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Effect of perceived supervisor support and social support on employees work engagement: how career optimism mediates the relationships

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Abstract: This empirical study examined the effect of perceived supervisor support (PSS) and social support (SS) on the employees work engagement (WE) in the energy sector of Thailand with a particular focus on mediating effect of career optimism (CO). The data was collected from 253 respondents working in the energy sector of Thailand. The results revealed that PSS has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.109, p < 0.01$), SS has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.158, p < 0.01$) and CO has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.536, p < 0.01$). As to the mediating effect of CO, the results indicated that CO is a significant mediator of the effect of PSS ($\beta = 0.081, p < 0.01$) and SS ($\beta = 0.057, p < 0.01$) on WE.

Keywords: supervisor support; social support; work engagement; career optimism; Thailand; perceived supervisor support; PSS; structural equation model; SEM.

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Biographical notes: William Philip Wall has received his Master's in English for International Communication and Doctorate in Management Science with concentrations in strategic management and global competitive advantage. He has lectured at numerous universities around the world including UAE, Myanmar, Thailand and the USA.

1 Introduction

In the current fiercely competitive and technologically advanced business environment, employees are regarded as the biggest asset of an organisation. Employees work engagement (WE) is a critical aspect of consideration for every business, as far as its performance, competition, profitability, and growth is concerned. WE implies the positive psychological behaviour or state of mind of employees at work, which results to positive work-related outcomes (Schaufeli, 2013). Inferring from Tuzun and Devrani (2011), this psychotically connection of employees to their work has increasingly gained importance in the 21st century. Managers, human resources specialists, scholars and

practitioners have shown notable interest in WE because of perceived positive relation which it has with job performance, employee's behaviour, work satisfaction as well as career satisfaction (Runhaar et al., 2013; Babcock-Roberson and Strickland, 2010; Lu et al., 2016; Joo and Lee, 2017). Experts recognise the employees positive WE leads to increased productivity and reduced operational costs (Swanberg et al., 2011). WE reflects a positive mood, which is characterised by the aspects of commitment, dedication, and motivation of employees towards achievement of their work tasks. As a result, their work leads to productivity, profitability, and increased customer satisfaction (Swanberg et al., 2011). According to Garg and Lal (2015), WE is influenced and subject to other factors, both internal and external to the organisation which an employee is working. Among these factors include perceived organisational support, perceived supervisor support (PSS), social support (SS), and career optimism (CO) (Joseph, 2016; Saks and Gruman, 2017).

Supervisor's support is considered as the perception of employees regarding their support, encouragement, concern and individual attention (Eisenberger et al., 2016; Guchait et al. (2014). Perceived SS is considered as the extent to which the employees feel that their supervisor value their well-being, social life, and assistance thereof (Cole et al., 2006; Eisenberger et al., 2002). CO has been considered to have a significant relationship between SS, PSS, and work performance. It has been theorised that, generally, optimists are more socially attractive than pessimists, and consequently are more likely to be integrated into supportive social networks, and to receive favourable responses from their social environment like workplace (Scheier and Carver, 1987). Various studies have shown a positive relationship between optimism and perceived SS, such as the availability of helping others (Trunzo and Pinto, 2003), and received SS, such as the frequency of helpful interactions (Aspinwall and Taylor, 1992). The aspect of WE and its associated influencing factors are important to any economic sector. There are various studies that have investigated the effect of PSS and SS on employees WE (Javed et al., 2015); however, there is insignificant literature available to ascertain the mediation effect of CO on PSS and SS on employee WE in Thailand's Energy Sector. Hence, this research will bridge the gap by investigating the moderating role of CO on effect of PSS and SS on employees WE from Thailand's context.

2 Literature review and hypothesis development

2.1 Supervisor and SSs, CO and WE

According to Eisenberger et al. (2002), the PSS is employees' overall perception about the level to which their supervisors work and superiors consider and value their input and contribution as well as their well-being. The organisational support theory indicates that perceived supervisors support has a significant effect on the employees' level off commitment, as it defines the views of the regarding how their supervisors' value their contributions and care about their well-being. It could be described based on point of view of social exchange (SE) theory, which posits that employees who are well taken care by their superiors and supervisors would react more appreciably and positively to their work and directives of their superiors or supervisors (Blau, 1986). Since supervisors are personnel and agents of the firm, employee's perception of high levels of support from supervisors would trigger positive returns and positive work attitudes to the firm

(Pattnaik and Ponda, 2020; Rafiq et al., 2020). Empirical works have revealed that employees with a high perception of support from their supervisor and superiors are highly involved and motivated in their work (Ibrahim et al., 2019; Suan and Mohd Nasurdin, 2016; Swanberg et al., 2011). Positive perceived supervisors support led to high commitment of the employees, increased job satisfaction and motivation (Christian et al., 2011). Based on the review of literature, the first hypothesis of this study is as follow:

H1 Perceived supervisors support has a significant and positive effect on employees WE.

SS is considered an important resource by the human resource professionals towards the worker. It is defined as the social climate which defined the relationship between the employees and their supervisors and co-worker. In attempts to conceptualise the construct of SS from different perspectives, Dean and Lin (1977) consider SS as functions of primary groups that meet instrumental and expressive needs. Lin et al. (1979) later reconstruct SS at multiple levels of social networks as support that is accessible to an individual through social ties to other individuals, groups, and the larger community. Cobb (1976) conceives of SS as information and classifies three types of information that constitute SS as information leading a person to believe that he or she is cared for and loved. Studies has shown that SS significantly influences employee behaviours in an organisation, such as their job attitudes, organisational loyalty, voluntary turnover, tardiness, organisational commitment, which in turn influences the overall performance of the company (Eder and Eisenberger, 2007). This leads to the second hypothesis of the study:

H2 SS has a significant and positive effect on employees WE.

CO is the personal or individual belief that their aspirations as concerned their career could be followed effectively. Previous works did not pay notable attention to mediating influence of career-associated self-efficacy in the connection between WE and perceived support of a supervisor. Thus, career-associated self-efficacy is considered as underlying mechanisms which could describe and explain possible connections between work involvement and perceived support of a supervisor. In fact, CO mediates the personality of an individual which is both influenced by supervisor supports and SS s such as peer influence (McIlveen and Perera, 2016). In a collectivist culture like in Thailand, individual CO can influence the effects of the SSs on WE. Thus, this current work intended to fill this research gap by examining the mediating influence of career-associated self-efficacy in the connection between work involvement and perceived support of supervisor (Fontaine and Seal, 1997). This review of literature leads to develop the third and fourth hypothesis of the study:

H3 CO significantly moderates the relationship between PSSs and employees WE.

H4 CO significantly moderates the relationship between SS and employees WE.

CO plays an important role on employee's level of WE. There are many factors that influence the CO such as personality, individual psychological factor and career aspirations of the employees, when an employee is optimistic about his/her career upliftment through the different ladders based on the fairness of evaluation and a clear roadmap, he/she might be more engaged in his/her work than if there is no clear roadmap

of career improvement in an organisation. Many studies have demonstrated that the positive aspirations influence individual performance to pursue opportunities (Lent and Brown, 2019). Based on the research on social psychology, career aspirations are considered as reflection of self-efficacy and factors that contribute to higher motivation and career development (Kelidbari et al., 2016). Based on the literature, we propose the following hypothesis:

H5 CO has a significant and positive effect on employees WE.

According to Schaufeli et al. (2006), WE is a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterised by vigour (elevated levels of energy and resilience at work), dedication (deep involvement in one's work as well as a sense of significance and enthusiasm), and absorption (feeling of being completely concentrated and comfortably engrossed on one's work). Several empirical works have revealed that the perceived support of a supervisor has a notable influencer on employee's job engagement (Ibrahim et al., 2019; Pattnaik and Panda, 2020; Swanberg et al., 2011). Employees who are engaged to their tasks usually consider their work to be meaningful and are determined to work hard to achieve the objectives sets for their jobs. Research has also confirmed that high WE led to increased financial performance, customer satisfaction, enhanced job performance, which contributes to overall growth of organisations (Bakker et al., 2008; Burke et al., 1992; Kim et al., 2009).

2.2 *Conceptual framework*

Based on the above literature review, and the hypothesis developed, the conceptual framework of the study was developed and graphically illustrated in Figure 1.

2.3 *Research methodology*

The data were collected using the convenience sampling technique from ten different energy companies of Thailand. In the process of data collection, a total of 450 questionnaires were distributed to the sample respondents. From the samples, 291 questionnaires were filled and returned. The data were collected between 15 August 2020 and 1 February 2021. After data collection, the missing values and outliers were removed, and a total 253 valid responses were considering suitable to use in the research study.

The questionnaire was composed of five sections. The first section was composed of 'demographic' questions such as age, gender, marital status, etc. The second section had 'PSS' questions using five-point (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) Likert scale adopted from (Burns, 2016). The third section contained questions on 'SS' using five-point (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) adopted from Aliu et al. (2016). The fourth section had the questions regarding the moderating variable 'CO' which was measured using a five-item scale designed by Rottinghaus (2004). The last section had questions regarding the dependent factor 'WE' which was captured by a modified short version of the nine-item WE scale designed by Schaufeli et al. (2003).

The data analysis was conducted using several techniques. The first technique involved descriptive statistics of the respondent's demographics. The data suitability for analysis was assessed using reliability, validity, and correlation analysis. Structural

equation model (SEM) was carried out to evaluate the research hypothesis using SPSS and AMOS Version 26.2.2.

Figure 1 Conceptual framework (see online version for colours)

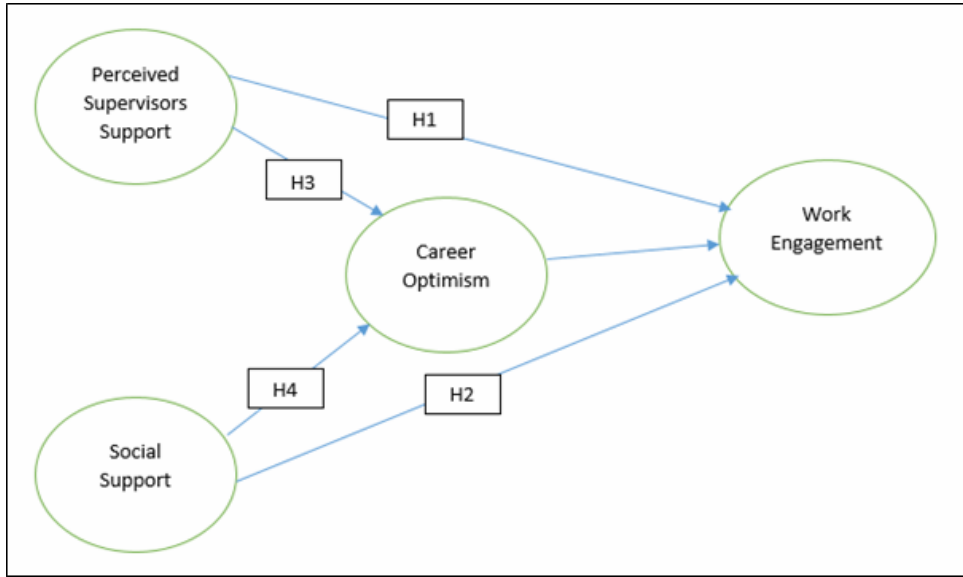


Table 1 Scales used in the research study

<i>Scale</i>	<i>Researchers</i>	<i>Number of items</i>
Perceived supervisor support	Burns (2016)	5
Social support	Aliu et al. (2016)	5
Career optimism	Rottinghaus (2004)	5
Work engagement	Schaufeli et al. (2003)	9

3 Research findings

3.1 Descriptive analysis

From Table 2, the sample respondents used in this study had 218 (86.17%) males and 35 (13.83%) females. In terms of age, 71 (28.06 %) were within age 18 to 25 years, 146 (57.72 %) were within age 26 to 40 while 36 (14.25%) were within age 41 and above. In terms of literacy level, 65 (25.69%) were high school certificate holder, 159 (62.84%) were bachelor's degree holder while 29 (11.46%) were master's degree holders, finally, in terms of work duration, 76 (30.04) have worked between 1 to 5 years, 121 (47.83%) have worked for 6 to 10 years while 56 (22.13%) have worked for 11 years and above.

Table 2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

		<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Gender	Male	218	86.17
	Female	35	13.83
Age	18–25	71	28.06
	26–40	146	57.71
	41-above	36	14.25
Education level	High school	65	25.69
	Bachelor's degree	159	62.84
	Master's degree	29	11.46
Work duration	1–5	76	30.04
	6–10	121	47.83
	11-above	56	22.13
Total		253	100

3.2 Common method variance

To control or handle variance of common method, Harman single-factor test was adopted from Podsakoff and Organ (1986). For variance of common method to occur, the one-factor structure must occur, or the first factor obtained must constitute a notable part of the entire variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Un-rotated exploratory element analysis showed that first-factor captured 39.3% of the entire variance and since the first factor captured less than 50% of the total variance, it was concluded that the variance of common method is not a problem.

3.3 Model evaluation

To evaluate the suitability of the model, several tests were conducted as illustrated in this section. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was adopted to ascertain whether the model was suitable to conduct SEM analysis. Fit indices that were employed to show the adequacy of developed mode based on CMIN/df, comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (IFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and standardised root mean square residual (SRMR). The standard regression coefficients for the variables are higher than 0.50. The result of the CFA is presented in Table 3 and discussed in the section below.

Table 3 Measurement model – factor loadings

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Range of factor loadings</i>
Perceived supervisor support	0.56–0.82
Social support	0.64–0.77
Career optimism	0.68–0.79
Work engagement	0.73–0.89

Note: $CMIN/df = 478.239/204 = 2.34$, $p < 0.01$, IFI = 0.91; TLI = 0.91; CFI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.079; SRMR = 0.07.

According to Hair et al. (2010), the acceptable fit model must possess CFI, IFI, and TLI values higher than 0.90, RMSEA less than 0.08 and SRMR less than 0.09. From the results presented above, the proposed model displayed a good fit (CMIN/df = 478.239/204 = 2.34, $p < 0.01$; IFI = 0.91; TLI = 0.91; CFI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.079; SRMR=0.07). Factor loadings of PSS ranged between 0.56 and 0.82; factor loading for SS ranged between 0.64 and 0.77; factor loadings of CO ranged between 0.68 and 0.79; and factor loadings for WE ranged between 0.73 and 0.89. Moreover, t values were greater than 1.96 ($p < 0.01$) (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004). These results indicated that the model was suitable to conduct SEM analysis.

The reliability of the constructs was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR). The results of the reliability analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Reliability and validity

	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	<i>Composite reliability</i>
1	CO	0.82	0.82
2	WE	0.84	0.84
3	SS	0.93	0.93
4	PSS	0.84	0.84

Note: CO = Career optimism, SS = Social support, PSS = Perceived support of supervisors, WE = Work engagement.

Table 5 Means, SD, CR, AVE and correlations among study variables

	<i>Variables</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD.</i>	<i>AVE</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
1	CO	2.86	0.88	0.57	(0.68)		
2	WE	2.61	0.76	0.51	(0.70)		
3	SS	2.56	1.34	0.72	0.24*	0.33*	(0.73)
4	PSS	2.61	0.76	0.51	0.27*	0.37*	(0.86)

Note: $n = 253$, $*p < 0.01$, CO = Career optimism, SS = Social support, PSS = Perceived supervisor support, WE = Work engagement, M = Mean, SD. = Standard deviations; AVE: average variance extracted, values in parentheses on the diagonal are the square roots of the AVE of each scale.

According to Hair et al. (2010), critical value for CR must be greater than or equal to 0.70. Based on the findings presented in Table 4, the CR is between 0.82 and 0.93; hence meet the Hair et al. (2010) threshold. The values of CA are all above 0.8 hence are all strong. The results indicate that the reliability of the constructs in the data is satisfactory. The validity of the model was evaluated using average variance extracted (AVE) and the correlation analysis, and the results are presented in Table 5.

The results presented above revealed that PSS was significantly and positively correlated with CO with an R-value of 0.27 and p-value 0.01, and positively and appreciably correlate with WE with an R-value of 0.37, and p-value of 0.01. It was also revealed that SS was significantly and positively correlated with CO with an R-value of 0.24 and p-value of 0.01 and positively and significantly correlated with WE with an R-value of 0.33 and p-value of 0.01.

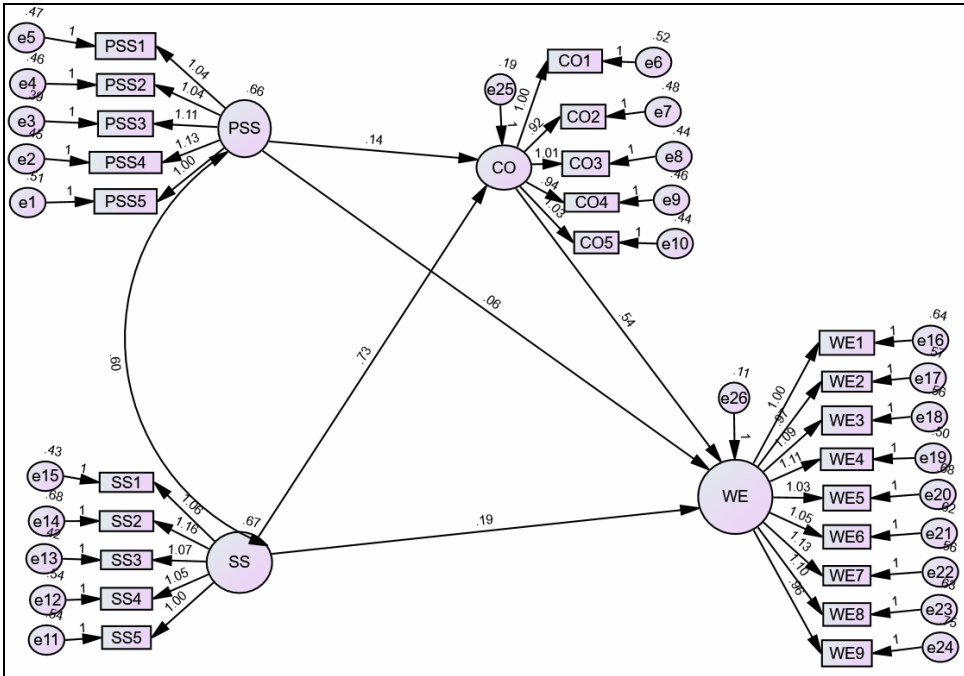
For convergent validity, the average value of variance must be greater than 0.5 and CR must be higher than AVE. The results above shows that AVE is between 0.57 and

0.72, hence meets the threshold. For discriminant validity, square root of AVE calculated for every structure must surpass correlation obtained for other variables (Hair et al., 2010). The square root of AVE value for these structures is also greater than their correlation. These results indicate that the proposed model is valid.

3.4 Hypotheses testing (SEM)

To investigate the possible direct and indirect relationship between the variables of this study, SEM applied. The model was geared to evaluate the four stated hypotheses of this research. The result of SEM analysis is presented in Figure 2 and Table 6.

Figure 2 Analysis of structural model and hypothesis testing (see online version for colours)



Direct and indirect effects of supervisor and SSs as well as the mediating role of CO on WE have been presented at Table 6.

According to the results presented above, PSS has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.109$, $p < 0.01$). SS has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.158$, $p < 0.01$). CO has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.536$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, the mediating variable CO was also significantly and positively influenced by perceived supervisors support (PSS) ($\beta = 0.354$, $p < 0.01$) and SS ($\beta = 0.578$, $p < 0.01$). Table 6 also presents the results the indirect effect of perceived supervisors support, SS, and WE through CO. These results investigated whether CO is a mediator of effects of perceived supervisors support and SS on WE. The results indicates that CO mediates the effect of PSS ($\beta = 0.081$, $p < 0.01$) and SS ($\beta = 0.057$, $p < 0.01$) on WE.

Table 6 Effects of independent variables on the dependent variable

	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>C.R.</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Label</i>
<i>Direct effect</i>					
CO ← PSS	0.354	0.040	8.808	***	
CO ← SS	0.578	0.046	12.542	***	
WE ← PSS	0.109	0.036	3.035	**	
WE ← SS	0.158	0.046	3.429	109	
WE ← CO	0.536	0.072	7.475	109	
<i>Indirect effects</i>					
WE ← CO ← PSS	0.081	0.004	0.317	0.006	
WE ← CO ← SS	0.057	0.003	0.199	0.004	

Note: *** = $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; CO = Career optimism, SS = Social support, PSS = Perceived supervisor support, WE = Work engagement.

4 Results and discussion

This study examined the effects of perceived supervisors support and SS on WE with particular focus on the mediating role played by CO in energy sector of Thailand. The summary of the findings of the hypotheses are summarised at Table 7.

The results show that PSS has a significant and positive effect on employees WE. An increase in PSS by one unit leads to 0.109 increase in the employee's engagement. These results concur with those of Christian et al. (2011) whose research indicated that positive PSS led to high commitment of the employees, increased job satisfaction and motivation. The results also indicate that SS has a significant and positive effect on employees WE. This means that one unit increase in SS led to 0.158 unit increase in WE. The results mean that when the management of these energy firms increase their SSs package to their employees and train their supervisors to use a supportive approach in handling their employees, these gestures would help employees to develop appreciable CO. This optimism would, in turn, make them more engaged in their respective work, thus ultimately increasing work performance of the employees. These findings are in line with the SE theory. According to Blau (1986), when there are suitable and sufficient support from supervisors and management in general, workers return these favours to their organisation through higher WE. This is due to the fact that they perceive their employers care about them and their career growth. Thus, the results of the present study are consistent with the SE theory as it revealed that the impact of perceived support of a supervisor, SS from management on work involvement through the mediating role played by the CO is positive and significant. Findings corroborates with the results of empirical work of Naeem et al. (2019). CO was found to significantly mediate the relationship between perceived supervisors and employees WE as well as SS and employees WE. These findings indicate that personal or individual belief that their aspirations as concerned their career could be a significant factor to consider, as long as career performance is concerned. SS, PSS and CO enhances the employees WE because of sufficient and suitable support from the supervisors; SS from the firms help employees to have a sense of being involved and effectively engaged (Nisula, 2015). Also, a

self-sufficient employee who receives suitable and adequate support from their superior or supervisors and from their firm shows appreciable levels of WE. Also, it is crucial to note that the direct impact of PSS on WE was high compared to the impact of SS on WE (0.31) which means that employees of energy sector of Thailand are more influenced to engage with their work by their PSS than their perceived SS package from management. However, it was clear from the results that increased PSS and SS from management enhances CO of these works which ultimately enhances their work involvement. This means that employees' feelings of being supported and recognised by their supervisors, and management in general, as concerns their career goals would motivate them to be more involved and engaged in their work. The mediating effect uncovered in this study concurred with previous work of Caesens and Stinglhambar (2014) who found that career self-efficacy; which is a career-based variable; helps employees to carry out complex duties. Therefore, an increase in personal perception of CO means an increase in individuals' personal beliefs about reaching their career goals which could further motivate the employee and enhance WE.

Table 7 Results of hypotheses test

<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Decision</i>
H1	Perceived supervisor support has a significant and positive effect on employees WE.	0.109	***	Accepted
H2	SS has a significant and positive effect on employees WE.	0.158	***	Accepted
H3	CO significantly mediates the relationship between perceived supervisor and employees WE.	0.081	***	Accepted
H4	CO significantly mediates the relationship between SS and employees WE.	0.057	***	Accepted
H5	CO has a significant and positive effect on employees WE.	0.536	***	Accepted

The result of this study also concurred with the result of the study conducted by Ekmekcioglu (2020) which uncovered the positive and appreciable relationship between perceived support of supervisors, WE, and career-based self-efficacy in which career-based efficacy was used as mediating factor between perceived support of supervisors and WE, and the mediating effect was so significant that it could be considered as a stand-alone variable in predicting WE of the manufacturing companies. Suan and Mohd Nasurdin (2016) conducted another empirical study on relationship between supervisor support and WE using gender as moderating variable between WE and PSS in the hospitality industry. They found also positive and significant relationship between PSS, and WE under the moderating variable 'gender'. However, the moderating effect was not so significant that it could be considered as stand-alone variable in predicting WE. In similar study, Jose and Mampilly (2015) examine possible impact of PSS and psychological empowerment on employee engagement, where psychological empowerment was used as moderating variable between the researched construct using work-demands-resources model and SE theory to explain the relationships between these variables. This work was done particularly for the service sector companies in India and their results revealed that PSS and psychological empowerment positively affected employees' engagement, and PSSs positively affect psychological empowerment. It was

also uncovered that psychological empowerment completely moderated relationship between perceived support of supervisor and employee's engagement.

5 Conclusions

This study has investigated the mediating role of CO on effect of PSS and SS on employees WE from the energy sector of Thailand. The study highlighted the importance of WE in the current technologically advanced and competitive business environment. The CFA was applied to evaluate the model and SEM was applied to evaluate the relationship between the study variables. The descriptive statistics revealed that the sector was male dominated [218/253 (86.17%) males and 35/253 (13.83%) females]. The CFA revealed that the proposed model was satisfactory according to threshold proposed by Hair (2011) ($CMIN/df = 478,239/204 = 2,244$, $p < 0.001$, IFI = 0.91; TLI = 0.91; CFI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.079; SRMR = 0.07). The results revealed that PSS has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.109$, $p < 0.01$). SS has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.158$, $p < 0.01$). CO has a positive and significant effect on WE ($\beta = 0.536$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, the mediating variable CO was also significantly and positively influenced by perceived supervisors support (PSS) ($\beta = 0.354$, $p < 0.01$) and SS ($\beta = 0.578$, $p < 0.01$). Regarding the mediating effect of CO, the results indicated that that CO the effect of PSS ($\beta = 0.081$, $p < 0.01$) and SS ($\beta = 0.057$, $p < 0.01$) on WE. The results concludes that it is important for the organisations to create a conducive work environment by offering higher PSS, SS, and the CO in order to improve WE of the employees and hence the productivity of the firm.

5.1 Theoretical and practical implications

There are several theories that have addressed the aspect of WE, such as the SE theory, a theory in psychology that implements a cost benefit analysis for the maximisation of benefits and minimisation of costs. This study contributed to the existing theory by proposing the current framework that incorporates the CO as a mediating variable. This study proposes that since CO was found to significantly influence the relationship between the perceived supervisors' support, SSs, and WE, the future studies should consider including additional variables such as organisational culture to the model. The study also provides a comprehensive understanding of the proposed measures and variables confirming the results of the previous studies which indicate that perceived supervisors support and SS are effective predictors of WE.

Regarding the practical implications, this study indicates that organisations which are working towards fostering their employees' WE should consider adopting and cultivating a supportive organisational-wide environment. As indicated by the SE theory, this study proposes that the firms which have adopted a consistent organisational behaviour of caring for their employees create a feeling of obligation to their employees to reciprocate by higher performance through the enhanced WE. Therefore, a firm struggling to achieve WE should consider incorporating perceived supervisors support and SS in their human resource management practices, as well as norms, policies, and cultures of the concerned organisation. For instance, an organisation could consider giving important training resources and adopt good and supportive working environment policies. This study also

holds the proposition that the organisation which encourages their supervisors to offer their employees with emotional support motivates their employees to reciprocate with WE.

5.2 Limitations and future directions

This study is the rare research conducted on energy sector which is a highly regulated industry. The study is needed to replicate in other industries as this would demonstrate the suitability of generalisability. Since this study was only carried out in energy sector in Thailand, the application of the findings in other regions should be done with caution.

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