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**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERPERSONAL TRUST, EMPLOYEE
SATISFACTION, EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT, LEADER SUPPORT AND
EMPLOYEE LOYALTY: A STUDY OF THE EMPLOYEES IN AN
AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR IN MALAYSIA**



By

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Universiti Utara Malaysia

**Thesis Submitted to
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business,
Universiti Utara Malaysia,
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Doctor of Business
Administration**

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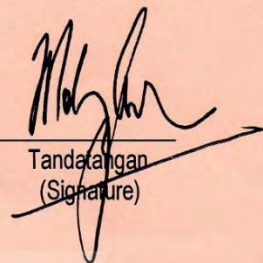
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ABSTRACT

The Malaysian automotive industry was unable to retain employees who are loyal, hence affecting its competitiveness. The objectives of this study were to determine the relationships among interpersonal trust, employee satisfaction, employee commitment and leader support with employee loyalty. Literature review suggested that trust, satisfaction, commitment and leader support exist in organizations as a dynamic set of factors, influenced by different surroundings and culture. Six hypotheses were then developed. This study utilized a quantitative research design. An established automotive firm in Malaysia was chosen as the target. The respondents of the study were the executives of this automotive firm. The executive register of the chosen firm was used as the base. Using stratified random sampling, the study sample was determined as 800 respondents. The research instrument was the survey questionnaire which was adopted and adapted from past research. The questionnaires were self-administered. From the 800 questionnaires distributed, 361 were returned, giving the study a response rate of 45 percent. For data analysis, the study used multiple regression and correlation methods. The findings of the study had indicated that interpersonal trust influenced leader support; employee satisfaction influenced leader support; employee commitment influenced leader support; and leader support was found to have a significant relationship with employee loyalty. The hypotheses involving the relationships of interpersonal trust, employee satisfaction, employee commitment and employee loyalty were partially supported. One important finding in this study was that leader support did not mediate the relationships between interpersonal trust, employee satisfaction, employee commitment and employee loyalty. This study contributed theoretically, methodologically and practically to academicians, professionals and managers in the automotive organization (as well as other organizations). Limitations in the study were highlighted as opportunities for improvement and recommendations were made to take the research to the next level. It was hoped that this study could further enrich the literature in the related research areas and provide more empirical evidence to support the future efforts of professionals and managers in the effective management of their respective organizations.

Keywords: employee loyalty, interpersonal trust, employee satisfaction, employee commitment, leader support.

ABSTRAK

Industri automotif di Malaysia tidak dapat mengekalkan pekerja yang setia, oleh itu menjejaskan daya saingnya. Objektif kajian adalah untuk menentukan hubungan di antara kepercayaan interpersonal, kepuasan pekerja, komitmen pekerja dan sokongan pemimpin dengan kesetiaan pekerja. Tinjauan literatur mencadangkan bahawa kepercayaan, kepuasan, komitmen dan sokongan pemimpin telah wujud dalam organisasi sebagai faktor-faktor dinamik yang dipengaruhi pelbagai suasana dan budaya. Enam hipotesis kajian seterusnya dibentuk. Kajian ini telah menggunakan reka bentuk kajian kuantitatif. Satu syarikat automotif yang bertapak di Malaysia telah dipilih. Populasi kajian merupakan eksekutif syarikat automotif ini. Daftar eksekutif syarikat automotif dipilih sebagai asas pemilihan responden. Dengan menggunakan teknik pensampelan rawak berstrata, sebanyak 800 responden telah diputuskan sebagai sampel kajian. Borang soal selidik yang diambil dan disesuaikan daripada kajian terdahulu digunakan sebagai instrumen kajian. Sesi soal selidik dijalankan sendiri oleh responden. Daripada 800 borang soal selidik yang diedarkan, sebanyak 361 telah dikembalikan, iaitu bersamaan 45 peratus kadar sambutan. Bagi tujuan menganalisis data, kajian ini telah menggunakan kaedah regresi berganda dan korelasi. Penemuan kajian menunjukkan kepercayaan interpersonal mempengaruhi sokongan pemimpin; kepuasan pekerja mempengaruhi sokongan pemimpin; komitmen pekerja mempengaruhi sokongan pemimpin, dan sokongan pemimpin didapati mempunyai hubungan signifikan terhadap kesetiaan pekerja. Hipotesis yang melibatkan hubungan antara kepercayaan interpersonal, kepuasan pekerja, komitmen pekerja dan kesetiaan pekerja disokong separa. Satu dapatan penting kajian ini menunjukkan sokongan pemimpin tidak memberikan kesan pengantara terhadap hubungan antara kepercayaan interpersonal, kepuasan pekerja, komitmen pekerja dan kesetiaan pekerja. Kajian ini memberikan beberapa sumbangan teori, kaedah dan praktikal kepada ahli-ahli akademik, profesional, pengurus organisasi automotif (dan organisasi lain) serta pihak industri. Batasan kajian dinyatakan sebagai ruang untuk penambahbaikan, dan cadangan penyelidikan diberi bagi memartabatkan kajian pada tahap lebih tinggi. Diharapkan kajian ini dapat memperkayakan penyelidikan dalam bidang berkaitan serta memberikan bukti empirikal bagi menyokong usaha pihak profesional dan pengurus bagi mengurus organisasi masing-masing secara efektif pada masa hadapan.

Kata kunci: kesetiaan pekerja, kepercayaan interpersonal, kepuasan pekerja, komitmen pekerja, sokongan pemimpin.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents, Allahyarham Haji Abu Bakar b Yahya and Hajah Jamilah binti Mohamad and to my parents-in-law. This journey would not have been possible without your doa and inspirations.

To my wife, Hafizah Abdul Latiff, thank you for your understanding and unwavering support.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE	i
CERTIFICATION OF THESIS WORK.....	ii
PERMISSION TO USE.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
ABSTRAK	vi
DEDICATION.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xviii
CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.1.1 Background of the Global Automotive Industry	4
1.1.2 Background of Malaysian Automotive Industry	5
1.1.3 Malaysian Automotive Companies.....	8
1.1.4 Background of the Workforce-Generation X and Generation Y.....	12
1.2 Problem Statement	14
1.3 Research Questions	19
1.4 Research Objectives	19
1.5 Scope of the Study	20
1.6 Significance of the Study	21
1.7 Definition of Key Terms	28
1.8 Organization of the Thesis	29
CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW.....	31
2.1 Introduction	31
2.2 The Basis for the Review	31
2.3 Employee Loyalty	31
2.3.1 Definition of Employee Loyalty	31
2.3.2 Prominent Studies on Employee Loyalty	35
2.3.3 Theories on Employee Loyalty.....	38
2.3.4 Past Studies on Factors Affecting Employee Loyalty	39
2.3.5 Discussion.....	43
2.4 Interpersonal Trust	44

2.4.1	Definition of Trust	44
2.4.2	Types of Trust.....	46
2.4.3	Definition of Interpersonal Trust.....	49
2.4.4	Prominent Studies on Interpersonal Trust	51
2.4.5	Theories on Interpersonal Trust.....	54
2.4.6	Discussion.....	56
2.5	Employee Satisfaction.....	58
2.5.1	Definition of Employee Satisfaction.....	58
2.5.2	Types of Employee Satisfaction	61
2.5.3	Prominent Studies on Employee Satisfaction.....	62
2.5.4	Theories on Employee Satisfaction	64
2.5.5	Discussion.....	66
2.6	Employee Commitment	67
2.6.1	Definition of Employee Commitment	67
2.6.2	Types of Employee Commitment.....	70
2.6.3	Prominent Studies on Employee Commitment	71
2.6.4	Theories on Employee Commitment	74
2.6.5	Discussion.....	76
2.7	The Mediator between the Links Involving Interpersonal Trust, Employee Satisfaction, Employee Commitment and Employee Loyalty	77
2.7.1	Introduction of a Mediator.....	77
2.7.2	The Role of a Leader Across Functions in an Organization.....	82
2.7.3	Definition of a Leader.....	83
2.7.4	Definition of Leader Support.....	84
2.7.5	Prominent Studies on Leader Support	87
2.7.6	Theories on Leader Support	89
2.7.7	Discussion.....	91
2.8	Underpinning Theory.....	92
2.8.1	Social Exchange Theory [SET]	92
2.9	Chapter Summary	95
CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY.....		96
3.1	Introduction	96
3.2	Research Framework.....	96
3.3	Hypotheses Development.....	97
3.3.1	The Relationship between Interpersonal Trust, Employee Satisfaction, Employee Commitment and Leader Support	98
3.3.2	The Relationship between Leader Support and Employee Loyalty	101
3.3.3	The Relationship between Interpersonal Trust, Employee Satisfaction, Employee Commitment and Employee Loyalty	103
3.3.4	The Mediating Effect of Leader Support on the Relationship between Interpersonal Trust, Employee Commitment, Employee Satisfaction and Employee Loyalty.....	105
3.4	Research Design.....	110

3.5 Research Method.....	111
3.6 Unit of Analysis	113
3.7 Population and Sampling	113
3.7.1 Population	114
3.7.2 Sample Frame	114
3.7.3 Sampling Design and Procedure.....	114
3.7.4 Sample Size.....	116
3.8 Measurement and Instrumentation.....	117
3.8.1 The Survey Questionnaire	117
3.8.2 Goodness of Measures	122
3.9 Data Collection Method	124
3.10 Data Analysis Method.....	125
3.11 Pilot Testing	126
3.12 Chapter Summary	127
CHAPTER 4 : RESULTS & DISCUSSION.....	129
4.1 Introduction.....	129
4.2 Overview of Data Collected.....	129
4.2.1 Response Rate.....	130
4.2.2 Test of Non-Response Bias	130
4.3 Data Preparation and Screening	132
4.3.1 Detection of Missing data	132
4.3.2 Detection of Outliers.....	133
4.4 Profile of the Respondents	133
4.5 Test for Goodness of Measures.....	136
4.5.1 Reliability Test (Before Factor Analysis).....	136
4.5.2 Validity Test	137
4.5.3 Reliability Test (After Factor Analysis)	142
4.6 Descriptive Analysis	143
4.6.1 Normality Test (Skewness and Kurtosis of Study Variables)	143
4.6.2 Means and Standard Deviations of the Study Variables.....	144
4.7 Test of Significant Differences	153
4.8 Correlation Analysis.....	155
4.8.1 Normality, Linearity and Homoscedasticity	155
4.8.2 Correlation Among Study Variables.....	156
4.9 Multiple Regression Analysis	158
4.9.1 Assumptions of Multiple Regression Technique.....	158
4.10 Hypotheses Testing	159
4.10.1 Relationship between the Independent, Mediating and Dependent Variables.....	159
4.10.2 Relationship between the Independent Variables and Employee Loyalty.....	163
4.10.3 Leader Support as Mediating Variable	164
4.11 Summary of Findings.....	167

CHAPTER 5 : CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	169
5.1 Introduction	169
5.2 Recapitulation of the Study	169
5.3 Discussion of the Findings	171
5.3.1 The State of Employee Loyalty in the Automotive Industry in Malaysia	171
5.3.2 The State of Generation Factor in the Automotive Industry in Malaysia	173
5.3.3 The Relationship between Interpersonal Trust, Employee Satisfaction, Employee Commitment and Leader Support	175
5.3.4 The Relationship between Leader Support and Employee Loyalty	178
5.3.5 The Relationship between Interpersonal Trust, Employee Satisfaction, Employee Commitment and Employee Loyalty	180
5.3.6 The Mediating Effect of Leader Support on the Relationship between Interpersonal Trust, Employee Commitment, Employee Satisfaction and Employee Loyalty.....	181
5.4 Contribution to the Body of Knowledge	184
5.4.1 Theoretical Contributions	184
5.4.2 Methodical Contributions	186
5.5 Managerial Implication	187
5.6 Limitations of Study.....	191
5.7 Recommendations for Future Research	192
5.8 Summary	196
REFERENCES.....	200
Appendix A - Survey Questionnaires	246
Appendix B - Pilot Test.....	251
Appendix C1-Reliability Tests before Factor Analysis	257
Appendix C2-Goodness of Measure	270
Appendix D-Profile of Respondents	285
Appendix E1-Skewness & Kurtosis.....	294
Appendix E2 – Descriptive Analysis.....	295
Appendix E3-Mean and Standard Deviations (ALL).....	300
Appendix E3a –Mean and Standard Deviation (T-TEST).....	305
Appendix E4-Test of Significance Difference.....	310

Appendix F-Correlation Analysis.....	315
Appendix G1-Regression Analysis (H1 to H4)	317
Appendix G2-Regression (H5) & Partial Plots.....	325
Appendix H- Scatter Plots.....	330
Appendix I –Normal Probability Plots.....	332
Appendix J – Mediating Analysis-SOBEL Tests	337



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LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
Table 2.1 Definition of Employee Loyalty	34
Table 2.2 Related Factors on Employee Loyalty	41
Table 2.3 Definitions of Interpersonal Trust.....	51
Table 2.4 Definitions of Employee Satisfaction	61
Table 2.5 Definitions of Employee Commitment	70
Table 2.6 Establishment of the Conditions for Leader Support for Mediation.....	81
Table 2.7 Definitions of a Leader	84
Table 2.8 Definitions of Leader Support.....	87
Table 3.1 Variables Forming the Research Framework.....	96
Table 3.2 The Hypotheses.....	109
Table 3.3 Number of Desired Samples Required.....	116
Table 3.4 Number of Executives and Questionnaire Distribution	116
Table 3.5 Employee Loyalty	119
Table 3.6 Interpersonal Trust	120
Table 3.7 Employee Satisfaction.....	120
Table 3.8 Employee Commitment	121
Table 3.9 Leader Support	122
Table 3.10 Reliability of construct for Pilot Study (n=30)	127
Table 4.1 Results of Chi-square Test for Early and Late Responses	131
Table 4.2 Profile of the Respondents (n=350)	134
Table 4.3 Reliability Scores for the Variables in the Instrument.....	136
Table 4.4 Factor Analysis on Interpersonal Trust.....	138
Table 4.5 Factor Analysis on Employee Commitment	139

Table 4.6 Factor Analysis on Employee Satisfaction	140
Table 4.7 Factor Analysis on Leader Support.....	141
Table 4.8 Factor Analysis on Employee Loyalty.....	142
Table 4.9 Reliability Coefficients for the Variables in the Study	143
Table 4.10 Normality Test of the Variables in the Study	144
Table 4.11 Descriptive Statistics.....	146
Table 4.12 Descriptive Statistics (Employee Loyalty)	146
Table 4.13 Comparisons of Gen X and Gen Y (Employee Loyalty).....	147
Table 4.14 Descriptive Statistics (Interpersonal Trust).....	148
Table 4.15 Comparisons of Gen X and Gen Y (Interpersonal Trust)	149
Table 4.16 Descriptive Statistics (Employee Satisfaction)	149
Table 4.17 Comparison of Gen X and Gen Y (Employee Satisfaction).....	150
Table 4.18 Descriptive Statistics (Employee Commitment).....	151
Table 4.19 Comparison of Gen X and Gen Y (Employee Commitment).....	152
Table 4.20 Descriptive Statistics (Leader Support)	152
Table 4.21 Comparison of Gen X and Gen Y (Leader Support)	153
Table 4.22 Employee Loyalty and Gender	153
Table 4.23 Employee Loyalty and Age.....	154
Table 4.24 Employee Loyalty and Qualification	154
Table 4.25 Employee Loyalty and Experience	155
Table 4.26 Results of Correlation Analysis	157
Table 4.27 Model Summary (Interpersonal Trust and Leader Support).....	160
Table 4.28 Model Summary (Employee Satisfaction and Leader Support)	161
Table 4.29 Model Summary (Employee Commitment and Leader Support)	162
Table 4.30 Model Summary (Leader Support and Employee Loyalty).....	162

Table 4.31 Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Factors Influencing Employee Loyalty (n=350)	164
Table 4.32 Variables in Simple Mediation Model: Hypothesis 6a	166
Table 4.33 Variables in Simple Mediation Model: Hypothesis 6b	166
Table 4.34 Variables in Simple Mediation Model: Hypothesis 6c	167
Table 4.35 Summary of Findings	168



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
Figure 1: The Research Framework.....	97



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
DV	Dependent Variable
EC	Employee Commitment
EI	Employee Employment Index
EL	Employee Loyalty
ES	Employee Satisfaction
FMM	Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers
HICOM	Heavy Industry Corporation of Malaysia
HR	Human resource
ICM	Inducements-Contribution Model
INOKOM	Industri Otomotif Komersial
IT	Interpersonal Trust
IV	Independent Variable
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LMX	Leader-Member Exchange
LS	Leader Support
MAA	Malaysian Automobile Association
MC	Mitsubishi Corporation
MIDA	Malaysian Investment Development Authority
MITI	Ministry of International Trade and Industry
MMC	Mitsubishi Motors Corporation
MNC	Multinational Corporation
MSA	Measure of Sampling Adequacy
MTB	Malaysia Truck and Bus Sdn Bhd
MV	Mediator Variable
NAP	National Automotive Policy
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behaviour
OCQ	Organizational Commitment Questionnaires
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
OICA	<i>Organization Internationale des Constructeurs d'Automobiles</i> (International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers)
OS	Organization Support
PERODUA	Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Kedua Sdn Bhd
POS	Perceived Organizational Support
PROTON	Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Sdn Berhad
SET	Social Exchange Theory
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
TCM	Three Component Model of Commitment
TIV	Total Industry Volume
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's business environment, managing businesses is becoming more complex. If recruiting the right candidates for firms is becoming a big issue to organizational managers, retaining them is a much bigger issue. It affects all industries, both manufacturing and service sectors. This research is focused on the automotive industry and the workforce Generation factor. The automotive industry is a major industrial and economic force worldwide. It makes 66 million cars and trucks a year, and is responsible for almost half the world's consumption of oil. The industry employs eight million people directly, and many more, indirectly (OICA, 2007).

Despite the fact that many large companies have problems with overcapacity and low profitability, the automotive industry still retains a very strong influence and importance (OICA, 2007). The industry also provides well-paying jobs with good benefits, has heavy links with supplier industries which gives it an oversized role in economic development and has a strong political influence. As a developing country, Malaysia too has a growing automotive industry which is led by its national car company called PROTON Berhad.

In any industry, including the automotive industry, employee loyalty is one of the key factors for the growth and sustainability of the business. As part of employee loyalty, employees will dedicate themselves, work hard and commit to the organization. Loyal employees who believe in the company's objectives will work for the company's welfare and accept the objectives.

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