



***MEDIATING EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT
ON ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE AND COMMITMENT RELATIONSHIP
AMONG MALAYSIAN SCHOOL SPORTS VOLUNTEER COACHES***

OOI CHENG LEE

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By

OOI CHENG LEE

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

August 2016

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DEDICATED

To

My beloved parents –
Ooi Beng Hai and Lim Kim Cheng
for their unconditional love and support





Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor Philosophy

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August 2016

Chairman: Professor Aminuddin bin Yusof, PhD
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Little is known on how perceived organisational support as an exchange mechanism could explain the inconsistent findings between organisational justice and organisational commitment, particularly among public school sports volunteer coaches. This study is the first to examine whether perceived organisational support mediates the relationships between the four-dimensional organisational justice and the three-component organisational commitment of the Malaysian High Performance School Sports Developmental Programme (SPTS) volunteer coaches, in an organisation-sponsored volunteerism at grass root sports development level. A cross-sectional correlation research mail survey was conducted. Data from 750 respondents were analysed by using IBM SPSS statistics software and structural equation modeling with AMOS. Findings showed that interpersonal justice related positively with affective commitment but negatively with continuance commitment; while, distributive justice was only linked to normative commitment. All four dimensions of organisational justice except procedural justice were associated with perceived organisational support. Perceived organisational support relates only to normative commitment. Findings also showed that perceived organisational support mediated distributive justice and informational justice on continuance commitment, and together with interpersonal justice on normative commitment. However, no mediation of perceived organisational support was found on all four dimensions of organisational justice with affective commitment. In conclusion, perceived organisational support has made the fairness process more definitive in explaining these Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' organisational commitment. This study implied that Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches have high normative commitment, but are not impressed from their perception of procedural justice due to Malaysian culture of collectivism, hierarchical organisation structure and high power distance. Moreover Organisation Support Theory, under current research, is suggested to contextualise and resolve their conflicting dual roles as a teacher by contract and as a volunteer coach by assignment within the organisation. Besides, it is essential to strengthen the Sports Officers' capabilities and abilities in volunteer sports management in order to achieve Malaysia's aim for sports excellence. Future in-depth research is recommended for a better understanding of the subject matter.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESAN PENGANTARA ATAS PERSEPSI SOKONGAN ORGANISASI
TERHADAP HUBUNGAN KEADILAN ORGANISASI DAN KOMMITMEN
DALAM KALANGAN SUKARELAWAN JURULATIH SUKAN SEKOLAH
MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Kurang diketahui bagaimana persepsi sokongan organisasi sebagai satu mekanisme perantara dapat menjelaskan dapatan yang tidak konsisten antara keadilan organisasi dan komitmen organisasi, khususnya dalam kalangan sukarelawan jurulatih sukan sekolah umum. Kajian ini adalah yang pertama menguji sama ada persepsi sokongan organisasi menjadi pengantara terhadap hubungan antara keadilan organisasi dan komitmen organisasi dalam kalangan sukarelawan jurulatih sukan Program Pembangunan Sukan Prestasi Tinggi Sekolah (SPTS); satu program pembangunan sukan sukarelawan tajaan organisasi di peringkat akar umbi. Satu penyelidikan korelasi keratan rentas melalui kajian secara pos telah dijalankan. Data daripada 750 responden telah dianalisis dengan menggunakan perisian statistik IBM SPSS dan *structural equation modeling* dengan AMOS. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa *interpersonal justice* berkorelasi secara positif dengan *affective commitment* tetapi secara negatif dengan *continuance commitment*; manakala, hanya *distributive justice* mempunyai perkaitan dengan *normative commitment*. Kesemua empat dimensi keadilan organisasi kecuali *procedural justice* adalah berkait dengan persepsi sokongan organisasi. Persepsi sokongan organisasi hanya berkait dengan *normative commitment*. Dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa persepsi sokongan organisasi menjadi pengantara *distributive justice* dan *informational justice* ke atas *continuance commitment*, dan berserta dengan *distributive justice* ke atas *normative commitment*. Walau bagaimanapun, tiada pengantaraan Persepsi Sokongan Organisasi bagi kesemua empat dimensi keadilan organisasi dengan *affective commitment*. Kesimpulannya, Persepsi Sokongan Organisasi telah membuat proses keadilan lebih terperinci dalam menerangkan komitmen organisasi sukarelawan jurulatih sukan SPTS Malaysia. Kajian ini memberi implikasi bahawa sukarelawan jurulatih sukan SPTS Malaysia mempunyai *normative commitment* yang tinggi, tetapi tidak tertarik terhadap *procedural justice* disebabkan budaya Malaysia yang kolektivisme, struktur organisasi berhierarki, dan tinggi dalam ketidaksetaraan kuasa.. Tambahan pula, Teori Sokongan Organisasi di bawah kajian ini dicadangkan untuk mengambil kira konteks kajian dan menyelesaikan percanggahan dwi peranan sebagai guru secara kontrak dan selaku sukarelawan jurulatih sukan secara lantikan dalam organisasi. Di samping itu, ini adalah penting untuk mengukuhkan keupayaan dan kebolehan pegawai sukan dalam pengurusan sukan sukarelawan demi mencapai cita-cita Malaysia ke arah

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 11 August 2016 to conduct the final examination of Ooi Cheng Lee on her thesis entitled “Mediating Effect of Perceived Organisational Support on Organisational Justice and Commitment Relationship among Malaysian School Sports Volunteer Coaches” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SPTS	High Performance School Sports Developmental Programme
MOE	Ministry of Education
OST	Organisational Support Theory
POS	Perceived Organisational Support
OJ	Organisational Justice
DJ	Distributive Justice
PJ	Procedural Justice
TJ	Interpersonal Justice
FJ	Informational Justice
OC	Organisational Commitment
AC	Affective Commitment
CC	Continuance Commitment
NC	Normative Commitment
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer Olkin
AIC	Akaike Information Correction
AVE	Average Variance Extended
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
IFI	Incremental Fit Indices
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
PFI	Parsimony Fit Index
PNFI	Parsimony Normal Fit Index



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Sport volunteers are indispensable human capital that contribute to the success of the sport industry (Cuskelly, Hoyer, & Auld, 2006; Nichols, Taylor, Barrett, & Jeanes, 2014; Peachey, Lyras, Cohen, Bruening, & Cunningham, 2014; Ringuelet-Riot, Cuskelly, Auld, & Zakus, 2014; Studer, 2015). They constitute approximately 0.9% of the average gross domestic profit in 15 countries (Salamon, Sokolowski, Haddock, and Tice, 2012). About 1.5 million sport volunteers backed up approximately 5.3 million of junior participants in sports (Sport England, 2012). Yet, the importance of sport-for-development volunteers has been undermined when compared with elite sport in volunteerism research (Peachey et al., 2014), particularly volunteer coaches in developmental sport. In Malaysia, grassroots sports development relies fully on volunteer school sports coaches under the Sports Division of the Ministry of Education (MOE). These volunteer coaches serve with free will and with no remuneration in order to develop student-athletes under the High Performance School Sports Developmental Programme (Program Pembangunan Sukan Prestasi Tinggi Sekolah, SPTS), a competitive school sports programme organised by the Sports Division of MOE as designated coaching position only. In this study, the term of volunteer competitive school/youth sport coaches refers to the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches.

Volunteer school/youth sport coaches not only develop athletes' sports skills and knowledge, but also guide their personal and social growth (Fletcher & Scott, 2010). They are the quality controllers of youth sport participation and performance in sport delivery programmes (Harman & Doherty, 2014). In line with this, Cuskelly et al (2006, p. 123) have highlighted that "coaches are often the most tangible manifestation of organisational quality and effectiveness in the sport context and are crucial component of the sport experience for most participants". Therefore, it is important to retain such a scarce resource (Busser & Carruthers, 2010; Harman & Doherty, 2014). In order to have better understanding of effective programme delivery by these volunteer coaches, the volunteer-organisation relationship may provide valuable insights on how organisational justice and perceived organisational support influence these Malaysian SPTS volunteer sport coaches' organisational commitment.

In many countries, organisational support is paramount for volunteer youth sport coaches development (Commonwealth of Australian, 2010). Perceived organisational support was developed based on organisational support theory (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). This theory posits that "... to determine the organisation's readiness to reward increased work effort and to meet socioemotional needs, employees develop global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organisation values their contribution and cares about their well-being" (Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 698). Thus, perceived organisational support is an aid to facilitate employees' socioemotional needs (Baran, Shannock, & Miller, 2011; Kurtosis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart, & Adis, 2015; Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002). It elicits social exchange (Blau, 1964), and norm of reciprocity (Gouldner,

1960) among the employees. Organisational support theory holds for a cyclic process of mutual engagement and commitment between both parties in the employment relationship. Therefore, perceived organisational support's unique features enable it to act as a mediator to explain, interact, and integrate the underlying factors that influence an observed relationship (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Baran et al., 2011; Eisenberger et al., 1986). Previous studies have reported its effects on work attitude (e.g. Eisenberger et al., 1986), productivity, and organisational performance (Purang, 2011; Woo & Chelladurai, 2012). Nevertheless, its significance is still debatable among scholars and practitioners (Riggle, Edmondson, & Hansen, 2009).

Perceived organisational support is personified by favourable treatment from the organisation's agents, such as organisational justice (Baran et al., 2011; Kurtosis et al., 2015; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In sport, perceived organisational support only caught little attention, such as among student-workers in the recreational sports department of a university (Pack, Jordon, Turner, & Haines, 2007); National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I coaches (Rocha & Chelladurai, 2011); NCAA Division I administrators (Pack, 2005). In addition, little is known of perceived organisational support from the perspectives of these volunteer school/youth sport coaches (Malaysian SPTS volunteer sports coaches) and in Asian countries such as Malaysia.

Organisational justice is the strongest antecedent of perceived organisational support (Baran et al., 2011; Kurtosis et al., 2015; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). It evaluates perceptions of employees on workplace fairness (Greenberg, 1990). It is also related to organisational commitment, job satisfaction, job performance, evaluation of authority, organisational citizenship behaviour, trust, and withdrawal (Cohen-Charash, & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Drawing on Colquitt (2001), the present study applied four-dimensional organisational justice, which comprises procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justices as antecedent of perceived organisational support. Distributive justice refers to fairness of outcomes; procedural justice indicates fairness of the organization's policies and procedures in decision-making processes; interpersonal justice considers fairness of interactive treatment; and informational justice reflects on fairness of justifying and conveying on-time accurate information.

Since 1994, sport management scholars have been attracted to organisational justice research (Mahony, Hums, Andrew, & Dittmore, 2010). In the sport management setting, most organisational justice research was confined to the United States of America (USA) and focused mostly on NCAA Division I, II, and III; one in Olympic sport, and three in Texas's high schools (Mahony et al., 2010). Such studies examined NCAA coaches (Kim, 2009; Kim & Andrew, 2013; Thorn, 2010); while, Hums and Chelladurai's (1994a, 1994b) research focused on both coaches and administrators. On the other hand, only two studies carried out in Texas high schools related to coaches and examined organisational justice and job satisfaction facet (Whisenant & Smucker, 2007, 2009). To date, little is known about these Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' (volunteer competitive school sports coaches) perceptions of organisational justice, and its impact on perceived organisational support, and its subsequent influence on their organisational commitment.

Organisational commitment is the strongest consequence of perceived organisational support (Benjamin et al., 2011; Kurtosis et al., 2015; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Organisational commitment is about “mind-set” that characterise an individual decision and action to remain in an organisation simultaneously (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). Current research adapted and adopted the three-component model of organisational commitment, namely affective, continuance, and normative commitments (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Relatively, these commitments reflect desires, cost avoidance, and obligation to an organisation. In volunteer management, continuance commitment has been omitted in previous volunteer literature due to the lack of legal obligations and material benefits linking between volunteers and organisation (Bozeman & Ellemers, 2007; Cha, Cichy, & Kim, 2011; Kim, Jones, & Rodriguez, 2008; Liao-Troth, 2001, 2008). Nevertheless, it is included in this study because these SPTS volunteer coaches are Malaysian in-service primary and secondary public schools teachers who serve an organisation-sponsored volunteerism – SPTS programme. The coaching conditions may suggest high social expectations on investment and the lack of alternative avenues for coaching.

Volunteer coaches are ranked second after volunteer sports administrators and demonstrate high level of engagement and commitment in sports operational roles (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The dynamics and complexity of sport coaching are also encountered by volunteer sport coaches in meeting the demand of preparing competitive excellent athletes and organisational goals (Peel, Cropley, Hanton, & Fleming, 2013). Sport coaches’ organisational commitment has been related with turnover between current and former coaches (Raedeke, Warren, & Granzky, 2002), satisfaction between American and Japanese collegiate coaches (Chelladurai & Ogasawara, 2003), perceived organisational support and performance of NCCA Division I head coaches (Rocha & Chelladurai, 2011), organisational justice in NCAA Divisions (Kim, 2009; Kim & Andrew, 2013, 2015; Thorn, 2010), and sport volunteers inclusive of volunteer coaches (Engelberg, Zakus, Skinner, & Campbell, 2012; Ringuet-Riot, Cuskelly, Auld, & Zakus, 2014). These studies have emphasised organisational commitment as one of the crucial factors in assuring quality and success in sport programme delivery and sustainability. However, little information is addressed on the volunteer school/youth sports coaches of these Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches.

Although considerable research has examined perceived organisational support as a mediator, only a few examined its mediating effect on organisational justice and organisational commitment. Research related to the business settings have been carried out by Loi, Ngo, and Sharon (2006), and Purang (2011). Kim (2009) studied head and assistant coaches of NCAA Division I, II, and III in sport management settings. Less attention has been paid to volunteer school/youth sport coaches. Therefore, this study argues that organisational support theory may be a useful theoretical framework for investigating the volunteer-organisation relationship from the perspectives of these volunteer school/youth sport coaches – the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches.

1.1 Problem Statement

To date, organisations still strive for enhancing and retaining committed employees (Meyer, Stanley, Jackson, McInnis, Maltin, & Sheppard, 2012; Morrow, 2011). However in sport, literature has reported that volunteer youth sport coaches are hard to retain (Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoyer, & Darcy, 2006; Rundle-Thiele & Auld, 2009) and replace (Paement, 2007), in particular the Malaysian High Performance School Sports Developmental Programme (SPTS) volunteer school sport coaches. They are the essence of Malaysian grassroots sports developers. In interviewing an officer of the Sports Division of the MOE in-charge of the District Training Centre (*Pusat Latihan Daerah*) SPTS volunteer coaches, he expressed his concern on the declining number of coaches from 1749 coaches of 831 District Training Centres in 2012 to 1670 coaches of 862 District Training Centers in 2013, despite the expansion of these centres for the nation's grassroots sports excellence. In addition, his District Sports Officers have reported on the closure of some District Training Centres as no replacements were available for dropped out, transferred, promoted, and unhealthy or demised volunteer coaches. An understanding of employee-employer relationship might improve volunteer coach sustainability.

Both employees and organisation are seeking for a win-win interdependence employee-organisation relationship on the evaluation of organisational justice and commitment (López-Cabarcos, Machado-Lopes-Sampaio-de Pinho, & Vázquez-Rodríguez, 2015; Mahony et al., 2010; Purang, 2011; Thorn, 2010). Organisations require fully committed employees as their competitive edge for success (Purang, 2011). In general, employees look forward to justice treatments in their employment relationship as predictable and controllable future benefits, considerations of personal and group values, and considerations of upholding ethical and social norms (Cropanzano, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007). Past studies have shown that perceptions of justice affect an individual's attitude, behaviour, and thus organisational outcome (Fortin, 2008; López-Cabarcos et al., 2015; Mahony et al., 2010; Purang, 2011; Thorn, 2010). In addition, it could mitigate conflict and disagreement (Kerwin, Jordan, & Turner, 2014).

However, past literature reported inconsistent findings on these relationships. For example, some researchers argued that procedural justice is stronger than distributive justice in predicting organisational commitment (Choong et al., 2010; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001; Griffin & Hepburn, 2005; Lambert, Hogan, & Griffin, 2007). Other scholars supported the opposite opinions (Greenberg, 1994; Lowe & Vodanovich, 1995). Some even reported that distributive justice was not correlated with organisational justice (Griffin & Hepburn, 2005; Lambert, 2003). Findings from meta-analysis studies revealed that the three- (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001) and four- (Colquitt et al., 2001) dimensional organisational justice have significant relationships with all three components of organisational commitment with different magnitude. Nevertheless, studies on men sports coaches in NCAA Divisions reported mixed results for the three dimensions of organisational justice and organisational commitment based on sport type (Thorn, 2010). However, past studies including sport management studies did not consider all four dimensions of organisational justice and three components of organisational commitment fully, thus resulting in inconsistent findings of these justice relationships. Furthermore, in sport

studies, research on volunteer-organisation relationship is limited (Mahony et al., 2010) despite volunteers' valuable contributions being well acknowledged, especially volunteer sport coaches (Cuskelly, Hoye, & Auld, 2006; Harman & Doherty, 2014; Studer, 2015).

The aforementioned inconsistent findings might have surfaced without considering the organisational support theory that posits perceived organisational support as a mediator that links causal and effect of social exchange theory and norm of reciprocity in employment relationships (Benjamin et al., 2011; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kim, 2009; Loi et al., 2006; Purang, 2011). In particular, the extent to which perceived organisational support explains (mediates) perceptions of organisational justice and organisational commitment among volunteer school/youth sports coaches is still not well understood. In this study, the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coach management is an organisation-sponsored volunteerism programme managed by the Malaysian Sports Division of MOE. Its volunteer coaches' management practices may differ from other voluntary sports organisations. Until research examines the process of how perceived organisational support links organisational justice to organisational commitment among these Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches, their organisational commitment will remain a puzzle.

Unlike other studies on volunteers (Bingham, Mitchell, Bishop, & Allen, 2013; Boezeman & Ellemers, 2007; Cha, Cichy, & Kim, 2011), this study includes continuance commitment because of their need to stay for vast investment of time, effort, and money spent on training these SPTS athletes (Park & Kim, 2013) rather than valued organisational memberships (Meyer et al., 1993). Even though these volunteers are not bounded to continuously commit to coach for the organisation, they expect the organisation to respond to their needs in terms of a large pool of potential athletes with the availability of essential sports equipment and facilities, coaches' networking and other factors that prevent them from seeking other alternatives (Andam, 2013). In addition, high continuance commitment is required to meet high collectivism and power distance culture in regions other than North America (Fisher & Mansell, 2009). Without this understanding, no constructive SPTS volunteer coaches retention strategies can be formulated by the management and the grassroots sports development will be retarded. Therefore, this present research aimed at examining the mediating roles of perceived organisational support on the relationships between the four dimensions of organisational justice and the three components of organisational commitment from these Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perspectives within the fifteen states in Malaysia.

1.2 Research Objective

This study addresses the following objectives:

- 1) To examine the relationship between the four-dimensional organisational justice (procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justices) and the three components of organisational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative commitments).

- 2) To investigate the relationship between the four-dimensional organisational justice (procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justices) and perceived organisational support.
- 3) To determine the relationship between perceived organisational support and the three components of organisational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative commitments).
- 4) To examine the mediating role of perceived organisational support in the relationship between the four-dimensional organisational justice (procedural, distributive, interpersonal, and informational justices) and the three components of organisational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative commitments).

1.3 Research Hypotheses

In order to address the aforementioned problem statement, four research objectives and 31 hypotheses were formulated as follows. Hypothesis one to 12 (H_{A1} to H_{A12}) were proposed to answer research objective one on the relationships between the four-dimensional organisational justice and the three-component of commitment as outlined in the following:

Organisational Justice and Affective Commitment Relationships

- | | |
|----------|---|
| H_{A1} | There is a positive significant relationship between procedural justice of the State/District Sport Unit and affective commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions |
| H_{A2} | There is a positive significant relationship between distributive justice of the State/District Sport Unit and affective commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions |
| H_{A3} | There is a positive significant relationship between interpersonal justice of the State/District Sport Unit and affective commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions |
| H_{A4} | There is a positive significant relationship between informational justice of the State/District Sport Unit and affective commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions |

Organisational Justice and Continuance Commitment Relationships

- | | |
|----------|--|
| H_{A5} | There is a negative significant relationship between procedural justice of the State/District Sport Unit and continuance commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions |
|----------|--|

- H_{A6} There is a negative significant relationship between distributive justice of the State/District Sport Unit and continuance commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A7} There is a negative significant relationship between interpersonal justice of the State/District Sport Unit and continuance commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A8} There is a negative significant relationship between informational justice of the State/District Sport Unit and continuance commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions

Organisational Justice and Normative Commitment Relationships

- H_{A9} There is a positive significant relationship between procedural justice of the State/District Sport Unit and normative commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A10} There is a positive significant relationship between distributive justice of the State/District Sport Unit and normative commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A11} There is a positive significant relationship between interpersonal justice of the State/District Sport Unit and normative commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A12} There is a positive significant relationship between informational justice of the State/District Sport Unit and normative commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions

Hypothesis 13 to 16 (H_{A13} to H_{A16}) were postulated to address research objective two on the relationships between the four-dimensional organisational justice and perceived organisational support as follows:

- H_{A13} There is a positive significant relationship between procedural justice and perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A14} There is a positive significant relationship between distributive justice and perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A15} There is a positive significant relationship between interpersonal justice and perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A16} There is a positive significant relationship between informational justice and perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit from the

Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions

Hypothesis 17 to 19 (H_{A17} to H_{A19}) were formulated to examine research objective three on the relationships between perceived organisational support and the three components of commitment as follows:

- H_{A17} There is a positive significant relationship between perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit and affective commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A18} There is a negative significant relationship between perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit and continuance commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A19} There is a positive significant relationship between perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit and normative commitment from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions

Hypothesis 20 to 31 (H_{A20} to H_{A31}) were proposed to test research objective four on mediating role of perceived organisational support on the relationships between the four-dimensional organisational justice and the three components of commitment as follows:

Perceived Organisational Support Mediates Organisational Justice and Affective Commitment Relationships

- H_{A20} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on procedural justice and affective commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A21} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on distributive justice and affective commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A22} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on interpersonal justice and affective commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A23} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on informational justice and affective commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions

Perceived Organisational Support Mediates Organisational Justice and Continuance Commitment Relationships

- H_{A24} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on procedural justice and continuance commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A25} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on distributive justice and continuance commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A26} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on interpersonal justice and continuance commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A27} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on informational justice and continuance commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions

Perceived Organisational Support Mediates Organisational Justice and Normative Commitment Relationships

- H_{A28} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on procedural justice and normative commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A29} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on distributive justice and normative commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A30} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on interpersonal justice and normative commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions
- H_{A31} There is a mediating effect of perceived organisational support of the State/District Sport Unit on informational justice and normative commitment relationship from the Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches' perceptions

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study will advance our understanding on these SPTS volunteer coaches' organisational commitment through perceived organisational justice and support in building the volunteer-organisation relationship. Their organisational commitment determines the success of grassroots sports development programme – SPTS as a feather pool, and future elite sports development. Malaysia like many other countries has integrated competitive sports into educational settings in order to pursue international elite sports glory (Ferry, Meckbach, & Larsson, 2013; Houlihan, 2000; Metsa-Tokila, 2002; Pot & van Hilvoorde, 2013). Despite public sector budget constraints, and low retention of these SPTS volunteer coaches, they are needed for training the targeted SPTS athletes at selected schools at districts and all state sports schools. This pioneer study sought to understand their organisational commitment development, and might further suggest an effective and conducive coaching environment for retaining them (Mahony et al., 2010; Rocha & Chelladuri, 2011).

Next, this research has broadened the research scope and applied in different level of sports and cultural setting in order to answer the calls from Mahony et al. (2010) on organisational justice in sport, and Loi et al. (2006) on perceived organisational support as a mediator. Most sport management research on organisational justice had been conducted in the United States of America and focused on NCAA Divisions, and a few on the Olympic Movement, and interscholastic sports in Texas's high schools. Yet, limited research in volunteer competitive school sports coaches from public primary and secondary schools were conducted. Similarly, research on perceived organisational support in sport was scarce (Pack, 2005; Pack, Jordon, Turner, & Haines, 2007; Rocha & Chelladuri, 2011); particularly on its mediator role in sport (Kim, 2009). Perceived organisational support which was developed from organisational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986) is deemed to provide a comprehensive social exchange process in the employment relationship. Further, applying multi-dimensional organisational justice and multi-component organisational commitment into the relationship simultaneously would provide more insights on theoretical validity (Loi et al., 2006). Besides, valuable perceptions of SPTS coaches on how they develop organisational commitment in the volunteer-organisation relationship would benefit both scholars and practitioners.

Finally, this study served as a basis to create awareness and provide an understanding for the Malaysian Sport Division of MOE to formulate a win-win sport management strategy. They can train their agents/sports officers (districts & states sport units officers) to be cautious and be aware of specific dimensions of justice that influence the trust on perceived organisational support, and subsequently affect the development of multi-component of organisational commitment among these SPTS volunteer coaches. This understanding might benefit policy makers and sports officers to re-strategise an effective and efficient SPTS volunteer coach management for supporting and sustaining coaching efficacy, retention, and attainment of grassroots sport development.

1.5 Delimitations

Present research participants were delimited to Malaysian full-time teachers who are qualified in-service teachers under the MOE, and have been assigned as SPTS volunteer coaches. They must possess at least Level One sport specific coaching certificate. They coach targeted SPTS athletes at appointed district training centers or state sports school. Other volunteer youth sport coaches who have served in local and international private schools were excluded from the research samples inclusion criteria. Therefore, the results could mainly be generalised to Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches under the management of the Sports Division of the MOE.

1.6 Limitations

This study has some limitations that might influence the relevance and impact of research results. Firstly, this study adopted the cross-sectional survey research because of time and financial resource constraints. This single point of time finding promotes reasonable cause-effect explanation but its causality could only be presumed rather than confirmed. This type of survey has been widely applied by most studies on organisational research (Kerwin, Jordan, & Turner, 2014; Patel, Pawan, & Varma, 2012; Purang, 2011; Rocha & Chelladurai, 2011). In order to address this limitation, drawing on Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson's (2010) guideline, by using probability sampling techniques and a large sample size of 500 as minimum samples from these Malaysian nationwide SPTS volunteer coaches might provide sufficient and adequate credibility and generalisation for this study

Secondly, the data for this study were collected through self-report measures and single- or same-source data (i.e., same group of individuals answering all variables' construct questionnaire) of these Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches might induce common method variance/bias (i.e., measurement error because of adoption of certain measurement technique and data source). The limitation of the degree of how these constructs have linked with each individual through social information processing bias (Avolio, Yammarino, & Bass, 1991; Spector, 2006) could be reduced by using discriminant validity (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) assessment.

Thirdly, the questionnaires were originally written in English. They were translated into Malay language. In order to minimise discrepancies on conceptual and semantic equivalence during translation and to avoid misinterpretation among the respondents (the SPTS volunteer coaches), the author has adopted Brislin's (1970) back to back translation guidelines. After translation processes, the questionnaires were further checked for content and face validity by three supervisory committees and two well-experienced SPTS volunteer coaches. Then a pilot study was conducted to test the questionnaire reliability and validity to ensure their applicability in the local context.

Finally, the findings of this study could only be generalised to full-time teachers who have been offered and served as SPTS volunteer coaches in public schools in Malaysia.

Any generalisation beyond these SPTS volunteer coaches has to be interpreted with caution. However, volunteer-organisation relationship could only be presented more vividly and genuinely under specific context. In light of the above, the author would attempt to minimise these limiting effects to ensure the study validity and reliability.

1.7 Assumption

Firstly, all Malaysian SPTS volunteer coaches were presumed to have clear understanding and honesty in answering each question voluntarily. Secondly, they were deemed to have adequate understanding and knowledge on roles and functions of their Malaysian Sports Division of the MOE and its agents.

1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms

The following operational definitions of terms were used in this study:

Volunteer coach: A volunteer coach refers to an individual who willingly contributes his/her time, service or skills or experience through a club, organisation or association without expecting monetary return other than expenses incurred (Coleman, 2002; Cuskelly & Auld, 2000a).

Sport Coaches: Sport coaches are those who coach specific sport skills and knowledge, lead and discipline, guide psychosocially and grow athletes to release their potential through sport (Gilbert & Trudel, 2006).

High Performance School Sport Developmental Programme in Schools (SPTS): High Performance School Sport Developmental Programme is locally known as Programme Pembangunan Sukan Prestasi Tinggi Sekolah (SPTS). This programme consists of nine categories of sports (with ten types of sports). The sports are soccer, archery, 'sepak takraw', badminton, track and field athletic, boys' hockey, girls' hockey, artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, and netball. These grassroots developmental sports are competitive in nature. These sports have been assigned to appointed district training centers (locally known as "pusat latihan daerah") at normal public schools and state sports schools.

Malaysian SPTS Volunteer Coach: Malaysian SPTS volunteer coach refers to full time public school teachers who possess at least level one sport specific coaching certificate. They are offered and appointed as volunteer coach to serve as sport coach of students' ages ranging from 13 to 18 years under the SPTS programme, three times a week with two hours per session, and a provision of monthly incentive based National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (locally it is known as '*Sijil Skim Persijilan Kejurulatihan Kebangsaan*' (SPKK)). In addition, they are not rewarded, punished nor promoted for their coaching and athletes' performance by the organisation.

Organisational Justice: A SPTS volunteer coach formulates fairness perceptions on outcomes, procedures, interpersonal, and informational between employee and employer within an organisation (Colquitt, 2001).

Distributive Justice: A SPTS volunteer coach formulates fairness perception on outcome allocation (i.e., the allocation of budget, rewards, incentives, sport equipment, and sport training facilities) based on equity rule to maximize generalisability (Leventhal, 1976).

Procedural Justice: A SPTS volunteer coach formulates fairness perception on organisational policies and procedures that involve process and decision control by which outcomes are allocated (Thibault & Walker, 1975). It adheres to consistency, bias suppression, accuracy of information, correctability, representation, and ethicality rules (Leventhal, 1980; Leventhal, Karuza, & Fry, 1980).

Interactional Justice: A SPTS volunteer coach formulates fairness perception on the quality of interpersonal treatment, adequacy information and explanation on decision making (Greenberg, 1993a).

Interpersonal Justice: A SPTS volunteer coach forms fairness perceptions on the quality of interpersonal treatment with respect, politeness, and dignity by authorities/superior when carrying out organisational procedures (Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt, 2001).

Informational Justice: A SPTS volunteer coach forms fairness perceptions on honesty, clarity, adequacy, reasonable, relevant, and timely information by authorities/superiors on procedures enactment and outcome allocation decision (Bies & Moag, 1986; Shapiro, Buttner, & Barry, 1994; Colquitt, 2001).

Perceived Organisational Support: A SPTS volunteer coach forms a global perception of the degree to which an organisation values his or her contribution for SPTS and cares about his/her well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986).

Organisational Commitment: A SPTS volunteer coach develops different psychological state of affective, continuance, and normative commitments to the organisation in the volunteer-organisation relationship. These commitments affect their decisions to remain in the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Affective Commitment: A SPTS volunteer coach commits to an organisation because of his/her “emotional attachment to, identification with, involvement in the organisation” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Continuance Commitment: A SPTS volunteer coach commits to an organisation due to awareness of the costs of leaving on investment made and replacement value available under lack of alternatives constraint (Meyer & Allen, 1984, 1991).

Normative Commitment: A SPTS volunteer coach commits to an organisation due to a sense of obligation to remain in the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

1.9 Summary

The need for investigating the Malaysian SPTS volunteer-organisation relationship from the SPTS volunteer coaches' perspectives has been argued for potential of unfair organisational treatment and inadequate organisational support that might lessen their organisational commitment to coach efficiently and to remain in the organisation. Unfavourable treatment could impair these volunteer coaches' trust on the organisation's intention in supporting them with appreciation and care. Subsequently, it might affect their willingness to engage in social exchange and reciprocity process that would bring detrimental effect in achieving the organisation's goals. Limited research on the volunteer-organisation relationship has been highlighted.

The importance characters in this relationship have been identified as the Malaysian Sports Division of MOE, its agents – the State/District Sport Units' sports officers, the SPTS volunteer coaches. The relevant research variables and dimensionality have been introduced. A suggestion on the potential of perceived organisational support as a mediator to address the inconsistent findings between organisational justice and organisational commitment has been made. Data would be collected through correlational research survey, analysed, and interpreted with some cautious measures. The purpose of this study was to examine and advance the understanding on how these variables correlated with each other, and the role of perceived organisational support as a mediator from the perceptions of the SPTS volunteer coaches.

The next chapter reviews literature on volunteer sport coaches, relevant variables (organisational justice, perceived organisational support, and organisational commitment), the main and related theories. Subsequent chapters describe methodology applied, present results collected, discuss analysed results, draw conclusions, explain theoretical and practical implications, and suggest future research.

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