The Influence of Managers' Communication Styles on Employees' Job Satisfaction among Local and Expatriate Managers

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ABSTRACT

In today's borderless business environment, companies are operating in different locations across the globe to ensure that they can gain competitive advantage over their competitors at different countries. To ensure common strategic mission, vision and objectives of the company across the globe, managers from different countries of origin are sent to different countries to equip them with a global mindset in managing the company. The problem is that they have different ways of communication as compared to local managers. These might affect the level of job satisfaction of employees. This study was intended to investigate the influence of different communication styles of expatriate and local managers on employees' job satisfaction in manufacturing companies in Malaysia. From the analysis of 170 data collected from the employees, the results indicate that telling, selling and joining communication styles of local managers are the significant predictors of employees' job satisfaction. For expatriate managers, only selling communication style contributes significantly to the level of employees' job satisfaction. The implications of the study are discussed in detail in the paper.

Key Words: Communication styles, expatriate, local managers, job satisfaction, manufacturing company.

1. INTRODUCTION

Driven by a strong demand for skilled and professional workforce in addition to continuing flow of foreign direct investment, Malaysia is fast becoming the chosen place for expatriates to offer their knowledge and expertise. According to the HSBC Expatriate Explorer Survey 2014, Malaysia is ranked 19th out of 34 countries in terms of expatriates' overall impression in which the country is still lagging behind its regional peers; namely, Singapore in the 2nd place and Thailand in the 7th place. Due to enormous emphasis placed by the government in increasing the number of expatriates, studies involving expatriates are indeed a matter of national interest. However, this study focuses on discovering the differences between employees' work environment under the supervision of both expatriate and local managers. Rather than attempting to discover the acceptance of expatriates towards the locals, this paper seeks to investigate the relationship between managerial communication styles (of both expatriates and local managers) and employees' job satisfaction.

Recent studies on expatriates working in Malaysia are quite few, and focus on their cross cultural adjustment and work outcomes. These involved the hotel industry (Halim, Bakar & Mohamad, 2014; Halim, Rahman & Mohamad, 2013), multinational corporations (Tahir & Ismail, 2007) and higher education (Hassan & Hashim, 2011; Tahir & Ismail, 2007). Besides, these studies are focusing on expatriates themselves and local employees' work outcomes as a result of their perception towards the expatriates. Given that expatriates usually held higher level positions compared to their local counterparts, their sense of supervisory and managerial styles would certainly determine the work outcome of their subordinates. The void in the literature that compares the work outcomes of employees who are under the supervision of their respective local and expatriate managers necessitates the undertaking of this study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Job Satisfaction

A study involving job satisfaction among expatriates is considered as highly relevant in the expatriate literature (Li, 1996). There are situations where expatriates may impose incompatible demands that might be difficult to be followed by local employees, due to different cultural and work environments (Kim & Slocum, 2008). Besides, expatriates employed in joint venture companies or subsidiaries may experience role conflicts due to contradictory requirements between the parent firms and local firms (van Oudenhoven, van der Zee & van Kooten, 2001). Such role conflict was often associated with lower levels of job satisfaction (Mohr & Puck, 2007). These can be addressed through better social adjustment of the expatriates, in terms of their

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interaction with host country employees (Kim & Slocum, 2008).

Local and foreign employees may have different levels of work satisfaction despite being employed within the same organization. For instance, local academicians achieved higher levels of job satisfaction compared to their foreign counterparts in public learning institutions (Hassan & Hashim, 2011). Besides, supervisors' nationality was found to be a determinant of job satisfaction of expatriates. Expatriates who worked under the supervision of their foreign supervisors have shown higher job satisfaction than their counterparts who work for host-country national supervisors (Froese & Peltokorpi, 2011).

In terms of local employees' acceptance towards foreign expatriates, a different scenario emerged. Local employees' may have different satisfaction towards their expatriate managers based on their country of origin. Leung, Wang and Smith (2001) who studied local expatriates of Chinese Joint Venture companies discovered that employees working with managers from Japanese, Hong Kong and Taiwan were significantly less satisfied and less committed compared to those who worked with the Western, Singaporean and Malaysian managers.

Studies pertaining to job satisfaction have always been linked to interactional justice (Masterson et al., 2000; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010). The organization's management fairness in treatment of employees regardless of their nationality is imperative in building the work morale and behavior of local employees. Inequitable treatment between expatriates and local employees may lead to low commitment and poor job performance among the locals (Toh & DeNisi, 2005). Within the local scenario, there is no difference regarding the perception of social treatment among locals and expatriates (Hassan & Hashim, 2011). However, it is not the case with UAE's Arab locals who view foreign expatriates as a threat to their career progression, while the expatriates stereotyped the locals as being lazy and having lack of attention towards details (Ariss, 2014). This can perhaps be attributed to the expatriates' higher sense of organizational loyalty and greater risk-taking attitude in making decisions, as compared to the local Emiratis (Ali, Krishnan & Azim, 1997).

2.2. Management Communication Styles

In getting their message effectively delivered across the hierarchies in a top-down approach, higher level managers need to decide on their approach of either being autocratic or democratic. However, both leadership styles are dichotomous, with the former being absolute in terms of sole control of authority and the latter being absolute in task delegation and collective decision making. In order to establish leadership behaviour as a flexible form of subordinates' level of participation between the two extremes, Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) suggested the use of leadership continuum. In this case, a leader can be boss-centered (autocratic), subordinate-centered (democratic), or in between the two leadership behaviors. Within the field of communication, the values highlighted in the leadership continuum are reflected in Johnson's (1993) dominance continuum. Based on the dominance continuum, people with low dominance tend to cooperate but low in assertiveness and willing to be controlled by others, while those with high dominance tend to be more initiative, assertive and seeking control over others.

Richmond and McCroskey (1979) offered a simpler and well-defined approach to the leadership continuum by proposing the Management Communication Styles (MCS) that consist of Tell, Sell, Consult and Join. Following the dearth of studies that employed the MCS scale particularly in Malaysia, Rozilah, Muhammad and Kamaluddin (2013) improvised the MCS instrument through interviews, validated the scale using EFA and discriminant analysis, and established fit indicators for the measurement model. However, the predictive validity of MCS was not reported. Each definition of the four MCS dimensions is described in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Management Communication Styles dimension (Richmond & McCroskey, 1979)

Dimensions of MCS	Definition	Communication Direction
Tell	Manager provides top-down directive which is non-interactive and lack of subordinates' concern.	Primarily downward & unidirectional.
Sell	Manager makes decisions by persuading subordinates to accept them. Questions from subordinates are encouraged but counter arguments are provided if the decisions are challenged.	Primarily but not exclusively downward, & sometimes bi-directional.
Consult	Manager makes decisions only when problems and solutions have been discussed with subordinates to ensure that their well-being needs are met.	Primarily upward, bi-directional & interactive.
Join	Manager delegates total authority to the subordinates, by setting the limit within which the decisions must be made and allowing decision to be made upon majority's opinion.	Primarily horizontal, sometimes bi-directional & highly interactive.

Expatriates working in culturally and linguistically distant countries may find it difficult to get their messages across effectively. A study by Peltokorpi (2010) involving Nordic expatriates working in Japan found that intercultural communication are affected due to their lack of cultural competencies and also host country employees' low proficiency in mastering non-native language. This scenario serves as a glaring reminder to international companies that deployed expatriates in foreign countries to review problems arising from intercultural interactions. As the expatriates are commonly positioned in the middle to upper management level, the extent to which their management communication

style differs from their local counterparts in shaping the attitude among the employees is a matter of concern for both practitioners and academicians.

Malaysians are renowned as a society whose culture is seen as collectivist (Bochner, 1994) and having high power distance (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). In an attempt to better understand the unique cultural diversity of Malaysians in the workplace setting, Bakar, Walters and Halim (2014) developed and validated the Malaysian Communication Style scale that are divided into two factors; namely, the use of language (*pekerti*) and communication and interaction (*budi*). Both factors significantly affect workgroup-level OCBs via structural equation modelling, thus affirming the predictive validity of the instrument. However, given that this study focuses on understanding the communication styles of both locals and expatriates, a globally accepted scale would be considered as more appropriate.

Organizational justice research may give a good indicator of the managerial communication styles perceived by employees, since their attitude towards the management are generally guided by justice and fairness (DeConinck, 2010). Mixed results were reported by several expatriate studies that involve organizational justice among expatriates in Asian host countries. Interactional justice, which reflects employees' perception of fairness from social treatment by superiors, was found to be not significantly related to job satisfaction among expatriates (Hassan & Hashim, 2011). Nevertheless, others found that there is positive effect of interactional justice on job satisfaction (Leung, Wang & Smith, 2001).

2.3 Management Communication Styles and Job Satisfaction

The understanding of job satisfaction among employees under expatriate supervision serves as the indicator of acceptance that may lead to the employees' support towards the expatriate's adjustment. Previous study by Halim et al. (2014) found that sensitivity towards new cultural environment and open-mindedness are significant predictors of job satisfaction among expatriates. They further suggested that local employees' support towards the expatriates would help them in performing better at work. Such relationship may also work in a reversal manner, where expatriates' support would eventually lead to employees' job satisfaction.

Existing research on expatriates tends to focus on the issues of expatriates social perception and adjustment with their current environment. Nevertheless, it was found that work adjustment does not affect job satisfaction among expatriates (Kim & Slocum, 2008). Work adjustment is defined as the extent of expatriates' comfort and adaptation regarding different performance standards and work values in a new environment (Black, 1998). Thus, research on local employees' attitude and satisfaction towards the

expatriates may contribute towards the improvement of expatriates' work adjustment in future research.

The attitude of local employees towards expatriates may actually determine their preference in providing cooperation towards them. Arman and Aycan (2013) had developed and validated 24-item Attitude towards Expatriates (ATEX) scale, consisting of adaptation, transformational capacity, openness, professionalism and perceived justice of expatriate privileges. It was further found that local employees who have positive attitudes towards expatriates are more likely to prefer working with expatriate managers as compared to local managers (Arman & Aycan, 2013).

Better cross-cultural understanding between local and foreign employees is the precursor for equal representativeness in getting their voices heard and unbiased decisions. Eventually, both top-down and bottom-up managerial communication styles that are equally diffused to both local and foreign employees are good predictors of their job satisfaction (Hassan & Hashim, 2011). The understanding of how expatriates' managerial communication styles affect job satisfaction among employees is relevant considering the local employees' negative perception towards expatriates. Specifically, local employees tend to stereotype expatriate managers with their perceived national culture, and they believed that expatriates are not keen in passing knowledge to them (Ariss, 2014). The abovementioned attitudes of local employees are assumed to be the results of the decision making and communication styles employed by their foreign managers. Based on the discussions above, the following hypotheses are drawn:

H1: 'Tell' Communication Style of local managers positively predicts job satisfaction of their subordinates.

H2: 'Sell' Communication Style of local managers positively predicts job satisfaction of their subordinates.

H3: 'Consult' Communication Style of local managers positively predicts job satisfaction of their subordinates.

H4: 'Join' Communication Style of local managers positively predicts job satisfaction of their subordinates.

H5: 'Tell' Communication Style of expatriate managers positively predicts job satisfaction of their subordinates.

H6: 'Sell' Communication Style of expatriate managers positively predicts job satisfaction of their subordinates.

H7: 'Consult' Communication Style of expatriate managers positively predicts job satisfaction of their subordinates.

H8: 'Join' Communication Style of expatriate managers positively predicts job satisfaction of their subordinates.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study is correlational in nature and was conducted using cross sectional research design. The population of the study consists of 300 non-managerial employees working in three steel manufacturing companies in Klang Valley, which are joint venture companies between Malaysia and Japan, Malaysia and Korea, and Malaysia and Australia. The sampling frame for the study is unavailable due to confidentiality of the information; therefore, non-probability sampling was utilized to select the samples. However, extra care was taken to ensure that the characteristics of samples represent those of the population. A total of 180 respondents were selected to participate in the study based on the suggested sample size by Krejcie and Morgan (1979). The response rate for the study is 94%.

The instrument used in the study is a survey questionnaire, which items were adapted from previous studies. Managerial communication styles were measured using Management Communication Scale, which was developed by Rozilah et al. (2013) based on the conceptualization of the construct by Richmond and McCroskey (1979). The measure contains 27 items measuring tell (five items), sell (eight items), consult (six items), and join (eight items). The responses were gauged using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. It was reported that the measure is highly reliable with Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 (Butts, 2010). The sample items are, "My manager receives decision from the top management and announces it to subordinates" (tell), "My manager persuades the subordinates of the desirability of decisions made by the top management or him/her" (sell), "My manager only makes final decisions after he/she has discussed it with the subordinates" (consult), and "My manager always delegates decision-making to the subordinates" (join).

Job satisfaction was measured using Job in General Scale (JIG) developed by Ironson, Brannick, Smith, Gibson and Paul (1989). The scale contains 18 items assessing overall feelings about one's job. It consists of a list of short phrases and adjectives of five and less words such as pleasant and bad. The responses were gauged using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. A previous study found the measure as highly reliable with Cronbach's alpha of 0.91 (Schneider & Dachler, 1978).

Table 2: Respondents' Profile

Variable	Descriptive	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	87	51.2
	Female	83	48.8
Age	20-30 years old	47	27.6
	31-40 years old	58	34.1
	41-50 years old	54	31.8
	>50 years old	11	6.5
Race	Malay	76	44.7
	Chinese	40	23.5
	Indian	51	30.0
	Others	3	1.8
Marital Status	Single	62	36.5
	Married	100	58.8
	Others	8	4.7
Education	Degree	48	28.2
	Diploma	36	21.2
	STPM/SPM/PMR	78	45.9
	Others	8	4.7
Length of Service	1-5 years	42	24.7
	6-10 years	55	32.4
	11-20 years	56	32.9
	>20 years	17	10.0
Work Division	Human Resource	14	8.2
	Marketing	31	18.2
	Finance	23	13.5
	Logistics	15	8.8
	Delivery	26	15.3
	Info Tech	10	5.9
	Factory Admin	18	10.6
	Quality Control	13	7.6
	Production	20	11.8

Respondents' information in the study was analyzed using descriptive analysis to examine its distribution. The 170 responses were almost equally divided between male and female (87 or 51.2% for male and 83 or 48.8% for female). With regard to age distribution, 47 respondents or 27.6% were in the age group of 20-30 years old, 58 respondents or 34.1% were in the age group of 31-40 years old, 54 respondents or 31.8% were in the age group of 41-50 years old and 11 respondents or 6.5% were more than

50 years old. Pertaining to respondents' race, 76 of them or 44.7% are Malays, 40 of them or 23.5% are Chinese, and 51 of them or 30% are Indians. Most of the respondents (100 respondents or 58.8%) were married and 62 of them or 36.5% were single. Examining their education levels, 78 respondents or 45.9% had STPM/SPM/PMR qualification; it is followed by those with bachelor degree represented by 48 respondents or 28.3%, then ensued by those with diploma amounting to 36 respondents or 21.2%.

Concerning the length of service of the respondents, 42 of them or 24.7% had been working for less than five years, 55 of them or 32.4% had between 6-20 years of working experience, 56 of them or 32.9% had between 11-20 years of working experience and 17 of them or 10% had been working for more than 20 years. The respondents were from various departments comprising Human Resource (14 respondents or 8.2%), Marketing (31 respondents or 18.2%), Finance (23 respondents or 13.5%), Logistics (15 respondents or 8.8%), Delivery (26 respondents or 15.3%), Information Technology (10 respondents or 5.9%), Factory Administration (18 respondents or 10.6%), Quality Control (13 respondents or 7.6%), and Production (20 respondents or 11.8%).

3.1 Factor Analysis

Principal Component Factor Analyses with varimax rotation were utilized to identify the underlying structure or dimensions in the independent and dependent variables in this study. Factor analysis can recognize whether a common factor or more than a single factor is present in the responses to the items. In essence, factor analysis was used to understand the underlying structure in the data matrix, to identify the most parsimonious set of variables, and to establish the goodness of measures for testing the hypotheses (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006).

Conducting factor analysis, several statistical values were observed to establish whether the items are suitable to be factor analyzed. This is accomplished by examining the values of Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA), Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity. The MSA value for the individual items was set to be above .50 and the KMO (overall items) value to be above .60. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was observed to detect the presence of significant correlations among variables. It is appropriate to proceed with the factor analysis if the value of the test is large and significant (p<.05) (Hair et al., 2006).

Overall, three (3) factor analyses were performed independently for each scale concerning managerial communications styles (for local and expatriate managers) and employees' job satisfaction. Two criteria were used to determine the number of factors to be extracted: (1) the absolute magnitude of the eigenvalues of factors (eigenvalue greater than one criterion), and (2) the relative magnitude of the eigenvalues (scree test plot) (Hair et al., 2006). The eigenvalue of a factor represents the amount of total variance accounted by the factor. The total amount of variance explained by the factor(s) was set at 60.0 % and above (Hair et al., 2006). In addition, the scree test plot was also inspected to find a point at which the shape of the curve changed direction and became horizontal. All factors above the elbow, or a break in the plot, were retained as these factors contributed the most to the variance in the data set. In interpreting the factors, only items with a loading of .40 or greater on one factor were considered. In the case of cross-loadings (an item that loads at .32 or higher on two or more factors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) or the difference between and among factors is less than .10 (Youndt, Snell, Dean, & Lepak, 1996)), the items were considered for deletion. The clean factors were then interpreted or named by examining the largest values linking the factors to the items in the rotated factor matrix. Reliability tests were subsequently carried out after factor analyses.

Table 3: Results of Factor Analysis for Managers' Communication Styles – Local

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
S4_Local	.868			
S5_Local	.860			
S3_Local	.801			
S6_Local	.791			
S1_Local	.700			
S8_Local	.683			
S7_Local	.642			
C1_Local		.855		
C2_Local		.774		
C5_Local		.670		
C6_Local		.669		
C4_Local		.654		
J7_Local			.824	
J8_Local			.814	
J6_Local			.808	
J5_Local			.600	
T3_Local				.786
T2_Local				.735
T4_Local				.725
% variance explained	27.206	20.147	18.144	9.547

					.601-.951
MSA					.601-.951
KMO					.903
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square				2776.168
	Df				177
	Sig.				.000

In assessing the validity of the managerial communication styles of local managers, Principle Component Factor Analysis was conducted. There were initially 27 items for the scale with different number of items for the four dimensions; 'tell' communication style (5 items), 'sell' communication style (8 items), 'consult' communication style (6 items), and 'join' communication style (8 items). Factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to determine factors' dimensionality. The results of the analysis revealed that 19 items formed four structures equivalent to the original structures.

The results are shown in Table 3. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the managerial communication style scale is .903, indicating that the items were interrelated. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows a significant value (Approx. Chi-Square = 2776.168, p<.01), indicating the significance of the correlation matrix and appropriateness for factor analysis. Moreover, the individual MSA values range from .601 to .951, indicating that the data matrix was suitable to be factor analyzed. Results of factor analysis with varimax rotation indicated the existence of four factors with initial eigenvalues greater than one that explained 75% of total variance. The results of a scree test also provided support for a four-factor solution.

The first factor comprises seven items with loadings which ranged from .642 to .868. This factor mainly embraces 'sell' communication style of local managers; therefore, the original name was retained. One item was removed due to high cross loadings or it loaded differently from the original conceptualization. The second factor was extracted with factor loadings which ranged from .654 to .855. This factor consisted of five items which reflected 'consult' communication style; therefore, the original name was retained. One item was removed due to high cross loadings or it loaded differently from the original conceptualization. The third factor reflects 'join' communication style of local managers comprising four items with factor loadings which ranged from .600 to .824, thus, the original name was maintained. Four items were removed due to high cross loadings or they loaded differently from the original conceptualization. The fourth factor contains only three items with factor loadings which ranged from .725 to .786. This factor relates to 'tell' communication style of local managers; therefore, the original name was used. Two items were removed due to high cross loadings or they loaded differently from the original conceptualization.

Table 4: Results of Factor Analysis for Managers' Communication Styles – Expatriate

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
J6_Expat	.824			
J5_Expat	.824			
J3_Expat	.795			
J4_Expat	.757			
J2_Expat	.725			
J7_Expat	.706			
J1_Expat	.698			
C4_Expat		.840		
C3_Expat		.835		
C2_Expat		.818		
C1_Expat		.792		
C6_Expat		.708		
S4_Expat			.870	
S3_Expat			.811	
S5_Expat			.811	
S6_Expat			.700	
T3_Expat				.827
T2_Expat				.788
T4_Expat				.729
T1_Expat				.576
% variance explained	24.531	20.831	15.510	13.068
MSA				.781-.957
KMO				.892
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square			2737.140
	Df			190
	Sig.			.000

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Principle Component Factor Analysis was also conducted to establish the validity of the managerial communication styles of expatriate managers. There were originally 27 items for the scale with different number of items for the four dimensions; 'tell' communication style (5 items), 'sell' communication style (8 items), 'consult' communication style (6 items), and 'join' communication style (8 items). Factor analysis with varimax rotation was utilized to determine factors' dimensionality. The results of the analysis indicate that 20 items formed four structures resembling the original structures.

The results are presented in Table 4. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the managerial communication style scale is .892 indicating that the items were interrelated. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows a significant value (Approx. Chi-Square = 2737.140, p<.01), indicating the significance of the correlation matrix and appropriateness for factor analysis. Moreover, the individual MSA values which range from .781 to .957, indicate that the data matrix was suitable to be factor analyzed. Results of factor analysis with varimax rotation indicated the existence of four factors with initial eigenvalues greater than one that explained 74%

of total variance. The results of a scree test also provided support for a four-factor solution.

The first factor comprises <u>seven</u> items with loadings which ranged from .698 to .824. This factor mainly reflects 'join' communication style of expatriate managers; therefore, the original name was retained. One item was discarded due to high cross loadings or it loaded differently from the original conceptualization. The second factor was extracted with factor loadings which ranged from .708 to .840. This factor comprises <u>five</u> items which reflect 'consult' communication style; therefore, the original name was retained. One item was discarded due to high cross loadings or it loaded differently from the original conceptualization. The third factor reflects 'sell' communication style of expatriate managers consisting of <u>four</u> items with factor loadings which ranged from .700 to .870, thus, the original name was maintained. Four items were discarded due to high cross loadings or they loaded differently from the original conceptualization. The fourth factor contains only <u>four</u> items with factor loadings which ranged from .576 to .827. This factor reflects 'tell' communication style of expatriate managers; therefore, the original name was used. One item was discarded due to high cross loadings or it loaded differently from the original conceptualization.

Table 5: Results of Factor Analysis for Employees' Job Satisfaction

		Component
		1
JS1		.829
JS3		.729
JS5		.734
JS7		.759
JS9		.755
JS10		.695
JS11		.826
JS13		.757
JS15		.760
JS17		.813
% variance explained		58.812
MSA		.888-.919
KMO		.904
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1018.708
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

In determining the unidimensionality of the employees' job satisfaction variable, Principle Component Factor Analysis was also performed. The results of factor analysis are displayed in Table 5. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the Job in General scale is .904 indicating that the items were interrelated. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows a significant value (Approx. Chi-Square = 1018.708, p<.01), indicating the significance of the correlation matrix and appropriateness for factor analysis. Moreover, the individual MSA values range from .888 to .919, indicating that the data matrix was suitable to

be factor analyzed. Results of factor analysis with varimax rotation indicated the existence of one factor with initial eigenvalues greater than one that explained 59% of total variance. The result of a scree test also provided support for one-factor solution. Originally, there were 18 items measuring the variable. However, the result of factor analysis with varimax rotation indicates the existence of one factor with 10 items. The remaining eight items were removed because of high cross loadings or they loaded differently from the original conceptualization.

3.2 Reliability and Correlation Analysis

Table 6: Results of Correlation Analysis

No	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Tell (Local)	3.59	.88	(.681)								
2	Sell (Local)	3.77	.89	.178**	(.943)							
3	Consult (Local)	3.84	.88	.019	.733**	(.932)						
4	Join (Local)	3.65	.86	.132*	.666**	.715**	(.890)					
5	Tell (Expat)	4.29	.72	.559**	.389**	.334**	.218**	(.623)				
6	Sell (Expat)	3.70	1.00	.248**	.453**	.347**	.301**	.292**	(.905)			
7	Consult (Expat)	4.23	.85	.241**	.474**	.591**	.412**	.389**	.601**	(.930)		
8	Join (Expat)	3.99	.89	.340**	.386**	.382**	.327**	.453**	.557**	.622**	(.920)	
9	Job Satisfaction	3.65	.66	.236**	.619**	.506**	.628**	.264**	.405**	.348**	.375**	(.916)

Notes: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed); *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed); N=170

The results of reliability analysis denote that the measure gauging the intended variables has high internal consistency and stability with Cronbach alpha values which range from .623 for 'tell' communication style for expatriate managers to .943 for 'sell' communication style for local managers (George & Mallery, 2003). Results of correlation analysis indicate that all variables are highly correlated with each other. The highly correlated variables indicate significant relationships among them which should be highly considered in explaining the phenomenon of interest. Significant correlations are observed between the independent variables or managerial communication styles for local and expatriate managers. The lowest correlation is between 'tell' communication style for local managers and 'consult' communication style for local managers (r=.019, p>.05). The highest correlation is between 'sell' communication style for local managers and 'consult' communication style for local managers (r=.733, p<.01). These significant correlations signify convergent validity of the independent variables. Besides, significant correlations are also observed between independent variables and the dependent variable with the lowest correlation between 'tell' communication style for local managers and employees' job satisfaction (r=.236, p<.01). The highest correlation is found between 'join' communication style for local managers and employees' job satisfaction (r=.628, p<.01). These significant correlations denote concurrent validity of the measures.

3.3 Regression Analysis

Table 7: Results of Regression Analysis

Variables	Local Managers Standardized Beta Coefficients	Expatriate Managers Standardized Beta Coefficients
Tell	.117*	.097
Sell	.367**	.256**
Consult	-.058	.063
Join	.409**	.150
R	.695	.456
R²	.483	.208
F value	38.506	10.802
Sig. F value	.000	.000
Durbin Watson	1.664	1.729

Regression analysis was performed to determine the influence of managerial communication styles (tell, sell, consult and join) on employees' job satisfaction. With regard to local managers' communication style, the regression model is significant with R^2 of .483, indicating that 48.3% of the variance was explained by communication styles ($F_{(4, 165)} = 38.506$, $p = 0.000$). Looking at the contribution of the individual independent variable, tell ($\beta = .117$, $p<.05$), sell ($\beta = .367$, $p<.01$) and join ($\beta = .409$, $p<.01$)

are significant predictors of employees' job satisfaction. Thus, H1, H2 and H4 were supported, while H3 was not supported.

Concerning the expatriate managers, the regression model is significant with R^2 of .208, indicating that 20.8% of the variance in employees' job satisfaction was explained by the expatriate managers'

4.0   DISCUSSION

For local managers, 'tell', 'sell' and 'join' communication styles are significant to influence employees' job satisfaction. These factors are significant because local managers share similar characteristics in terms of personality, work behaviour and to a certain extent the aspiration. Therefore, employees expect the managers to involve them in their work especially when it comes to making important decisions pertaining to their work. They also expect the managers to convince them by selling their ideas to them (providing ample reasons) besides telling them on what to do. The line of authority between local managers and employees seems to appear both unidirectional and bidirectional, and also both instructive and interactive. Based on a logical perspective, the practice of utilizing various management communication styles is common in the workplace because different circumstances may require dynamic and contingent style of leadership behavior (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 2001).

As for expatriate managers, 'sell' communication style is the only significant predictor of the employees' job satisfaction. In this case, the expatriate managers can only be effective in fulfilling their employees' work satisfaction when they are able to convince or persuade them to perform their tasks, albeit with less upward interaction and opinion seeking. This is perhaps the best communication style for expatriate managers as they are regarded as foreigners who have different traits, ways of doing things, and different objectives with regard to the work being performed. The result may not be surprising since Malaysia-based expatriates considered the locals as having a slower working pace than themselves (Tahir & Ismail, 2007). Furthermore, a significant number of the employees are Malays, whom are believed to be less extrovert and less open to experience compared to the Westerners (Mastor, Jin & Cooper, 2000). In such circumstances where subordinates are unable to match their speed but show positive willingness to perform, selling style may serve as the most appropriate communicative behaviour by leaders to match with their subordinates' lower level of readiness (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 2001).

Based on the findings of the local managers, they are able to do more than just persuade the employees that they are churning the right decisions. Their 'join' communication style or inclined attitude towards employees' delegation positively affects the employees' job satisfaction. In this regard, their supportive behaviour is more effective as compared to their expatriate counterparts. It is assumed that

communication styles (F (4, 165) = 10.802, p = 0.000). Looking at the contribution of the individual independent variable, only 'sell' communication style (β = .256, p<.01) is a significant predictor of employees' job satisfaction. Thus, only H6 is supported, while H5, H7 and H8 are not supported.

incompatible demands, role conflicts and lower level of social adjustment between the expatriates and local employees are the possible reasons for the less supportive behaviour perceived by the latter (Kim & Slocum, 2008; van Oudenhoven, van der Zee & van Kooten, 2001). Undeniably, supportive communication by the superiors is vital to ensure employees' satisfaction. When employees perceive that they receive ample supervisory support, they will feel more secure and sense that the management is taking care of their welfare (DeConinck, 2010)

Another reason for the existence of different communication styles for local and expatriate managers is that normally both managers have different job positions or job levels. For example, certain positions are 'locked' only for locals due to security concerns (Ariss, 2014). Meanwhile, it is commonly believed by local employees that expatriates hold certain privileges that are less accessible to them (Toh & DeNisi, 2005; Hailey, 1996). Expatriate managers are usually positioned to be special advisors to ensure the alignment of company's objectives with those of other companies in the group. Local managers, on the other hand, are more inclined towards implementing the strategies agreed at the higher levels. In this regard, it is assumed that the local managers held execution roles while the expatriates performed strategic planning roles. Because of their differing job scopes, local managers are working more closely with the employees and the communication styles used are more towards higher involvement among employees. For expatriate managers, 'sell' type of communication is more appropriate as they use it to convince or persuade others to accept their ideas for the improvement of the organization as a whole.

5.0   CONCLUSION

In the global business era, companies are establishing their branches in different countries. Expatriate managers are sent to these countries to help in aligning the goals of the companies with the mother company. In ensuring that the employees' job satisfaction levels are above the desired levels, the model of managerial communication styles of expatriate and local managers should be established. This study was conducted to achieve this objective by suggesting the communication models for local and expatriate managers that are linked to job satisfaction of employees in manufacturing companies in Malaysia. The findings of the study indicate that 'tell', 'sell', and 'join' communication styles are significant predictors of employees' job satisfaction for local managers. For

expatriate managers, only 'sell' communication style is found to be able to influence employees' job satisfaction. Besides, the re-validated MCS scale is highly suitable to be used within the Malaysian workplace context based on the results of factor analysis.

5.1   Managerial Implications

Since the findings of the study indicate the existence of different communication models for local and expatriate managers that contribute to employees' job satisfaction, organization should ascertain that the managers are equipped with the right skills to choose the best types of communication when dealing with the subordinates. Although the objective of communication is to convey the message to the recipients, the end result that is related to the emotional acceptance of the employees is also important. By having the right communication styles, managers can ensure that their subordinate can execute the tasks assigned with an open heart and the right attitude.

The socio-cultural dissonance between expatriates and local employees are barriers for effective adjustment and inter-cultural communication at the workplace. Being able to adapt and function effectively in new cultural surroundings are the hallmarks of cultural intelligence, which was found to be a significant predictor of job performance (Ramalu, Chuah & Rose, 2011). Therefore, the management should actively promote informal and off-site engagement activities between local employees and expatriate managers to establish a stronger bond between them and abolish the stereotypes and negative vibes that are associated with the opposite culture (Ariss, 2014).

Effective communication does not only involve one party but it includes various parties engaged in communication in the form of two-way communication. Therefore, employees should be trained so that they are able to familiarize themselves with the communication styles used by their local or expatriate managers. In this case, exposure to cross cultural communication is essential. Cross-cultural programs may acculturate both parties to accept and value the cultural differences between the locals and expatriates (Zakaria, 2000). Training programs designed by the company should incorporate different cultural aspects in the communication process such as body language, intonation, explicit and implicit meanings of certain terms, time orientation and others so that messages transmitted during the communication process can be accurately translated by the recipients.

5.2   Suggestion for Future Research

The present study was conducted among employees in a manufacturing industry. Some factors unique to the industry might have affected the findings such as nature of work, structure of the organization, organizational culture, and others. The fact that most of the facets of MCS, which originated from the West failed to predict job satisfaction of employees under the supervision of expatriates as compared to the locals, reduce the literature gap pertaining to the MCS model. Notwithstanding, theoretical contribution still exists regardless as to whether a certain theory does or does not work under new settings, which necessitates remedial and alternative approaches in future research (Whetten, 1989). Although the generalization of the findings is possible, extra care should be exercised when interpreting the findings. To ensure the smooth transition from research to application, replication of this study with different subjects or industries is highly recommended. Besides, in the present study, the items used to measure job satisfaction includes both positively and negatively worded items. When factor analysed, two factors emerged indicating that positive and negative items tend to measure two distinct aspects. Therefore, researchers are suggested to use only positive or negative items to measure certain variables in order to avoid confusion among the respondents.

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