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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Understanding Supervisor's Crab Syndrome in the Private Security Sector: A Mediation Model

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Abstract

This research is based on the conservation of resources theory. It aims to examine the mediator role of relational energy in the effect of supervisor's crab syndrome on employee work effort. This research, focusing on the crab syndrome and relational energy, a new phenomenon in the literature, differs from other research in terms of the concepts it deals with. The design of the empirically designed research has been formed through the scanning model. The research sample consists of 221 private security employees reached by employing the convenient sampling method. The SmartPLS software has carried out the research's measurement and structural model tests. Reliability and validity tests have been performed in the measurement model, while research hypotheses have been tested to reveal causal relations in the structural model. According to the research results, it has been determined that relational energy has a mediator role in the effect of supervisor's crab syndrome on employee work effort. The contributions and limitations of the research have been discussed, and suggestions for future research are given.

Keywords

Conservation of Resources Theory, Supervisor's Crab Syndrome, Relational Energy, Work Effort, Mediator Effect

Introduction

The conservation of resources theory (COR) can reveal the behaviors of individuals towards their tendency to maintain their welfare. COR includes efforts to conserve what is available or achieve what is not (Hobfoll et al., 2018). All these efforts may have positive or negative reflections on the individuals who interact with one another or the work environment. There has been a significant increase in the number of studies examining the antecedents and subsequents of negative behaviors in organizations throughout recent years. The fact that "negative" behaviors become phenomena is due to the behaviors that are exhibited to retain power or lose power, that the practitioner, who takes reference from "moral licensing", does not consider objectionable (Jordan et al., 2011), that is condemned in terms of its consequences and creates victimization (Linstead et al., 2014; Schilpzand et al., 2016). Moral licensing

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provides the basis for the effort to retain resources to be considered “reasonable,” even if unethical (Jordan et al., 2011). Resource retention begins with the competition that pervades organizational life (Yip et al., 2018). Swab and Johnson (2019), who defined competition as a situation and preference issue arising from individual differences that shape interpersonal relationships, stated that competition had an interactional context within the triangle of process, personality, and situation. As a concept in which personality traits are examined, it is difficult to consider the crab syndrome independently of interpersonal relationships (Uzum et al., 2022). Uzum et al. (2022) presented empirical research results that grounded the crab syndrome in a social context through the visor of social comparison, and a psychological context as a type A-type B personality.

Although there are researchers who define the crab syndrome (Bulloch, 2013; DeGruy, 2003; McPhail, 2010; Özdemir and Üzümlü, 2019), psychology, sociology, anthropology, organizational behavior literature is encountered in which its structure is tried to be determined by phenomenological research (Miller, 2019), but empirical researches (Üzümlü and Özdemir, 2020; Uzum et al., 2022) are almost absent.

COR also has the power to illuminate positive business behaviors through leader-member relationships. Bilateral relationships between the leaders and the members are crucial mechanisms that affect the development of followers’ attitudes and behaviors (Cole et al., 2012). Owens et al. (2016) referred to the process of “transfer of emotions, thoughts, experiences”, in which such a mechanism is used based on individual relations, as relational energy. Although there are few studies in which leadership behaviors are considered with relational energy (Amah, 2018; Owens et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2018; Yang et al., 2019), it can be pointed out that certain unknowns, which have the potential to increase both organizational and individual resources, regarding relational energy, exist. It is possible to reach research results that indicate the evidence of the interaction between individual psychology and performance, in which leadership style is associated with individual psychology (Ployhart and Hare, 2014). However, it is seen that negative leadership behaviors adversely affect employees’ attitudes toward their work (Nasser et al., 2016), for instance, abusive supervision weakens work effort (Dedahanov et al., 2021), whereas low leader-member interaction leads to low work effort (Wheeler et al., 2012). Yeo and Neal (2004: 232) defined work effort as “the amount of resources spent on work”. Work effort covers the entire outcomes of employee attitude, behavior, and performance (Wheeler et al., 2012). Work effort aims to reach what is valued, it is motivated based on psychological need, and influenced by leader-member interaction (Vroom, 1964). It is seen that there are many points that need to be clarified regarding the concept of crab syndrome, a new phenomenon. From this point of view, the study aims to examine the effect of perceived supervisor crab syndrome on employees in the research. None of the research studies examining negative supervisor behaviors have addressed the supervisor’s crab syndrome and its outcomes. Moreover, identifying the antecedents of relational energy

and work effort and exploring the mediating role of relational energy in the relationship between supervisor crab syndrome and work effort constitute another aim of the research. This research study indicates the feature of being a pioneer in terms of the concepts it covers and makes inferences by revealing the relationship of the concepts which it points out.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

COR

People make efforts for surviving, achieving some things, be accepted by others, and feel psychologically comfortable. The efforts are focused on obtaining the “valuable one.” The COR theory gives the name “resources” to things that are considered valuable, however, they can be both a means and a purpose (Hobfoll and Ford, 2007). For example, making more money may be the ultimate goal while building a solid career can be the means to keep it going. The resources are divided into four categories by Hobfoll (2001a), regardless of considering whether used as a purpose or a means. Object resources are defined as physical property, such as a house or car. Status resources refer to the social conditions, such as marriage, and the resources that make situations, such as status and money, better. Personal resources include the ability to overcome stress and increase the resources or traits, such as self-esteem. Furthermore, information or social relations that can be used to obtain other resources can also be considered energy sources.

Life History Theory

Vital strategies are formed to keep welfare in balance. These strategies can be explained by the life history theory. Today's researchers make use of this theory to explain human behavior although it has come to the fore as a research topic in evolutionary biology (Griskevicius et al., 2011; Davis and Werre, 2008). The theory suggests that there is a need for a rapid survival strategy by increasing the probability of survival in the face of unpredictable living conditions (Brumbach et al., 2009). Rapid survival ensures the same amount of resources is shared among many individuals (Griskevicius et al., 2011). In other words, the amount of resources per person increases as the number of individuals decreases. The crab syndrome aims to increase the quality of life by eliminating competition and being willing to take a larger share of scarce resources (Üzüm et al., 2021).

Crab Syndrome

Crab syndrome is sociologically defined as the actions of white-skinned individuals to interfere with the achievement of black-skinned individuals (DeGruy, 2003). Hobfoll and Ford (2007) interpreted this situation as a cultural feature of COR. According to Bulloch (2013),

it is the mentality that forces everyone to keep them down by preventing them from reaching the top. McPhail (2010) summarized it as “wasting the oppressed groups or individuals”. It is possible to state that the essence of the notion is to eliminate competition and strengthen resource access by keeping others below. These are actions that ensure welfare is kept at a high level (Özdemir and Üzümlü, 2019; Üzümlü and Özdemir, 2022).

Relational Energy

Another assumption of the COR theory involves the usage of social networks to multiply energy resources. Social networks are used to strengthen motivating energy sources, such as acquiring and being accepted by the environment (Buchwals and Schwarzer, 2010). Relational energy serves this opinion, and it can be transmitted and multiplied through social relations. Relational energy, serving this view, can be transmitted and multiplied through social relationships. Amah (2018) asserted that relational energy, which he defined as an organizational resource, “can be increased by positive interactions among employees and used when desired” and it is transferred from the individuals who share it. Owens et al. (2016) defined this phenomenon as relational energy.

Work Effort

In line with the employment contract, it is expected that the employees will make efforts toward the organizational goals (Gould-Williams, 2004). In this context, the effort is considered as the power made for reaching the “goal”. Work effort can be defined as the effort made by the employee in the organizational environment (Trendowicz and Ross, 2014) and the increase in resources by exerting more effort than expected (Behling and Starke, 1973). Productivity, which is an indication of strengthening work effort, increases with the provision of skills and functional effectiveness (Green, 2004). Performance can be improved by providing optimal skill and motivation, and performance is positively associated with work effort (Vroom, 1994; Wheeler et al., 2012).

Hypothesis Development

Crab syndrome feeds on emotions such as jealousy, fear, and anxiety (Soubhari and Kumar, 2014), and these emotions belong to human nature. Whether it is an employee or a supervisor, the crab syndrome may not distinguish among positions. The stress caused by the loss of resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018) may be transformed into a structure that desires to sabotage others’ success by predicting being unrivaled (Özdemir and Üzümlü, 2019). According to crab syndrome, the supervisor may aim to maintain his/her superiority in this manner by wishing to keep organizational resources in his/her own hands. In this regard, the supervisor may wish to collect the praise by emphasizing that he/she is the source of success. He/she may consider the employees as competitors in the future.

Swab and Johnson (2019) stated that competition feeds on relational dynamics and affects them. Propagation of resources may be possible with the effective use of interpersonal relationships (Cole et al., 2012). The more positive the leader-member interaction, the stronger the energy level of the employees (Atwater and Carmeli, 2009). It is stated that destructive leadership, which acts towards establishing superiority and holding power, and increasing personal resources, harms organizational outputs (Schyns and Hansbrough, 2010). While the negative behaviors of the supervisor create a high level of negativity in the employees, they reduce the energies of the employees (Giunetti et al., 2013). It can be claimed that the crab syndrome, which can be considered one of the adverse supervisor behaviors, would also decrease relational energy. The hypothesis based on this assumption is presented below:

H₁: Supervisor's crab syndrome negatively affects relational energy.

It is seen that leadership styles affect both individual and organizational outputs. For instance, transformational leadership appears to improve employee performance (Wang et al., 2011), whereas trust in the leader enhances employee performance and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Legood et al., 2021). It is stated that the negative qualities of the leader inhibit the role performances, creativity, and OCBs of the employees (Naseer et al., 2016), and create a lower level of task performance (Xu et al., 2012) as a result of the interpersonal relationships (Lian et al., 2012; Kernan et al., 2011) that deal with low-level leader-member interaction. Work effort, as an output that can be managed by a leader or manager (Kmec and Gorman, 2010), corresponds to work engagement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017) and increased well-being (Brissette et al., 2002) when managed correctly. Otherwise, if supervisor behaviors are perceived differently by employees, it would be a waste of effort to expect positive outputs. For example, an abusive supervisor leads to both low performance (Harris et al., 2007) and low work effort (Dedahanov et al., 2021). However, the employees may exhibit withdrawal behavior to put an end to this situation if they think that they consume more resources emotionally or physically for the sake of earning (Hobfoll, 1989). Employees can consciously reduce their performance and work efforts (Anjum et al., 2021), and kill the time they spend at work outside of work productivity in order to minimize the loss of resources (Pearson et al., 2000). It is inevitable to experience a decrease in productivity, owing to the withdrawal behavior of the employees (Tepper et al., 2017). The hypothesis developed in this regard is given below:

H₂: Supervisor's crab syndrome negatively affects employees' work effort.

People focus on experiencing positive emotions, such as being happy and satisfied. Acting in line with this goal requires her or him to have control over her or his life and enables her or him to establish useful relations (Huppert, 2009).

COR predicts that resources can be enhanced through social ties and relationships (Buchwals and Schwarzer, 2010). In this way, while the energy caused by social relations is inc-

reased to experience positive emotions (Amah, 2016), the energy in the organization is also increased (Enhratd, 2014). Obtaining positive experiences is effective in exhibiting positive behaviors (Owens et al., 2016). Employees with high relational energy levels have a stronger desire to achieve organizational goals and job satisfaction (Cole et al., 2012). The leader should act in a way that improves the attitudes and behaviors of the followers in bilateral relationships (Sue-Chan et al., 2011). Positive relationships with the leader increase the energies of the employees (Atwater and Carmeli, 2009), and this impact manifests itself in employees' performance (Owens et al., 2016). It is known that relational energy is affected by the sense of trust, and when the relationship between them is positive, employees exhibit higher service performance (Fan et al., 2021). In fact, it can be claimed that relational energy affects the well-being of customers in service creation, in short, it enhances the welfare of all stakeholders (Shulga et al., 2022). Relational energy may become a source of motivation for employees to increase their resources based on human relationships that provide resource increase and shapes the work output of the employee (Xiao et al., 2020). Leader behavior that supports resource gain (relational energy) is expected to enhance work effort. The hypothesis developed in this regard is as follows:

H₃: Relational energy positively affects employees' work efforts.

The Mediating Role of Relational Energy

Although it is well-known that leader and member relationships affect the development of employees' attitudes and behaviors (Cole et al., 2012), the leader assumes an energizing role (relational energy) in these relationships and plays a strengthening role in employee performance (Owens et al., 2016), however, it seems that the mediating effect has not been tested much. Yang et al. (2019) stated that spiritual leadership enhances job performance and relational energy assumes a mediator role in this relationship. In compliance with the findings of researchers who stated that relational energy was closely associated with leadership (Baker, 2019), and that relational energy led to positive results (Cole et al., 2012; Owens et al., 2016; Amah, 2018; Wang et al., 2018), it is assumed that energy can play a mediating role between supervisor's crab syndrome and work effort. Sharing experiences may mitigate negative impact, whereas giving the other individual the opportunity to experience a situation with empathy and make inferences regarding how to behave upon encountering a similar situation (Baker, 2019). Individuals attain resource gains by using the relational energy source without consuming their own personal resources (Hobfoll, 2001a). As a result, even one's negative experience may lead to positive gains for another. As such, relational energy may create a force that can counteract the negative feedback of work effort toward the supervisor's crab syndrome.

H₄: Relational energy has a mediator role in the relationship between the supervisor's crab syndrome and the work effort of the employee.

Methodology

This research is empirical, and its design is formed by considering the scanning model. The SmartPLS program was used in the measurement and structural model tests of the research since the data distribution of the research was not normal (Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk; $p < .05$) (Hair et al., 2017). In this part, there were the universe in which the research was conducted and the sampling, the data collection tools used, the characteristics of these tools, and the analysis of the data collected during the research.

Sample and Procedure

The universe of the research consists of the non-management personnel in the private security sector in Bursa, and the sample comprises the participants selected by the convenience sampling method in this sector. This research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Kocaeli University of Social Sciences with code of ethics 2022/04.

The data for the research studies were obtained by the questionnaire method, and it consists of two parts. There are questions about the demographic (gender, marital status, education level, age, and experience) data of the employees in the first part. There are scales whose reliability and validity were tested in order to measure the variables in the research model (supervisor's crab syndrome, relational energy, and work effort) in the second part.

The questionnaire used in the research was created via Google Forms and delivered to private security officers through companies operating in the sector. Research data were collected between 03-31 March 2022 by an online survey method. During the data control and purging phase, it was observed that 221 data were suitable for analysis since 19 participants did not answer the attention questions correctly. The sample size was determined as ten times the number of items in the scale (Bryman and Cramer, 2001; Hair et al., 2014). In line with this information, it was evaluated that the 221 data obtained would be sufficient to reveal the relations between the variables and to test the hypotheses.

It is seen that 86% of the participants are male, 13% are female, 72% are married, and 27% are single when the demographic characteristics of the participants are considered. Also, 62% of them are high school graduates while 36% are associate degree graduates. The average age is 37.10, and the average professional experience is 15.75.

Measures

The scales of the variables in this research were formed through the statements that led to multiple-choice answers. Participants were asked to respond to each of the fourteen statements formed with a 5-point Likert-type scale as "1=Strongly Disagree" and "5=Strongly

Agree”. It is obligatory to answer all questions in the survey form created via Google Forms in order to prevent data loss.

Supervisor’s Crab Syndrome: The supervisor’s crab syndrome scale, which was developed by Üzüm and Özdemir (2020), consists of five items, and a single factor was used. The participants were asked to evaluate their supervisors based on the statements in the scale. A sample item is “Employees outstripping him/her frightens my leader.”

Relational Energy: The scale, which was developed by Owens et al. (2016) and was adapted into Turkish by Özkan and Üzüm (2022), was preferred in determining the relational energy levels. The scale consists of five items and a single factor. A sample item is “I feel invigorated when I interact with my supervisor.”

Work Effort: The five-stage technique, which was introduced by Brislin (1980), benefited the translation process of the scale. The work effort scale, which was developed by Zhang et al. (2020), was used. It consists of four items and a single factor. The participants were asked to evaluate themselves based on the statements in the scale. A sample item is “I try to work as hard as possible.”

Control Variables: The selection of control variables is an important consideration in the development of the research model (Bono and McNamara, 2011). Demographic variables, which were thought to be related to work effort, and were the result variable of the research, were used as control variables in this research. However, the effects of these variables could not be controlled since they did not exhibit a significant relationship with the outcome variable.

Findings

The mean, standard deviation, and correlation values for the variables of the research were presented in Table 1.

Table 1
The Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation Values

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Supervisor’s Crab Syndrome	2.52	0.94	1		
2. Relational Energy	3.28	1.25	-.44**	1	
3. Work Effort	3.37	1.06	-.40**	.78**	1

Note: n = 221; **p<.01; SD = Standard Deviation

According to the findings, there are negative and significant relations between supervisor’s crab syndrome, relational energy, and work effort. On the other hand, there is a positive relationship between relational energy and work effort.

Measurement Model

The measurement model consists of three latent variables and fourteen indicators of these variables. Reliability and validity analyses of the structures in the model were conducted before testing the hypotheses of the research. Within the scope of reliability and validity, the internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were evaluated, and the results are given in Table 2.

Table 2
Reliability and Validity Findings of the Measurement Model

Structures	Item	Factor Load	Cronbach's Alpha	CR – AVE
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome	SCS1	.92	.95	(.95) - (.84) (CR>AVE)
	SCS2	.89		
	SCS3	.94		
	SCS4	.89		
Relational Energy	RE1	.93	.96	(.96) - (.84) (CR>AVE)
	RE2	.94		
	RE3	.91		
	RE4	.89		
	RE5	.91		
Work Effort	WE1	.94	.92	(.92) - (.75) (CR>AVE)
	WE2	.87		
	WE3	.86		
	WE4	.78		
Fornell-Larcker Criterion				
	Supervisor's Crab Syndrome	Relational Energy	Work Effort	
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome	(.91)	-	-	
Relational Energy	-.43	(.92)	-	
Work Effort	-.41	.83	(.86)	
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio Criterion				
	Supervisor's Crab Syndrome	Relational Energy	Work Effort	
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome	-	-	-	
Relational Energy	.43	-	-	
Work Effort	.41	.83	-	

Note: CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted

Hair et al. (2017) stated that the Composite Reliability (CR) or Average Variance Extracted (AVE) coefficients of items with factor loading values between .40 and .70 should be

examined, and if they are below the threshold values, these items should be removed from the measurement model. Therefore, the 5th item was removed from the supervisor's crab syndrome scale in the measurement model, as a result of the analyses. It was seen that the lowest factor load value was .78, the lowest AVE value was .75, the lowest CR value was .92 and the lowest Cronbach Alpha value was .92 in Table 2 after subtraction. Within the scope of these values, it can be said that the internal consistency and convergent validity of the supervisor's crab syndrome, relational energy, and work effort scales are ensured (Hair et al., 2011; Hair et al., 2019).

The criterion suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and the criterion of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) proposed by Henseler et al. (2015) were used for cross-loading in determining the discriminant validity. It was observed that there was no overlap between the items measuring the research variables when cross loading table was checked out. According to the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion, the square root of the AVE values of the structures in the research should be higher than the correlation coefficients between the structures in the research. It is seen that the square root of the AVE value of each structure is higher than the correlation coefficients with other structures when the values in Table 2 are examined. However, the fact that the HTMT coefficients are below the limit value ($<.90$) indicates that the structures are separate factors from each other (Henseler et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2019).

Structural Model

The results of the structural model performed with the help of the SmartPLS software are shown in Table 3 following the measurement model of the research.

Table 3
Values of the Structural Model

Model Summary	R²	Q²	f²	VIF
Relational Energy	.18	.14	-	-
Work Effort	.69	.49	-	-
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome → Relational Energy	-	-	0.22	1.00
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome → Work Effort	-	-	0.01	1.22
Relational Energy → Work Effort	-	-	1.73	1.22
Total Effect	β	Std. Dev.	t-value	p-value
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome → Work Effort	-.41	0.06	6.35	***
Direct Effect	β	Std. Dev.	t-value	p-value
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome → Relational Energy	-.43	0.06	6.75	***
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome → Work Effort	-.06	0.05	1.06	.288
Relational Energy → Work Effort	.80	0.03	25.28	***
Indirect Effect	β	CI (95%)	Result	
Supervisor's Crab Syndrome → Relational Energy → Work Effort	-.34	(-.454; -.238)	Accept	

Note: ***p<.001; R² = Explained Variance; Q² = Predictive Relevance; f² = Effect Size; VIF = Variance Inflation Factor; CI = Confidence Interval; Coefficients are standardized (β)

It is thought that there is no linearity problem between the structures since the VIF coefficients are below the threshold value of 5 (Hair et al., 2014). It is understood that the supervisor's crab syndrome has a medium size impact on relational energy while it has a high size impact on relational energy work effort when the effect size coefficients (f^2) are examined (Cohen, 1988). The Q^2 coefficients calculated for the endogenous variables are greater than zero, and thus it can be said that the relevant variables have predictive power (Chin, 1998). It is seen that the exogenous variable explains the relational energy is 18% and the work effort is 69% when the R^2 values in the table are taken into consideration.

The relational energy variable, which is the mediator variable, was removed from the research model, and the significance of the path coefficients was tested in order to investigate the mediator effect in the first step. As a result of the analysis, the effect of supervisor's crab syndrome on work effort (H_2) was found to be significant ($\beta = -.41$; $p < .001$).

The mediator variable was included in the model, and the significance of the path coefficients was evaluated in the second stage. As a result of the analysis, it was detected that the effect of supervisor's crab syndrome on relational energy (H_1) was significant ($\beta = -.41$; $p < .001$), and the effect of relational energy on work effort (H_3) was significant ($\beta = .80$; $p < .001$).

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), firstly, the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables must be significant to mention a mediator effect. Moreover, the effects of independent variables on mediating variables and mediating variables on dependent variables should be significant when mediator variables are included in the model.

Accordingly, it can be said that there is a mediator effect since the work effort of the supervisor's crab syndrome is significant in the model without the mediator variable, the relational energy of the supervisor's crab syndrome in the model with the mediator variable and relational energy has significant effects on work effort. The significance of the indirect effect should be tested through the "Sobel" test after detecting the mediator effect, however, the bootstrap confidence interval method was used, instead of the "Sobel" test in the research, due to the fact that the distribution of the indirect effect is often not normal (Stone, 1990) and the criticisms, such as the low reliability of this test (MacKinnon et al., 2004; Preacher and Hayes, 2008). It can be said that the indirect effect is significant since the calculated confidence interval values do not include a zero (0) value (MacKinnon et al., 2004).

The Variance Accounted For (VAF) value suggested by Hair et al. (2017) was used to analyze the feature of the mediator effect. The size of the VAF value helps determine whether the mediator effect is the partial or full mediator. According to Hair et al. (2017), if VAF is $> 80\%$, there is a full mediator effect while if VAF is between 20% and 80% , there is a partial mediator effect. However, if VAF is $< 20\%$, there is no mediator effect. In the research model, VAF is calculated to be 82% in the Supervisor's Crab Syndrome \rightarrow Relational Energy \rightarrow Work Effort path where the indirect effect was significant. This result showed that relational

energy has a full mediator role in the relationship between the supervisor’s crab syndrome and work effort. This finding supported Hypothesis 4 of the research.

It was detected that the change of the supervisor’s crab syndrome in work effort was to be 16% while the independent and mediator variable explained in the mediated model was 69% when the R² values of the tested models were taken into consideration. This increase in R² (53%) indicates the presence of a mediator effect in the mediational model.

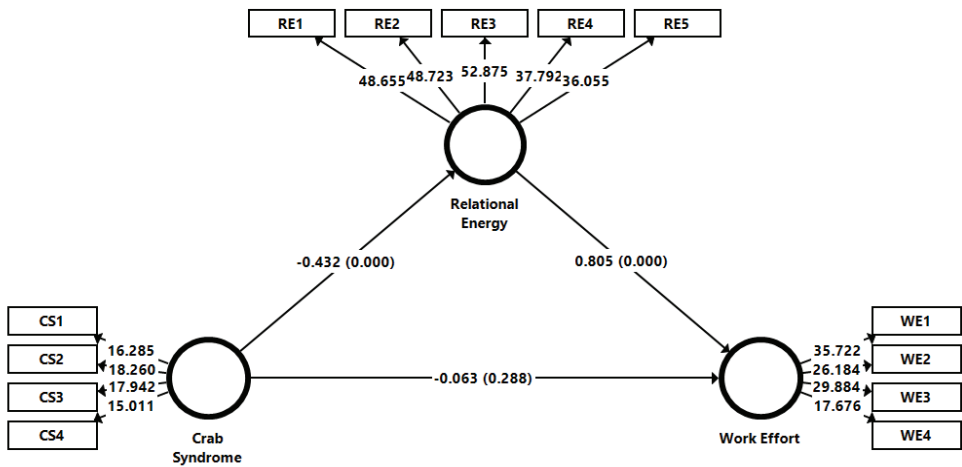


Figure 1. Structural model and coefficients

Discussion

Both supervisor and subordinate develop behavioral strategies focused on maintaining and expanding their resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018). In this research study, it is revealed that the extent to which the leader, on the one hand, motivates his/her followers for positive behaviors, on the other hand, can disrupt the working atmosphere due to the predominance of his/her own personal ambitions. Taylor et al. (2012) reported that incivility behaviors in the workplace reduced the emotional commitment of employees and led to avoidance of extra-role behaviors. Another deduction of the research is that supervisor’s crab syndrome reduces work effort. A conclusion in line with the negative supervisor behavior literature (Harris et al., 2007; Dedahanov et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2012) is drawn. Behavioral strategies, which are built to increase positive emotions in human nature (Huppert, 2009), are transformed into relational energy that will ensure happiness and satisfaction through social interaction (Enhardt,

2014; Amah, 2016). It has been determined that subordinates get higher energy from their interactions with the supervisor who exhibits positive behavior and are more focused on their work (Giumetti et al., 2013). A similar deduction is made by Kjelberg et al. (2010), and it was found that energy reduced the stress level to a reasonable level. In this research study, it is determined that relational energy contributed to the increase of resources and increased work effort, and it is seen that it supported the previous research results. Tummers and Bakker (2021) emphasized that the leader assumes a crucial role in enhancing employee efforts to conserve resources. It was also argued that energy is affected by leader behaviors and the environment (Bedawy, 2015). As a result of this research, it is seen that relational energy supports the conservation of personal resources (Hobfoll, 2001b). Yang et al.'s (2019) perceived quality leadership behaviors enhance performance and it is stated that relational energy mediates this relationship. Another finding of this research is that relational energy has a mediator role in the impact of supervisor behaviors on employee work effort. As the final result of this research, it is proven that the supervisor's crab syndrome reduces the relational energy and work effort of the subordinates, but the relational energy takes the current situation to another level.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

With this research, a model, which integrates relational energy into the impact of supervisor's crab syndrome on work effort, and explains these relations, is tested. Upon considering the concepts it examines, this study makes important contributions to the crab syndrome and relational energy literature. The first contribution of the research is the investigation of the crab syndrome from the scope of the supervisor, which has quite a limited empirical research scope. The second contribution involves the fact that the crab syndrome appears to be one of the antecedents of relational energy. The third contribution is to determine relational energy as the antecedent of work effort, whereas the fourth contribution is to explain the relationship between crab syndrome and work effort through relational energy. Especially by illuminating the unknowns about the crab syndrome, the scope of the unknown regarding the mediating role of relational energy is broadened. The relationship between the variables that are the subjects of the research could be supported by the COR.

Practical Implications

It is stated that well-being and high self-esteem have a negative impact on crab syndrome (Üzüm et al., 2021; Uzum et al., 2022). Crab syndrome has the potential of causing the encounter with negative outcomes. Therefore, the crab syndrome has the ability to cause confrontation with negative outcomes. It is possible to express that it creates a negative change in the quality of the person's relationship with her or his environment and in the business life of

the individuals she or he keeps in her or his target. For this purpose, it is also recommended that human resources provide psychological support to each individual affected by the stated results, regardless of employee or supervisor.

Ployhart and Donald (2014) stated that exploring the world of organizational behavior offers a competitive advantage and strategic opportunity. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, common use of resources should be encouraged by dispersing competition from individual to the group, conflict becomes inevitable when competition remains individual-based, and performance can be enhanced when remains team-based (Swab and Johnson, 2019). It is also thought that the crab syndrome may promote positive outcomes in the organizational atmosphere, with the researchers' emphasis on "sharpening the steel with steel". It is recommended that human resources management develops programs that can identify employees with the crab syndrome mentality and manage them to their goals.

Kim et al. (2020) expressed that business efforts could change direction on the axis of satisfaction, and negatively affected psychology caused a cost burden. In this regard, human resources practices that would encourage the establishment of better quality social relationships (relational energy) between managers and subordinates can be put into effect. Moreover, reminder policies can be conducted to balance individual and organizational resource acquisition as well as retaining individual resources. It is stated that competition is motivating for success and performance (Yip et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the supervisor's view of the employees as his/her competitors may prevent him/her from raising potential candidates for success in the future. This may be caused by the supervisor having the power to access and allocate organizational resources (Yang et al., 2019). Therefore, it is recommended that the supervisor should supervise himself/herself and be supervised by employees or customers (Harris et al., 2007).

Limitations and Suggestions

This research, which was designed to evaluate the supervisor's crab syndrome, was performed on employee perceptions. Research data were obtained cross-sectionally from a single source. Obtaining data from different sources (leader-customer-colleagues etc.) at certain time intervals and from a larger sample group would render the research results more reliable. The scope of the research is limited to the concepts of supervisor's crab syndrome, work effort, and relational energy. Besides work effort, multiple behavioral outcomes, such as organizational citizenship, work stress, intention to leave, and organizational commitment can also be examined for future research studies. Whether supervisor's crab syndrome differs across cultures can also be examined in a cultural context. Practices in enterprises with less hierarchical levels may provide a better understanding of the crab syndrome, which prioritizes the competitive factor. The research study is conducted in the service sector (private security). It

takes its place in the literature as a rare empirical example that reveals the supervisor-member interaction on the basis of the sector to which the sample is subject (Scheerlinck et al., 2020). Nonetheless, each sector has its own specific characteristics. It is thought that crab syndrome in the production sector, R&D, or informatics sector would lead the individual to better results. It is recommended to examine the supervisor's crab syndrome in an intergroup manner, and it is thought that it would strengthen teamwork and motivate collective work as well as reach a common goal in intergroup competition (Swap and Johnson, 2019).

Conclusion

This research study, based on COR and supported by the life history theory, defines the relationship between the supervisor's crab syndrome and work effort along with the mediator role of relational energy. Economic uncertainty and competition also reveal themselves in business life (Chen and Yang, 2012). Crab syndrome is a response to the conservation of resources (Uzum et al., 2022). Competition-oriented vital and organizational conditions in the 21st century have started to take people under the influence of the crab syndrome.

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