WORKPLACE SOCIAL SUPPORT AND SERVICE RECOVERY PERFORMANCE: AN EVIDENCE FROM THE TELECOM CALL CENTERS

Nazlina Zakaria¹, Munawar Javed Ahmad², Norzieiriani Ahmad³

1,2,3School of Business Management, University Utara Malaysia
E-mail: ¹nazlina@uum.edu.my, ²munawarjaved@uob.edu.my, ³norzieiranai@uum.edu.my

Received: 20.05.2020 Revised: 17.06.2020 Accepted: 04.07.2020

Abstract
The purpose of this study is to develop and test a research model that examines the relationship between workplace social support (organizational support, supervisor support, and co worker support,) and service recovery performance of call center front line employees working in telecon call centers in Pakistan. Simple random sampling technique was implemented to collect data from 15 telecom call center with a sample of 320 call center frontline employees. PLS-SEM approach was used to test the hypotheses using PLS 3.2. Consistent with the study propositions, PLS structural model results found that organizational support and supervisor support have the positive and significant effect on the call center frontline employees’ service recovery performance, no significant relationship found between employee empowerment and service recovery performance. Implications of the empirical findings are discussed, and future research directions are offered.

Keywords—Organizational support, Supervisor support, Co worker support, Service recovery performance, call centers

INTRODUCTION
In today's competitive market situation, every service providing firms’ top priority is to provide superior quality services to the customer. In the services organizations, frontline employees significantly contribute to this process to deliver quality services (Bouranta, Chátris, & Paravanitis, 2009; Yavas & Babakus, 2010). Because front liners are interacting directly (face to face or voice to voice) with the firms’ customers (Boshoff & Allen, 2000; Choi, Kim, Lee, & Lee, 2014; Parralal, Bhatti, Parralal, & Juhart, 2016). By doing so, front line employees contribute to enhance customer experience and play a significant role during service recovery process (Boshoff & Allen, 2000; Yavas, Karatepe, Avci, & Tekinkus, 2003) Not surprisingly, in the services setting frontline employees are the more important than the backhand employees due to certain characteristics, e.g., they are expected to display the positive image of the organization by playing the boundary spanning roles (Karatepe, 2012c; P. Crick & Spencer, 2011) and secondly, they are the key source of information regarding customer’ complaints, requests, and their likes and dislikes, which help managers to make strategies for the improvement of the customer service experience and customer service recovery as well (Babakus, Yavas, Karatepe, & Avci, 2003; Yavas & Babakus, 2010). Consequently, service organizations enable to recapture the dissatisfied customers’ trust and build a long-term relationship (Ahmad, Ahmad, & Zakaria, 2018b).

Although the role of front-line employees in the services setting is essential to contribute firm’s success, frontline employees are facing a number of job-related issues e.g., customer aggression, excessive job demands, inflexible and irregular work schedules which leads toward decreasing performance of employee (Karatepe, 2012c; Poubton, 2008). Particularly, call center front line employees to face more stress due to the intrinsic environment of call centers that includes repetitive work-related tasks and less autonomy of employees which leads toward the lower performance (Kumar, 2012).

In the past literature, theoretical and empirical consensus has been developed that stressful job nature of call centers lead to undesired job-related employee outcomes such as decreasing job performance and increasing emotional exhaustion (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeker, 2004; Rod & Ashill, 2009). Mukherjee, Malhotra, Sharma, Mathur, and Dhawan (2009) stated that frontline employees of call centers might reduce the cost of emotional resources by getting support from their supervisors and coworkers as well. Call center employees who are not attached with their supervisors and coworkers are unable to perform job-related tasks effectively in the organization. (Rod & Ashill, 2009) postulated that during service encounter call center front line employees face the depletion of emotional resources and consequently they are emotionally exhausted by their job which may cause them to decrease their work efforts and customer satisfaction will be compromised. Second, the coping approach to interacting with the customers as the uninterested object will affect the call center front line employee performance while addressing the customer complaints (Ashill, Mukherjee, Rod, Thirkell, & Carruthers, 2009).

Besides, past researched conducted on the call centers are predominantly focused mostly on the employee surveillance, work management, human resource management issues, and management control, with less attention of the employee attitudes and perceptions regarding workplace social support (e.g., organizational support, supervisor support, and coworker support) (Karatepe, 2012c). Prior research witnessed that the positive perceptions of the frontline employee regarding the management determined by the positive interaction between management and frontline employees particularly those are working in call centers (Mattila & Mount, 2003; Mukherjee, Malhotra, Sharma, et al., 2009). Several studies highlighted that slight attention has been paid to intense workplace environment and workplace support of call center agents (Mukherjee, Malhotra, Sharma, et al., 2009).

With this realization, the current study integrates the workplace social support with service recovery performance and investigates whether workplace social support (i.e., organizational, supervisor and co-worker support) motivates call center frontline employees to perform superior service recoveries. Although some recent studies investigate the workplace factors which contribute to improving service recovery performance (Karatepe, 2012c; Lin, 2010), there is still a dearth of research that exactly looks at the factors which result
in enhanced call center employees’ service recovery performance. The present study proposed that workplace social support results in positive outcomes such as service recovery performance of employee because employees feel they are valued, loved, and cared about their wellbeing and valued their efforts within their workplace environment.

**LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

**Service recovery performance (SRP)**

Service recovery involves the organizational efforts to resolve the service failure to regain the customer loyalty and long-term relationship by satisfying the customer service failure (Boshoff & Allen, 2000; Choi et al., 2014). Gronroos (1988) explained that service recovery contains a bunch of arrangements by the service organizations and their employees to compensate a customer regarding the customer cost, such as physical cost, time cost, monetary cost, and emotional cost the customer faces during a service failure. The compensation could be in the form of refunds, price discount, reimbursement, free product or services, social resources such as acknowledgement of the problem, apology, and management intervention (Smith, Bolton, & Wagner, 1999). The successful service recovery lead firms toward the positive outcomes such as customer loyalty, greater customer satisfaction, positive word of mouth, and long-term profitable relationship (Ahmad, Ahmad, & Zakaria, 2018a; Boshoff & Allen, 2000; Liao, 2007).

Thus, researchers, therefore, argued that to achieve the outcomes firms must focus on the frontline employees (who are dealing with the service encounters) to ensure that they are able to perform effective service recovery once service encounter occurs (Liao, 2007; Magnini & Ford, 2004). Service recovery performance of employee refers to the action and abilities of frontline service employees to resolve the service failure effectively and get the angry customer back to the satisfaction state (Yavas et al., 2003). As discussed above, Frontline service employees are most often involving the service jobs where they directly interact with the dissatisfied customer after service failure (Babakus et al., 2003).

Past studies have been conducted in the service industry to investigate the service recovery performance of employees to examine the relationship between the specific organizational factors which may affect the employee's ability to resolve the customer service failure and bring the customer back to the satisfaction state. For instance, Lin (2009) investigated the relationship between leadership authority, corporate culture, and self-efficacy and SRP, indicated that additional authority of leaders negatively affected employee SRP. Yavas and Babakus (2010) studied the link between organization factors, namely psychological, personal, and attitudinal job outcomes. Tan, Husain, and Murali (2014) investigated the impact of employee and organizational characteristics, on the employee SRP in luxury hotels and revealed that employee empowerment had a positive influence toward SRP of service employees.

Particularly, in the call centers setting Rod and Ashill (2009) investigated the effect of job resourcefulness on SRP from Front line employees (FLEs) of call centers in a New Zealand bank. Mulherjee, Malhotra, Sawyerr, Srinivas, and Wang (2009) conducted a study to reveal the effect of emotional exhaustion and employee personality on the service recovery performance of the employee in the call centers of telecom and insurance firms. Close scrutiny of past literature reveals that researchers paid little attention to the importance of the workplace social support to investigate the service recovery performance of the employee. In this study, the researcher focused on how workplace social support (organizational support, supervisor support, and coworker support) plays a role in effective service recovery performance of the employee.

Equity theory used to develop the link between the workplace social support and service recovery performance of the employee. According to equity theory, individuals are concerned with maintaining fairness or equity in their social relationships and they view these relationships “in terms of exchange transactions involving various kinds of resources” (Tornblom, 1992, p. 179). To determine the fairness of a situation, the individual compares their perceived ratio of inputs to outputs. Inputs and outputs are defined, respectively, as what an individual perceives they contribute to and what they perceive they receive from a relationship (Lings & Greenley, 2005).

**Workplace social support and SRP**

Workplace social support generally viewed as a worldwide construct with a variety of scopes and definitions which vary in meaning (House, 1981; Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011). One of the most cited definitions is the perception of employees regarding their belief that they are valued, loved, and cared about their wellbeing and valued their suggestions within a particular network/place (Cobb, 1976). Viswesvaran, Sanchez, and Fisher (1999) defined social support as the person’s positive perception that he/she has the helping relationships with the easy access, that may vary in value or strength and provision of resources Kossek et al. (2011) combines above definitions and stated that both of these concepts, for instance, caring feelings and having helping access, have been explained that this is social support. To operationalize the concept of workplace social support, this study investigated three constructs, namely organizational support, supervisory support, and coworker support.

**Organizational support and SRP**

Organizational support defined as the positive perception of the employee regarding the organization that their job effort and their contribution toward the organization are valued and appreciated by the organization, and organization cares about them and their wellbeing as well (Karatepe, 2012b; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Based on social exchange and equity theory, if organization willing to support the employees through supportive practices, in exchange employees tend to repay benefits and opportunities provided by the organization in by displaying the positive attitude toward their jobs and commitment (Armstrong & Urpel, 2009). Consequently, the positive perceptions of employee motivate them to perform effectively their work-related tasks (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

There are several empirical studies have been done to investigate the relationship between organizational support and the possible job outcomes of employee, for instance, employee commitment, in-role job performance, extra-role job performance, and turnover intention (Hee, Hyun, & Seog, 2004; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Interestingly, empirical literature is lacking to provide enough evidence regarding employee perceptions regarding workplace social support (organizational support, supervisor support, and coworker support) within the organization. Particularly in the intense stressful workplace environment such as call centers.

Other dimensions also investigated in the past, such as career development (namely training appraisal, career development, and career competency), skill utilization, job hierarchical plateau, and employees’ career satisfaction in the service organizations (Akgunuz & Sanli, 2017; O. M. Karatepe, 2012b; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). On the relationship with service recovery performance, Yavas, Karatepe, and Babakus (2010) found that organizational support positively linked with SRP and further demonstrated that organizational support was more effective in differentiating between high- and low-performing FLEs in the case of SRP. However, the present study treats organizational
support as workplace social support factor to investigate service recovery performance as the performance outcome using social exchange theory. Second, much of the extant research on perceived organizational support (POS) has been employed in the comparatively developed and Western context (Chen, Aryee, & Lee, 2005; Karatepe, 2012c). In the services marketing, there is less research conducted where data derived from developing countries such as Pakistan. In this study, the proposed framework will be tested with data collected from the front-line employees working in Pakistan. Hence, based on the above discussion following hypothesis is proposed.

**H1:** Organizational support positively related to SRP.

**Supervisor support and SRP**

Employees working under the direct control of supervisors most often view and expect support from their immediate supervisors (Eder & Eisenberger, 2008). Supervisory support perception is the attention devoted by a supervisor to each individual employee by directing, helping and coaching the employees in fulfillment of their job responsibilities (Choi, Cheong, & Feinberg, 2012; Liaw, Chi, & Chuang, 2010). In line with the Social Exchange Theory, employees perceive and develop certain beliefs concerning the extent to which their supervisors value employees’ contributions (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Furthermore, supervisors’ supportive role reflects the organizations’ support as they act as an agent or representative of the organization. In relation to the past literature (Michel, Kavanagh, & Tracey, 2013), supervisor support incorporates different factors i.e., listening to work and family related issues of employees, sharing of ideas and opinions, skill acquisition and flexibility in work schedules.

Companies with an embedded approach to service recovery performance tend to gain more insight into the service complaints and the required recovery strategies (Van Dyck, Frese, Baer, & Sonnentag, 2005). Supervisors working in such companies are in better positions to support their employees to handle service-related complaints and required actions to resolve deficiencies. Such support may take the form of resource availability, involvement in decision making (Baldner et al., 2004), and service recovery training (Frese & Davis, 1997). Support may further be extended to open communication about the potential problem areas and related consequential reward and/or punishment in service recovery performance (Edmondson, 1999).

Service recovery employees with substantial support of their supervisors, are better to cope with service recovery problems, acquiring skills and getting new ideas to further enhance their service recovery performance (Karatepe, 2014). Supervisors’ support being part of the social support system of an organization, leads to improved job outcomes e.g., service recovery performance (Liaw et al., 2010). It seems that enough supervisors’ support enables employees to be more aligned with their supervisors and more successfully accomplish their tasks.

Furthermore, researchers Karatepe and Uludag (2007; Liaw et al., 2010) believe that support from the supervisors can help in lessening work-related stress of employees and improves their self-worth that consequently improves service recovery performance of employees. ‘Supervisor support’ in the study under focus involves; open communication regarding supervisors’ support themselves, about errors in services, help needed in service recovery, share service failure related knowledge, support for quick response to customer complaints and encouragement for learning from the errors. Such support for service recovery can possibly make employees feel obliged and enable them to payback in superior service recovery. In line with these arguments, it can be postulated that supervisors’ support will positively influence the service recovery performance of employees. This relationship is posited as following:

**H2:** Supervisor support positively related to SRP.

**Coworker support and SRP**

In relation to support from the co-workers, it is the degree to which employees have confidence in the willingness of their co-workers in supporting them to carry work-related service activities (Susskind, Kacmar, & Borchgrevink, 2003). Coworker support incorporates knowledge sharing, encouragement and supporting coworkers in assigned work/duties (O. M. Karatepe, 2012a). More specifically, it involves emotional support among coworkers, sharing customer information and directive guidelines that may facilitate the new ways of performing tasks (Limpanitgul, Boonchoo, & Photiyarach, 2014). Joiner (2007) argues that supporting coworkers make an environment more supportive and encouraging where they can discuss mistakes and share new ideas. Some researchers (e.g., Susskind et al., 2005) consider such co-worker support as essential to effectively perform the tasks.

Importance of the coworker’s support has been increased with the change in the job content from routine tasks to more complex and collective nature of the job (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). Contrary to the past, co-workers are now considered to define an environment rather being a component of the corporate culture (Schneider & Bowen, 1993). Moreover, co-workers influence the working environment, both positively and/or negatively, that consequently affect the attitude of employees at the workplace (Limpanitgul et al., 2014). Thoits (1983), argued that support within the same group of workers tends to be more effective in comparison to support obtained from an employee of an outer-group.

Coworker support is considered as a component of a social support system that is associated with an instrumental aid, emotional concerns, information and appraisal (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999). The presence of such support facilitates the employees to resolve problems related to their jobs, lessen emotional exhaustion and social stressors related to customers (Ismail, Mohamed, Sulaiman, Ismail, & Mahmood, 2010; Karatepe, Haktanir, & Yorgancı, 2010). Employees with front-line responsibilities shows a positive attitude towards job-related problems if they associate themselves as part of a certain helping group.

In relation to the frontline employees receiving enough instrumental and emotional support from their co-workers tend to have access to job related resources of the organization to deal with customers’ complaints and improve their performance (Cho & Johanson, 2008; Tsai, Chen, & Liu, 2007); Tsai et al., 2007, 2009). Moreover, such employees will show a high level of motivation to deal with customers’ complaints (Karatepe, 2012a).

Thus, it implies that an environment with co-worker support for sharing service failures and supporting each other will enhance the overall service recovery performance. This study operationalizes the ‘Go-worker support’ as the behaviors of the co-workers i.e., communication about tasks, knowledge sharing, helping each other in the service failures and supporting quick responses to service failures. Therefore, it can be argued that coworker support will have a positive effect on employees’ attitude towards service recovery performance. This relationship proposed as following:

**H3:** Coworker support positively related to SRP.

**Research methodology**

The context of the study

Among telecom service industries, the inbound call centers of telecom companies where customer register their complaints
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regarding service failure direct to the call center service employee, considered as an ideal context for employee service recovery performance studies for several reasons. First, the call centers are widely recognized as a vital component of any service organization to facilitate the customers, provide service support, and access the information regarding customer likes and dislikes. Studies revealed that front-line employees of call centers are playing the key role to increase or decrease service firms’ positive or negative reputation through the way how they are handling the customer complaints (Mattila & Mount, 2003). Second, call centers considered as the key source which contribute to retaining existing customers, acquiring new customers and increasing their satisfaction and loyalty through effective provision of services (Nederlof, Anton, & Petouhoff, 2002). Call center front line employees also found to contribute the increasing firm profits and success by maintaining the long term relationship with the service customers (Holman, 2003). Third, the characteristics of a call center employee job are conducive to the study of workplace social support. For instance, call center employees work is relatively more stressful because of customer anger, particularly in inbound call centers where castor complaints about service failure, in comparison to out bound call centers. However, to the best of author’s knowledge, scarce investigations are done to investigate the workplace social support toward service recovery performance in the call centers particularly, in the telecom call centers in Pakistan. Thus, this study argues that this research context is the best platform to investigate the proposed model.

Subject
In this study, the customer service representatives (CSR’s) were the target respondents who are working as the front-line employees in the telecom call centers. A total of 15 call centers of five telecom companies were selected which are operating in three regions (e.g., Lahore, Islamabad, and Karachi). List of telecom companies and call centers retrieved from Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB, 2017).

The non-response biased tested in this study and no significant differences found between the late or early responses because of the self-administered survey. However, non-response bias was not to be considered as a serious issue in this study. The male respondents are dominating consisted of (78.3%). Approximately, 58% of the respondents were married and most of the participants fell within the age 25-30 years (63.2%). About (52%) of participants master’s degree holders. Almost all of the respondents are Muslims and identified themselves as of Pakistani ethnic background. Their average monthly income was 30,000 to 45,000 Pkr. Most of the respondents held a position of full-time employees and had worked in the organization for no less than three years

Measures
All of this study constructs were operationalized by using Likert-type rating scales anchored by 1 ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 ‘strongly agree’. All the measurement scales are adopted from the previous studies are discussed one by one below.

Organizational support was operationalized as the perception of employees that the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Karatepe, 2012a). It was measured using six items, adopted from Karatepe (2012a). Supervisor support was operationalized as individual care to every worker through coaching, leading, and helping subordinates toward the fulfillment of their work-related responsibilities and performance evaluations (Choi et al., 2012). It was measured using four items, adopted from Choi et al. (2012). Coworker support refers to the degree to which employee believes that his/her coworkers are available to assist in work-related issues to aid in the execution of their service-based duties (Karatepe, 2012a). Coworker support was measured using five items, adopted from Karatepe (2012a). Service recovery performance was operationalized as the effective ability of a service employee’s behavior and actions to resolve the service failures and get the customer back to the satisfaction state (Boshoff & Allen, 2000; Yavas et al., 2003). It was measured using five items, adopted from Boshoff and Allen (2000). In this study, the researcher followed the questionnaire development process outlined by Churchill and Iacobucci (2002) to develop the study questionnaire. After the development of the questionnaire, the original version translated from English to Pakistani national language (Urdu) by following the Douglas and Craig (2007) guidelines, for the ease of target respondents.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS
The present study utilized Smart PLS 3.2.8 to analyze structural equation modelling (SEM). The SEM of this study was done by implementing the two-step process by using smart PLS 3.2.8. In the first step the measurement model was assessed which presents the construct reliability, discriminant validity, and the composite reliability of all the latent constructs (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013). In the second step, the structural model was assessed to test the proposed structural relationships between the latent constructs (Hair et al., 2013). Prior to the measurement and structural model assessment, preliminary data analysis was done (i.e. missing value, multicollinearity, and common method variance) which revealed that the data fulfill all the requirements so that collinearity and other assumptions were not affected in the assessment of measurement and structural model.

-measurement model
The first step in the PLS-SEM approach was to examine the measurement model and evaluate the reliability and validity of the constructs. Cronbach alpha (CA), average variance extracted (AVE) and the composite reliability (CR) are regarded as a measure of the reliability (Hair et al., 2010). As the recommended value of AVE be over 0.50, CA is more than 0.70, and CR more than 0.70. In this study all of the constructs

Sample and data collection
In the present study, data have been collected through a self-administered questionnaire. A sample size of the study was determined by following the Morgan sampling guidelines. Simple random sampling has been used to collect data from the respondents. A total of 471 sets of the questionnaires were circulated between frontline employees of telecom call centers. The questionnaires of this study were personally distributed and collected by the researcher. The questionnaires returned were 331. However, only 320 were valid while 11 were omitted because of incomplete response, representing a valid response rate of 67%. The response rate was relatively high because of the use of a self-administered questionnaire (Fayyork, Abu Elainin, Obeidat, & Al-Nahyan, 2016).
Discriminant validity was obtained by evaluating the correlation between the latent variables along with the square root of AVE (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Fornell and Larcker (1981) recommended the use of one item and AVE ranging between 0.559 to 0.720 shown in Table 1. Factor loading of each item is more than 0.60 and one item with outer loading below 0.6 has been removed.

Table 1. Assessment of measurement model (PLS Algorithm).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>CA</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>Item deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>0.856</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>0.585</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors support</td>
<td>0.802</td>
<td>0.863</td>
<td>0.559</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coworker support</td>
<td>0.866</td>
<td>0.903</td>
<td>0.653</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service recovery</td>
<td>0.871</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>0.720</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Discriminant validity Matrix (Fornell-Larcker Criterion).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CS</th>
<th>OS</th>
<th>SRP</th>
<th>SS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>0.765</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OS</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.747</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRP</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.808</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td>0.849</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Discriminant validity (HTMT).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CS</th>
<th>OS</th>
<th>SRP</th>
<th>SS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OS</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.755</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRP</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>0.576</td>
<td>0.799</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structural Model

After the assessment of the path model’s reliability and validity of items and constructs, the structural model of the study was assessed in the first step, model fit analyzed by a combination of R2 values, (coefficient of determination), and Stone-Geisser’s predictive relevance (Q2). Where R2 explains the percentage of variance explained by independent variables on the dependent variable, and Q2 explains the overall predictive power of the research model. It is suggested that to make a meaningful interpretation, the value of R2 should be at least 10 per cent that demonstrated substantive explanatory power, which is 0.622 and Q2 explains predictive relevance of the endogenous variable considering Q2 values larger than 0, which is 0.376 assessed by Stone-Geisser’s predictive relevance using by blindfolding procedure. On the basis of structural equation modelling, hypothesis results are as follows. Tests of H1-H3 were conducted using correlation analysis to determine whether the proposed individual relations exist or not, which shows that H1 (β=0.399, SE=0.043, t=9.278), and H2 (β=0.512, SE=0.043, t=11.85) were supported, and H3 (β=0.045, SE=0.041, t=1.099) was not supported.

Table 4. Structural model results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>STDEV</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OS -&gt; SRP</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>9.278</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS -&gt; SRP</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>11.85</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS -&gt; SRP</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>1.099</td>
<td>0.272</td>
<td>Not Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Results for R2 and Q2 (predictive relevance).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Endogens variable</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>Q2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SRP</td>
<td>0.376</td>
<td>0.622</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSIONS

The results of this study revealed that workplace social support influences the call center frontline employees’ service recovery performance. As the findings explain that two out of three hypotheses were supported on a significant basis. Such as, Organizational support was found to be positively and significantly correlated with SRP (β = 0.399, t = 9.278). Hence, hypothesis 1 was supported and aligned with the previous research findings (Hee et al., 2004; Karatepe, 2012a, 2012b; Yavas & Babakus, 2010). Hee et al. (2004) argued that OS triggers to increase employees’ belief that the efforts they put toward achieving organizational goals will be appreciated, resulting in better service given to customers. Hypothesis 2 was also supported as a positive and significant association between supervisor support and SRP (β = 0.512, t = 11.85). The results of hypothesis 2 consistent with previous research (Guchait, Pašamehmetoğlu, & Dawson, 2014; Karatepe, 2014; Oentoro, Popaitoon, & Kongchan, 2016) which indicated that SS positively linked with SRP. The critical role of call center employees in the
service delivery process in the service organizations are challenged with several problems such as long working hours, excessive job demands, customer aggression, and inflexible and irregular work timings (Poulston, 2008). However, in such a work environment, supervisor support is key to enable employees to perform as expected. However, Hypothesis 3 was not found significant positive association between coworker support and the SRP (β = 0.045, t = 1.099) as shown in Table 4. Moreover, the result of this study supports the equity theory that postulates that employees evaluate their jobs by comparing what they put into their work with and what they get out of it.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

This research extends the service literature on service recovery performance of an employee by investigated the role of the workplace social support. According to the results of this study, it is found that workplace social support particularly, organizational support and supervisor support are the significant contributors which contribute to enhancing service employee performance of call center employees. Although the coworker support is not significantly correlated to the employee’s service recovery performance, however, the composite effect of workplace social support indicated that the proper implementation of the workplace social support practices helps service organizations to get more desirable employee outcomes such as effective service recovery performance. This study results further suggest that the management of telecom call centers can get more benefits from it as high workplace social support can only bring a competitive weapon for the organization by enhancing the service employees’ performance which in return positively effect customer satisfaction and makes a customer loyal for a long time. Based on the findings, it is recommended that the management of telecom call centers provide workplace social support to accommodate employee’s workplace needs and help establish a stress-free environment to enable the employees to improve their SRP.

The interpretation of the findings should consider some limitations of the study. Firstly, the present employed a survey questionnaire research design involving cross-sectional data was gathered at a point of time to test the hypothesized relationships. Future study may consider longitudinal design to expand the research finding. In addition, this study considered inbound call centers only. Future research may examine outbound call centers and other sectors call centers such as hospitality, banking, and transportation. Secondly, this study was conducted in telecom call centers in Pakistan. As such, the findings of this research may not be generalized to call centers outside of Pakistan because of some potential differences in culture, the characteristics of call centers etc. in other countries. Thus, future studies may consider investigating call center employees in other countries for wider generalizability. Lastly, this study identified direct relationships between workplace social support and service recovery performance. Future studies should investigate the attitudinal variables as a mediator between workplace social support and service recovery performance such as organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour, organizational culture, and employee well-being which might provide more insight to explore the relationship between workplace social support and service recovery performance.

REFERENCES


