41 to 45 years	3	9.7	
	46 to 50 years	5	16.1	
	51 years onwards	1	3.2	
Religion	Muslims	27	87.1	
	Buddhists	1	3.2	
	Hindus	2	6.5	
	Christians	1	3.2	
Race / Ethnicity	Malay	25	80.6	
	Chinese	1	3.2	
	Indian	3	9.7	
	Native of Sabah	1	3.2	
	Native of Sarawak	1	3.2	
	Others	0	0	
Academic Qualifications	SPM	17	54.8	
	STPM	4	12.9	
	Degree	6	19.4	
	Masters	2	6.5	
	Doctor of Philosophy	0	0	
	Others	2	6.5	
Position	Superintendent of Police	0	0	
	Deputy Superintendent of Police	0	0	

Information		Frequency	Percentage	Std. Deviation
	Assistant Superintendent of Police	1	3.2	
	Inspector of Police	1	3.2	
	Police Sergeant	5	16.1	
	Police Corporal	4	12.9	
	Police Lance Corporal	4	12.9	
	Police Constable	16	51.6	
Working Experience	1 to 5 years	8	25.8	1.447
	6 to 10 years	6	19.4	
	11 to 15 years	5	16.1	
	16 to 20 years	9	29.0	
	21 to 25 years	2	6.5	
	26 years onwards	1	3.2	

Cronbach's alpha was then calculated and a value of more than 0.70 was determined, which indicates good reliability of the measurement scale (Hair et al., 2014) (see Table 3).

Table 3

Measurement Scale

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha (α) Value
1. Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)	0.818
2. Perceived Supervisor Support	0.896
3. Perceived Organisational Support	0.923

The overall results of the study paint a vivid picture of the care and thoroughness with which the pilot study was conducted. Respondents indicated that they rated their supervisors' support as moderately high, suggesting that they generally feel supported and valued by their supervisors. Perceived organizational support was also high, indicating that respondents believe that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. The high reliability scores for the measurement scales indicate that the constructs were measured accurately, which provides confidence in the results. Rigorous validity testing of the instruments was conducted prior to the commencement of the pilot study to ensure that the content was validated during the verification process. The aim was to assess and improve the quality of the questionnaire. Subsequently, the pilot study was methodically conducted to identify any challenges that might arise during the actual implementation of the study. The importance of this pilot study cannot be overstated, as it allows initial obstacles to be quickly identified and corrective action to be taken immediately to address the shortcomings uncovered in the study. The entire process of this pilot study is thus an example of a strong commitment to the integrity and thoroughness of research.

Limitations and Future Directions

Several factors of the limitations of the study. This study, which focuses on university auxiliary police service, uses a modest sample size of 31 respondents. Its main aim is to assess the reliability of research tools and methods before embarking on a larger investigation. We must

recognize that future research projects may require more extensive data collection to provide a more comprehensive picture and capture a broader population. In addition, this study encounters the challenge of ensuring that the assessment tools used accurately capture the constructs under investigation. Consequently, subsequent research may expand the scope of the analysis to explore deeper connections and ramifications between the variables examined. Furthermore, the methodological approaches used in this study are limited to basic and rapid data processing procedures typically associated with pilot studies. Therefore, future research initiatives could conduct comparative studies with control groups or different cohorts to corroborate the findings and shed light on the observed effects. By acknowledging these limitations and providing a way forward for future investigations, researchers can improve the robustness and applicability of their findings in the field.

Conclusions

This study has indeed achieved its goal of conducting a pilot study on the impact of supervisor perceptions and organizational support on employee organizational behavior. To ensure originality and suitability to the current research context, questions were selected from previous studies. However, the study recognizes the need to increase the validity of the questionnaire by aligning it more closely with the study setting and the findings of experts in the field. The literature review highlights the importance of perceived supervisor support and perceived organizational support in promoting OCB. The unique context of college auxiliary police services provides an opportunity to extend existing theories and develop tailored strategies to promote OCB in this critical sector. The unique challenges faced by these officers, such as high stress situations and the need for quick decision making, require a supportive work environment to promote OCB. By focusing on this under-researched group, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of OCB in different professional contexts. The findings highlight the importance of refining the questionnaire instrument to improve clarity and consistency. A pilot study, which also included a face validity test, showed that respondents were able to answer the questions appropriately. However, it is recommended to make the questions bilingual to accommodate respondents who may need help in a second language. In addition, the reliability test of the measurement scale yielded high and acceptable Cronbach's alpha values, indicating that there were no significant issues that hindered the survey process. Consequently, this pilot study has paved the way for significant improvements to enhance the overall quality and effectiveness of the study in the future.

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