Organisational Justice and its Role in Promoting Citizenship Behaviour among Hotel Employees in Malaysia

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Abstract: *This study examines the role of organisational justice in promoting organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and assesses leader-member exchange (LMX) as well as trust in supervisor as mediators. Data is collected from a total of 227 subordinate supervisors dyads from 16 hotels, located within the central region of Malaysia. Hypothesis is postulated on the relationship between employee's perceived organisational justice and OCBs; it is also posited that LMX as well as trust in supervisor will mediate the effects of organisational justice on citizenship behaviour. The findings reveal that procedural justice reports stronger relationship with all dimensions of OCB compared with distributive justice. Both LMX and trust in supervisor are found to be significantly related to organisational justice and citizenship behaviour. However, only LMX fully mediates the impact of organisational justice on citizenship behaviour. Conceptual and managerial implications of research findings are also discussed.*

1.   Introduction

The Malaysian economy depended strongly on trading of commodities such as rubber, cocoa, palm oil and timber until mid-1990s, where the country witnessed the gradual emergence of the manufacturing sector and the booming of the services industry. The country in particular enjoyed major expansion in the tourism industry since 1970 in which a sharp increase was reported in foreign

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exchange revenue, employment opportunities and potential tourist attractions (Goldsmith and Mohd Zahari, 1994). Tourism was recognised as an important source of income for the country as growth in this industry contributed to development in other related fields, for example hospitality, food and leisure. By 1990, with the launching of "Visit Malaysia Year" campaign, the tourism industry had become the third largest source of income in foreign exchange (Poon and Low, 2005). Throughout the years, the Malaysian government has taken bold and sustained efforts in making the country an attractive destination for foreign tourists. Malaysia recorded 25,032,708 tourists arrivals in 2012 yielding a revenue of RM60.6 billion compared RM58.3 billion in the previous year (NST, 2013). It ranked 13th in international tourism receipts RM60 billion, placing it firmly as the 10th most popular tourism destination in the world, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and is expected to earn RM168 billion from the targeted 36 million tourist arrivals by 2020 under the Malaysia Tourism Transformational Plan (MTTP) (The Star, 2013).

Hoteliers in the country constantly update and improve their services to attract tourists and with the increasing role of information technology in the tourism industry, hoteliers face stiff competition not only from local players but also neighbouring countries. In view of the influx of tourists into Malaysia, the hospitality industry competes aggressively and struggles hard not only to earn survival profit but also to maintain its competitive advantage. The key to moving hotels to the high road lies very much with the frontline employees. Human resource practitioners believe that "Frontline equals bottom line" in reference to hotel employees. Under such circumstances, the behaviour of hotel employees, or rather, the citizenship behaviour of its employees, who are willing to walk the extra mile, help colleagues and serve customers beyond what is prescribed in their employment contract, will improve organisational image and enhance performance. Ultimately, the extra effort contributed by a front desk receptionist who not only registers the newly arrived customers or checks out the leaving customers, but also orients and assists new colleagues who have just reported to work, is very much desired by the organisation and constitutes the hotel's competitive edge. Similarly, a bellboy who does not only open doors or carry luggage for his customers but also refrains from complaining over trivial matters, can be a great asset because his behaviour reduces friction among colleagues which leads to increased organisational efficiency. All these extra-role behaviours are assets for the organisation since employees exhibit them willingly without expecting any reward. Performing duties above what is stipulated in an employment contract or beyond what is required in the job description, without expecting any reward in return, is termed "organisational citizenship behaviour". The next question that necessarily follows is ways to inducing such behaviour.

The widespread and increasing interest shown in organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) can be attributed to the notion that these extra-role behaviours do result in organisational effectiveness (Bateman and Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988; Podsakoff *et al*., 1990). Significantly, in the past two decades, researchers have looked into the antecedents of OCB. There have been numerous studies on the source of OCB tracing its roots to work environment, job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, organisational justice, leadership behaviour, individual, task as well as organisational characteristics.

Specifically, most studies on the linkages of organisational justice, trust, leader-member exchange (LMX) and OCB have been conducted in the West (Organ and Konovsky, 1989; Organ, 1990; Konovsky and Pugh, 1994; Organ and Ryan, 1995; Williams, Pitre and Zainuba, 2002; Connell, Ferres and Travaglione, 2003; Bhal, 2006; Erturk, 2007) and a few Asian countries such as Taiwan (Liang *et al*., 2007), Hong Kong (Wat and Shaffer, 2005) and China (Wong, Ngo *et al.*,2006). However, the generalisability of these findings to other parts of the world is somehow questionable. To our knowledge, very limited studies in this area have been conducted in Malaysia. A somewhat similar study examining relationship between organisational justice and OCB, setting LMX as mediator, was carried out by Ishak and Ahmad (2004). Contrary to many Western researchers' findings, this study on non-supervisory employees working in domestic commercial banks in Malaysia concluded that procedural and distributive justice did not contribute to subordinates' exhibiting OCB. It was reported that interactional justice contributed to only two of the OCB dimensions namely altruism and consideration through LMX.

Due to the mixed findings among studies concluded in Malaysia and the West, we find it mandatory to examine these linkages again among organisational justice, OCB and LMX, and explore the relationship further by expanding the model with an additional mediator - subordinate's trust in supervisor. Thus, this research has two main objectives: (1) to examine the relationship between organisational justice and OCB (2) to assess the role of LMX and trust in supervisor as mediators of organisational justice – OCB relationship, in the context of five-star hotel frontliners (Figure 1).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

OCB was defined originally as "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988:4). Examples of OCB include willingness to help, gestures of goodwill,

Figure 1 : Research Framework: An Extended Model
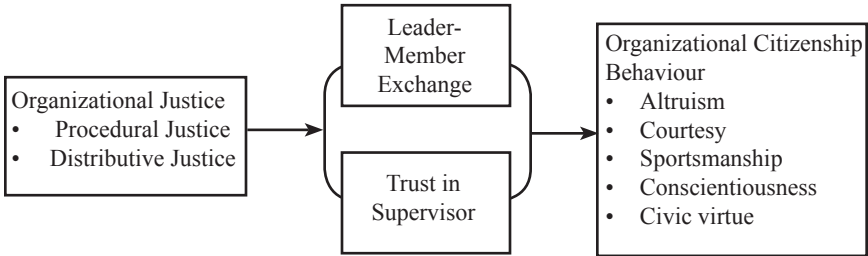
cooperation among co-workers, prevention of problem and contribution of ideas among others.

The debate on what constitutes the dimensions of OCB is a long standing one (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000). To date, none of the researchers can conclusively provide the best components representing OCB. While the underlying concepts may remain the same, the different dimensions suggested by researchers range from general behaviour, altruism, courtesy, general compliance, compliance, loyalty and participation, cheerleading, peacekeeping, sportsmanship, civic virtue to conscientiousness. Williams (1988) discovered a two-dimensional structure of OCBs and defined them as (1) non-required duties which improve the organisation as a whole (OCBO) and (2) non-required duties which help individuals within the organisation (OCBI). Graham (1991) explored three-dimensional OCB under the terms of organisational obedience, organisational loyalty and organisational participation. Farh et al. (1997) developed a Chinese OCB scale as a need arose to understand different OCB dimensions across varying cultures.

The most comprehensive and widely accepted dimensions are the ones developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990) which incorporate altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue. The first dimension, "altruism" refers to the helping behaviour offered to organisational members in solving some tasks or work-related problems; the second dimension, "courtesy" includes efforts made to prevent problem with others at work; thirdly, "sportsmanship" refers to tolerance over unsatisfactory condition without complaining; fourthly, "conscientiousness" involves discretionary behaviour that goes beyond contractual requirements; and the last dimension, "civic virtue" is behaviour indicating willingness to participate actively in the organisation (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990). These five dimensions were formulated based on Organ's (1988) definition. This scale is seen reliable as it includes the measures of Smith, Organ and Near (1983) and original altruism and generalised compliance factors as well as scales for three additional components of OCB

conceptualised by Organ (1988). Due to its comprehensiveness, these five dimensions have been frequently examined by researchers (LePine *et al*., 2002; Schnake and Dumler, 2003).

2.2   *Organisational Justice and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour*

The formulation of this research framework (Figure 1) is predominantly based on social exchange theory (Eisenberger *et al*., 1986; Shore and Wayne, 1993; Dyne *et al*., 1994). Social exchange theory dictates the norm of reciprocity and builds on the belief of 'we help those who help us' (Gouldner, 1960). Organ (1988) proposed that supervisor's fairness often leads to employee's willingness in exhibiting OCBs due to social exchange relationship between the two parties. When an employee perceives that he or she has been treated by his or her supervisor in a fair and just manner, this employee reciprocates by offering various helping behaviours, which enhance organisational effectiveness. For example, a housekeeper who deems his or her working schedule as fair will most likely reciprocate by not taking long lunch breaks, even though a further extension of five to ten minutes from the allotted time will not lead to any punishment or warning.

Generally, organisational justice addresses the question of "what do employees perceive as fair". Organisational justice has been commonly operationalised as a three-dimensional construct namely, distributive, procedural (Cropanzo and Folger, 1991a, 1991b) and interactional justice (Folger and Cropanzo, 1998). Distributive justice, conceptualised through equity theory in social exchange (Adams, 1965), refers to the perceived fairness of the outcomes received by an employee while procedural justice concerns the perception of an employee on the fairness of the procedures used in reaching the outcomes (Folger and Greenberg, 1985); and interactional justice relates to the manner in which procedures regarding relevant outcomes are implemented (Bies and Moag, 1986; Bies 1987).

To date, many studies have examined the relationship between organisational justices and OCB. Overall, findings concluded that when employees perceive organisation as treating them fairly, they are more likely to indulge in OCB. Organ (1990) concluded that there is a strong link between perceived organisational justice with the promotion of OCBs. Organ and Konovsky (1989) proposed that when treated fairly, the employee's perception of the organisation may change, thus giving way to OCB. In another study, Williams et al. (2002) found that organisational justice components had strong positive effects on OCBs. Specifically, procedural justice was found to have influenced OCB in general (Coyle-Shapiro *et al*., 2003; Zellers *et al*., 2003). Also, procedural justice was significantly related to the different dimensions of OCB such as conscientiousness, civic virtue, courtesy, sportsmanship

(Moorman, 1991) and extra-role behaviour (Zellers *et al*., 2002). Some studies supported the relationship between interactional justice and OCB (Moorman, 1991; Moorman and Niehoff, 1993; Williams *et al*., 2002; Coyle-Shapiro *et al*., 2003). However, many studies have reported that there was no significant relationship between distributive justice and OCBs (Williams *et al*., 2002; Zellers *et al*., 2003).

For this study, since operational level employees are the main units of analysis, interactional justice is excluded. This is somehow justified because frontliners are not expected to comprehend or question the technicality of how procedures relating to outcomes are implemented. Frontline employees in this context are seldom given the opportunity by management for inputting any decisions affecting them. Given the nature of their work which is rather routine and highly operational, frontliners' perception on this dimension of justice, if any, should be deemed as inconclusive. Thus, we propose the first hypothesis as follows:

H1: Perceived organisational justice is significantly related to organisational citizenship behaviour.

2.3   *Mediating Effects of Leader-Member Exchange and Trust*

2.3.1 Leader-member exchange (LMX)

Another social context characteristic which may influence the promotion of OCBs is leader-member exchange. Research exploring the leader-member exchange (LMX) suggests that leaders may develop varying relationships with different members working in the same unit (Dansereau, Graen and Haga, 1975; Graen and Cashman, 1975). Since its first introduction in 1975, LMX theory has been frequently revised and it remains a subject of interest among researchers who study encounters between subordinates and supervisors. Leader-member exchange posits that leaders do not use the same style in dealing with all subordinates. Due to these differing styles, varying relationships or exchanges with subordinates are developed. In the context of LMX, high quality exchanges between a subordinate and a supervisor, characterised by trust, respect and mutual liking, often leads to the emergence of extra-role behaviour or citizenship behaviour while low quality exchanges, characterised by formal and impersonal interactions, often results in subordinate displaying only contractual behaviours.

Earlier research concluded that LMX is unidimensional (Graen and Cashman, 1975; Graen and Bien, 1995) but later studies argued and agreed that it should be multidimensional (Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Sparrowe and Liden, 1997; Liden and Maslyn, 1998). Bhal and Ansari (1996) proposed

two-dimensional construct consisting of perceived contribution and affect. Liden and Maslyn (1998) who later developed the fourth dimension of leader member exchange – multidimensional (LMX-MDM), contended that based on role theory, different subordinates may have different focuses. Some may interact and socialise well with supervisors. Some may, however, focus solely on completing tasks while others may be strong or weak on both dimensions. With this justification, LMX was proposed to be multidimensional, based on three currencies of exchange: perceived contribution (task behaviours), loyalty (loyalty to each other) and affect (liking for each other) (Dienesch and Liden, 1986).

To our knowledge, there has been little empirical research on the relationship between LMX and organisational justice (Bhal, 2006). Vecchio, Griffeth and Hom (1986) suggested that LMX is positively related to distributive justice and Manogran, Stauffer and Conlon (1994) confirmed positive relationship between LMX and procedural as well as interactional justice. Some studies have also examined how relationship quality (LMX) affects OCBs (Wat and Shaffer, 2004). It was reported that subordinates who experience good quality relationships with supervisors are more likely to engage in OCBs (Deluga, 1994). Ishak and Ahmad (2004) found that LMX fully mediated the relationship between interactional justice and one of OCB dimensions, altruism. Formally, we hypothesise:

H2: Perceived organisational justice is significantly related to leader-member exchange.
H3: Leader-member exchange is significantly related to organisational citizenship behaviour.
H4: Leader-member exchange mediates the effects of perceived organisational justice on organisational citizenship behaviour.

2.3.2 Trust

Trust in supervisor refers to employee's faith in his or her supervisor and expectation that the supervisor will act on his or her benefit (Podsakoff, *et al*., 2000). Numerous scholars attempted to define trust and the working definition of trust by Robinson (1996:576) is relevant here whereby trust is defined as "one's expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions will be beneficial, favourable, or at least not detrimental to one's interests". In Malaysia, individuals tend to relate to one another, rather than to the organisation directly due to its culture of collectivism (Hofstede, 2014). Hence, subordinates are more inclined to relate to their relationship with supervisors and not the organisation directly. Supervisors instruct and decide on the work of subordinates, operate strategic plans and lead subordinates

to achieve organisational goals. With such bridging of relational contracts, subordinates' trust will be increased if they perceive the supervisors' decision in any matter as justified.

Thus, it is not surprising that organisational justice is found to be positively related to the commitment and trust in an organisation (Alexander and Ruderman, 1987; Cropanzo and Folger, 1991; Sweeney and MacFarlin, 1993). Alexander and Ruderman discovered a positive relationship between perceptions of both procedural justice and distributive justice and trust in upper management. Other studies have noted organisational justice to be an important component in building trust between subordinates and supervisors (Folger and Konovsky, 1989; Lind and Tyler, 1988; Pillai, Williams and Tan, 2001; Aryee *et al.*, 2002).

Many scholars have studied the relationship between trust and OCB (Konovsky and Pugh, 1994; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990). As mentioned earlier, trust is the basis of relational contracts and social exchange. The linkage between trust and OCB can be attributed to the manifestation of social exchange theory. Social exchange as supported by Organ (1990) is crucial for promoting OCBs because the mutual trust that underlies social exchange relationship ensures that OCB will be reciprocated in the long run (Organ, 1990; Mengue, 2000). Ferrin (2002) confirmed that trust in an organisation has a positive relationship with altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, courtesy and sportsmanship. Significantly, trust has been linked to OCBs in many ways (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000, Rahim *et al.*, 2001; Aryee *et al.*, 2002). Thus, we posit that a subordinate who has higher level of trust in the supervisor is more likely to display OCB and this faith tends to mediate the relationship of organisational justice and OCB: We further hypothesise that:

H5: Organisational justice is significantly related to subordinate's trust in supervisor.

H6: Subordinate's trust in supervisor is significantly related to organisational citizenship behaviour.

H7: Subordinate's trust in supervisor mediates the effects of perceived organisational justice on organisational citizenship behaviour.

3.   Methods

3.1   *Procedure and Sample*

Data was collected from frontline employees working in five-star hotels in Malaysia located in Kuala Lumpur (Federal Territory), Selangor, Putrajaya (Federal Territory) and Negeri Sembilan. The Human Resource Department of all five-star hotels registered under the membership directory of Malaysian

Association of Hotels was invited to participate in this study. After follow-up calls, a total of 16 hotels agreed to participate. As tokens of appreciation, these hotels were promised a copy of the study's findings and both subordinates as well as supervisors who took part in the survey were gifted with souvenirs from the university.

To avoid problems associated with common method variance, data was collected from both subordinates and supervisors. Based on a pre-test of 50 frontline employees randomly selected from star-rated hotels, several adjustments were made on the questionnaire before the final version was administered.

In order to ensure high reliability and validity of the responses, we visited all the hotels for data collection including trips by researchers to each site. Prior appointment was made with person-in-charge who was a Human Resource Director, Human Resource Manager, Assistant Human Resource Manager or Training Manager. For sample selection purposes, a list of frontline employees working in various departments (front office, housekeeping and maintenance, restaurant, kitchen, bar, banqueting, conference and others) was obtained from the human resource department. This list was then filtered and careful selection made based on employees' number of years working in the department. Only employees who have worked for at least two years or more were eligible to participate. This was to ensure that the employees were in a justified position in assessing perceived organisational justice, trust in supervisor and quality of relationship (LMX) they had with the supervisors. Probability sampling was adopted where we relied on Microsoft Excel sheet to generate the k-number of frontliners from the filtered list using (=rand() function), as agreed by the hotels.

The first part of the pre-coded questionnaire consisting of measurement scales on organisational justice, LMX and trust was distributed to subordinates. Subordinates' demographic details were also enquired. Selected subordinates, gathered in a meeting or conference room by human resource personnel, were given half an hour to fill in the questionnaires and in order to assure them that their individual responses would not be revealed to anyone in the hotel, their completed questionnaires were collected instantly. We then proceeded with distributing the second part of the questionnaire consisting of OCB measurement scales to the respective supervisors. Similarly, to ensure a fair evaluation on subordinate's OCB, we made sure that the identified supervisor had known the subordinate for at least two years. This matching dyad of subordinate-supervisor was made possible with the help from the human resource personnel. Some supervisors returned the OCB assessment on the same day. Some, however, posted the questionnaires to us within a week. Self-addressed and stamped return envelopes were provided. Both subordinates and supervisors were assured that their questionnaires would be kept confidential.

3.2 Measures

The first part of the questionnaire consisting of measurement scales for perceived organisational justice, trust in supervisor and leader-member exchange was completed by subordinates; and the second part of the questionnaire which incorporated measurements for organisational citizenship behaviour was rated by supervisors. All constructs except for demographic details, were assessed on the 7-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 7 indicates "strongly agree".

For organisational justice, two dimensions namely, procedural and distributive justice, were measured with the scales developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993). Distributive justice consisted of five items (e.g. my work schedule is fair) and procedural justice was measured on six items (e.g. job decisions are made by my supervisor in an unbiased manner). 12-item scale of LMX developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998) on four major dimensions (affect, loyalty, contribution and professional respect) was adopted. Examples of LMX items include "I like my supervisor very much as a person" and "I am impressed with my supervisor's knowledge of his or her job". Trust in supervisor was assessed on 4-item scale adapted from Leader scale by Podsakoff et al. (1990) (e.g. I have complete faith in the integrity of my supervisor). And finally, OCBs were evaluated through the 20 item-scale by Podsakoff et al. ranging from altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue. Examples of an item for each of the category include altruism – "I help others who have heavy workload"; courtesy – "I do not abuse the right of others"; sportsmanship – "I consume a lot of time complaining about trivial matters"; conscientiousness – "I am always punctual" and civic virtue – "I keep abreast of changes in the organisation".

4.   Results

A total of 280 questionnaires were distributed but only 227 surveys were usable. These matched surveys were completed by 227 subordinates and 62 supervisors, yielding response rates of 81% and 88% respectively. On average, these supervisors evaluated OCBs of four subordinates each who worked in the same department. The characteristics of subordinates who participated in the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics of Respondents (n = 227)	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	108	47.6
Female	119	52.4
Race		
Malay	101	44.5
Chinese	78	34.4
Indian	27	11.9
Others	21	9.3
Marital status		
Single	139	61.2
Married	88	38.8
Age		
Below 25 years old	81	35.7
25-30 years old	69	30.4
31-35 years old	39	17.2
36-40 years old	17	7.5
41-45 years old	13	5.7
46-50 years old	3	1.3
51-55 years old	4	1.8
Above 55 years old	1	0.4
Academic Qualification		
Primary level	3	1.3
Secondary level	95	41.9
Diploma	87	38.3
Bachelor's Degree	40	17.6
Master's Degree	0	0.0
Doctorate Degree	0	0.0
Others	2	0.9
Department		
Reception/ Front office	74	32.6
Night Audit	1	0.4
Housekeeping/ maintenance	53	23.3
Restaurant	21	9.3
Kitchen	13	5.7
Bar	2	0.9
Banqueting	15	6.6
Conference	2	0.9
Others	46	20.3

Characteristics of Respondents (n = 227)		
	Frequency	Percentage
Income		
Less than RM1000	33	14.5
RM1000-RM2000	117	51.5
RM2001-RM3000	58	25.6
RM3001-RM4000	18	7.9
RM4001-RM5000	0	0.0
More than RM5000	1	0.4
Location		
Kuala Lumpur	159	70.0
Selangor	44	19.4
Putrajaya	9	4.0
Negeri Sembilan	15	6.6

Exploratory factor analysis, through the method of principal axis factoring with varimax rotation, was conducted to examine the factor loadings of all variables and this enabled groupings according to our conceptual framework. From the output shown on rotated factor matrix, most of the variables loaded accordingly into the respective factors except for few which did not meet the cut-off loading points of 0.50. Those items which held less than 0.50 loadings were dropped. Table 2 summarises the loadings on each factor.

Table 2 : Factor Loadings for All Items

Items	Factor Loadings (cut-off point = 0.50)	
Procedural		
Justice	0.632	
PJ1	0.738	
PJ2	0.530	
PJ3	0.064*	
PJ4	0.546	
PJ5	0.610	
PJ6		
Distributive		0.360*
Justice		0.554
DJ1		0.620
DJ2		0.671
DJ3		0.751
DJ4		
DJ5		

Items	Factor Loadings (cut-off point = 0.50)				
LMX					
L1	0.729				
L2	0.711				
L3	0.586				
L4	0.529				
L5	0.815				
L6	0.804				
L7	0.753				
L8	0.704				
L9	0.763				
L10	0.694				
L11	0.760				
L12	0.730				
Trust					
T1		0.778			
T2		0.866			
T3		0.820			
T4		0.841			
OCB					
Altruism					
A1		0.684			
A2		0.675			
A3		0.829			
A4		0.649			
Courtesy					
C1		0.560*			
C2			0.530		
C3			0.704		
C4			0.587		
Sportsmanship					
S1				0.667	
S2				0.892	
S3				0.712	
S4				0.575	
Conscientiousness					
CS1					0.533
CS2					0.793
CS3					0.750
CS4					0.468*
Civic virtue					
CV1						0.222*
CV2						0.531
CV3						0.814
CV4						0.344*

*Note: Items were dropped due to poor and cross loadings

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities and Correlations

n = 227	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Procedural justice	24.61	4.60	(0.803)								
2. Distributive justice	18.85	4.04	.588**	(0.781)							
3. Leader-member exchange	59.51	11.72	.710**	.541**	(0.925)						
4. Trust	20.33	4.57	.702**	.516**	.847**	(0.896)					
5. OCB (Altruism)	20.78	3.68	.403**	.234**	.461**	.328**	(0.825)				
6. OCB (Courtesy)	16.56	2.49	.381**	0.127	.361**	.365**	.425**	(0.710)			
7. OCB (Sportsmanship)	20.64	5.42	.156*	0.08	.212**	.151*	.258**	.270**	(0.813)		
8. OCB (Conscientiousness)	16.20	3.44	.152*	.147*	0.098	0.084	.233**	.255**	.196**	(0.749)	
9. OCB (Civic virtue)	9.44	2.38	.384**	.257**	.416**	.370**	.351**	.353**	0.122	.219**	(0.655)

Note: Cronbach alpha is in parentheses along the diagonal.
*p < 0.05
**p < 0.01

One item each is dropped from procedural and distributive justice due to poor loadings. Instead of four factors, the 12 items measuring LMX load only on one factor. This is consistent with the early research findings which claimed that LMX is one-dimensional (Graen and Cashman, 1975; Graen and Bien, 1995). We retain this sole factor and group it under "LMX". Four items on trust record loadings of more than 0.50 and load in one factor as expected. As for OCBs, all four items are retained for altruism and sportsmanship with loadings reported at more than 0.50; one item (0.56) is dropped from courtesy due to cross loading; the last item from conscientiousness with low loading of 0.468 is also dropped and only two out of four items on civic virtue are retained due to poor loadings. This maybe somehow attributed to the profile of respondents who are mainly frontline employees. This level of employees have no capacity, therefore not required or even expected, to display civic virtue dimension such as keeping themselves updated with changes and development of the hotel.

Table 3 reports the means, standard deviations, reliability coefficient alpha and zero-order correlations among all the variables. Based on Table 3, Cronbach coefficient alpha for all variables are recorded high, ranging from 0.655 to 0.925. Therefore, all the scales meet the generally accepted reliability of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978).

Based on the correlation coefficients, H1 can be partially supported as procedural justice is found to have significant relationship with all the five dimensions of OCB but distributive justice is only significantly related to altruism, conscientiousness and civic virtue. H2 and H5 are fully supported because procedural and distributive justice are positively related to LMX and trust. Both LMX and trust are found to have influenced only the OCB dimension of altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship and civic virtue but not conscientiousness. Thus, H3 and H6 cannot be fully supported.

In order to test mediating effects of LMX and trust in supervisor, we further tested the hypotheses on separate regression analyses. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), three equations or conditions must be fulfilled for a mediator to exist:

- The independent variable (predictor) must be significantly related to the dependent variable (criterion) (Equation 1);
- The independent variable must be significantly related to the mediator (Equation 2);
- The mediator must be significantly related to dependent variable and the impact of independent variable on dependent variable must either become insignificant (total mediation) or become less significant (partial mediation), when the mediator is introduced (Equation 3).

Table 4 : Regression Analysis for Testing Mediation Effects of LMX and Trust

	Equation 1	Equation 2		Equation 3	
Predictor	OJ	OJ	OJ	OJ	OJ
Criterion	OCB	LMX	Trust	LMX / OCB	Trust / OCB
Unstandardised β	0.551***	1.076***	0.409***	$\beta a = 0.170$ / $\beta b = 0.433^{***}$	$\beta a = 0.351^{**}$ / $\beta b = 0.898^{***}$
Model statistics R^2	0.142	0.501	0.475	0.21	0.163
Adj. R^2	0.139	0.499	0.473	0.203	0.156
F	37.361	226.08	203.85	29.771	21.84

**p < 0.01

***p < 0.001

OJ = Organisational Justice, LMX = Leader-Member Exchange, OCB = Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

By running the three equations stated above, confirmation can be done on the relationships among perceived organisational justice, LMX, trust and OCB, as proposed in H1, H2, H3, H5 and H6, complementing results depicted in correlation table (Table 3). H4 and H7 can only be tested through the third equation. Three equations are analysed through the composite scores for all the variables. The output is depicted in Table 4. From the regression analysis for the first equation, it is proven that perceived organisational justice is significantly related to organisational citizenship behaviour with unstandardised beta coefficient recorded at 0.551, $p < 0.001$; second equation confirms a significant relationship between perceived organisational justice and LMX ($\beta = 1.076$, $p < 0.001$) as well as trust ($\beta = 0.409$, $p < 0.001$). Both mediators are also found to be positively related to perceived organisational citizenship behaviour with LMX reporting $\beta = 0.433$, $p < 0.001$ and trust $\beta = 0.898$, $p < 0.001$. In the third equation, when OCB is regressed on LMX, the main effect of perceived organisational justice becomes insignificant ($\beta = 0.170$). Thus, we conclude that H4 is fully supported as LMX fully mediates the relationship between perceived organisational justice and OCB. However, when trust is included as a mediator in the equation, although the beta coefficient is reduced, level of significance remains at $p < 0.01$. Thus, H7 is not supported.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study, affirming social exchange theory, conclude that a healthy climate at the workplace, which is characterised by perceived organisational justice and high quality exchanges as well as trust between supervisor and subordinate, permit the psychological capacity on part of frontline employees in hotels to exhibit OCB. Significantly, the results of this study confirm earlier findings which supported the relationship between perceived organisational justice and OCB (Organ and Konovsky, 1989; Moorman, 1991; Moorman and Niehoff, 1993; Williams *et al*., 2002; Coyle-Shapiro *et al*., 2003; Zellers *et al*., 2003). Although regression analysis fully supports the relationship between perceived organisational justice and OCB, a careful study on the correlation coefficients among the dimensions of these two variables warrant some insights.

Procedural justice, as expected, is found to be significantly related to all dimensions of OCB – altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue. This implies that frontline employees in these hotels who perceive fairness in procedures taken to reach certain outcomes, display the behaviour of helping colleagues in solving organisational tasks, tolerating less ideal work environment, complaining less, carrying out duties beyond contractual requirements and participating actively in organisational development. On the other hand, distributive justice is found to have significant influence on altruism,

conscientiousness and civic virtue, but not on courtesy and sportsmanship. This indicates that five-star hotel employees in this region whose work are highly routine and operational emphasise sense of equity not only in procedures taken to reach a decision but also to a certain extent, fairness in decisions made by the management. Such unexpected findings should be highlighted because many studies have reported that there was no significant relationship between distributive justice and OCB (Williams *et al*., 2002; Zellers *et al*., 2003). A similar study conducted by Ishak and Ahmad (2004) whose respondents were non-supervisory employees in banks concluded that both procedural and distributive justice did not lead to OCBs. Moorman's (1991) findings are consistent with this study as stronger link is discovered between procedural justice and OCB, rather than distributive justice.

As expected, procedural and distributive justice show positive significant relationship with LMX and trust reflecting that interpersonal relationship remains an important component in any social exchange process. Five-star hotel employees who perceive fairness at the workplace are more likely to reciprocate by maintaining good relationship with the supervisor placing faith in them. On the other hand, both LMX and subordinate's trust in the supervisor shows significant relationship with all of the OCB dimensions except for conscientiousness. This is in line with Deluga (1994) who concluded that subordinates who experienced good quality relationships with supervisors were more likely to engage in OCB. This study's findings are also consistent with studies which linked trust with OCB (Organ, 1990, Podsakoff *et al*., 2000, Rahim *et al*., 2001; Aryee *et al*., 2002). Conscientiousness which include items such as "I am always punctual, I never take long lunch breaks, I do not take extra breaks, I obey rules and regulations even when no one is watching", is found to have no significant relationship with LMX and trust in supervisor in this study. One possible explanation may be that in the perspective of these hotel frontliners, they are bound to obey rules and regulations. This dimension is thus, in their opinion, not relevant to be considered as extra-role behaviour. Undoubtedly, a waiter who works in the bar might be given a letter of warning if he or she was to arrive late for work, take long lunch break or go against any rules. Hence, regardless of whether he or she had high or low quality of exchanges with his or her supervisor or whether he or she had faith in his or her supervisor, he or she still needs to comply with the rules and regulations, as specified under this conscientiousness dimension. This may also be attributed to the long debated issue where various constructs of OCB were developed as a result of the different interpretation and understandings among researchers over the definition of "in-role" and "extra-role" behaviours. Although these five dimensions of OCB (Podsakoff *et al*., 1990), employed in this study have been widely used and tested in many contexts and claimed to be conceptually

distinct, many researchers and managers often face difficulty recognising some of these fine distinctions in-role or extra-role behaviour (Graham, 1991).

Another important finding which must not be overlooked is that high quality exchange between supervisor and subordinate is found to have full mediating effect on the relationship of perceived organisational justice and OCBs. We can infer that implanting fairness and justice in the eyes of employees maybe insufficient. Frontline employees in these hotels demand for high quality exchanges with their supervisors where they would want to like this supervisor as a person, work more than required for him or her, be loyal and respect his or her knowledge and professionalism. This is consistent with the findings by Ishak and Ahmad (2004) who reported that LMX fully mediated the relationship between interactional justice and one of OCB dimensions, namely altruism. Trust in supervisor, however, is found to have only partially mediated the perceived organisational justice – OCB relationship. When trust is included in the equation, effects of organisational justice on OCB is reduced to a certain extent but remain significant. This is somehow explainable because having embraced the culture of collectivism and living high on uncertainty avoidance, Malaysians tend to relate to their immediate supervisors, as opposed to their organisation directly. Thus, even though trust in supervisor does not fully mediate the relationship between perceived fairness and OCB, elements of trust are still significant consideration for employees before enacting citizenship behaviour.

6.   Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to establish linkages among perceived organisational justice, leader-member exchange, trust and OCB. Findings of this study contend that people always seek to reciprocate those who benefit them (Adams, 1965; Blau, 1964). When a supervisor treats his or her subordinate fairly besides maintaining good quality relationship and high level of trust, the subordinate finds it obliging to repay by displaying OCB, which subsequently in aggregate, enhances organisational effectiveness (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990). This reasoning is logical because firstly, employees who are helped and supported by altruistic colleagues will not have to seek assistance or guidance from supervisors enabling the supervisors to focus on more important issues such as drawing strategic plans for the organisation. And secondly, employees who display courtesy and sportsmanship increase organisational resources by eliminating unnecessary problems at the workplace. For example, if complaints are filed over unsatisfactory work condition or arguments arise among co-workers, organisation will have to spend time and incur costs, finding ways to solve the internal problems, at the expense of leaving customers unattended to. Thirdly, conscientious employees would walk the extra mile, performing

duties beyond contract requirements and lastly, those who exhibit civic virtue dimension may contribute sound ideas for organisation betterment.

It has been proven in this study that perceived organisational justice, LMX and trust have significant impact on OCB. Practitioners and the hoteliers in particular, should take appropriate actions to improve these three factors in the workplace. Since frontline employees deem procedural justice as highly important, the approaches and procedures taken in reaching every single outcome should be justified and answerable. Biasness ranging from stereotyping, halo effect to discrimination against an individual should always be avoided. Supervisors should be held accountable and responsible for every action taken. Two-way communication should always be practised as this encourages subordinates to approach their supervisors freely when in doubt. An open door policy enabling subordinates to discuss their problems with supervisors, without any hesitation, will definitely enhance the relationship and mutual trust. LMX sensitivity and ways to build trust could be incorporated into leadership training programmes mandated for all supervisors. As a conclusion, by having a positive organisational climate in which fairness for employees is prioritised and high quality as well as trusting relationship between subordinate and supervisor are maintained, OCB as desired by all organisations, can be realised and organizational performance can be enhanced. With that, the proposition of "frontline equals bottom line" is verified.

7. Limitations and Future Research

This study is not without any weaknesses. Firstly, according to the membership directory of Malaysian Association of Hotels, there are 33 five-star hotels located in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Putrajaya and Negeri Sembilan. However, only 16 hotels agreed to participate. Among the reasons given by the hotels for refusal to take part in the survey include hotel policy; hotel was serving full occupancy rate at its peak season and hence non availability of staff to participate; hotel had its own appraisal form, thus this study may not be useful; and questionnaires were too sensitive and may breach confidentiality rules. Therefore, the 227 respondents randomly selected from 16 hotels amounted to a sample that maybe too small. Secondly, the units of analysis of this study are solely frontline employees. Hence, the findings could not be generalised to all other levels which may vary in terms of nature of work, academic qualifications, income level, working experiences and the likes. Only employees from hotels operating in central region of Malaysia participated in this study, thus findings may not be relevant to other states. Lastly, since the data originates from employees working in the hospitality industry, we could not conclude the same for all other industries. Due to these limitations, we recommend that future research increase the sample size for better validation as well as include all

levels of employees from all the states in Malaysia and not confining it only to non-supervisory employees. Similar theoretical framework should be tested on other industries such as manufacturing, food and beverage, education, construction and so forth, so as to reaffirm the findings of this study.

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