

Study of challenging and hindrance stress psychology essay



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This study is aimed to explore hindrance and challenging stress frame work of sub optimal performing sales employees and its impact on OCB and employee turnover intent. It has been proved that challenging stress help employees to perform better and hindrance stress de motivate employee to excel in their targets; which intern affect employees OCB and turnover intent. The study propose that if sales employees take sub optimal performance as challenging stress, their OCB will be positive and may stay with organization longer. The research also study whether sustained sub optimal performance lead to learned helplessness state where employees feel that they are destined to fail and cannot be successful even if they perform hard, which ultimately lead the suboptimal performance as hindrance challenge. The employees who have internal locus of control consider that sub optimal performance is due to their own reasons and have better control to turn around the performance than employees with external locus of control. The study is also aimed to look into mediating role of self helplessness of sustained sub optimal performance employees and stress and moderating role of locus of control of OCB and employee turnover intent.

Research Problem

There is an increasing trend wherein companies are placing a great emphasis on sales employees' retention due to strategic value of intellectual capital and costs of replacing trained manpower (Holtom , Branch, 1998; , & Inderrieden, 2005, Mitchell, Lee; Lee & Maurer, 1997). Moreover, many organizations report that turnover of salesperson remains a significant challenge due to continuously changing marketplaces, rising customer expectations, and rapidly evolving technologies (Jones et al. 2007). Many

scholars have responded to this concern by studying the different criteria that are closely associated with retention, such as job satisfaction, commitment, organizational Citizen behaviour, intentions to quit, withdrawal behavior (e. g., lateness and absenteeism), and voluntary turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Caranikas-Walker, Hom, Prussia, & Griffeth, 1992). The turnover cost incurred by a company is very high and includes not only immediately lost revenues but also many hidden costs like recruiting and training expenses, and customer dissatisfaction (Brashear et al. 2003; Darmon 1990).

Sales function is considered to be one of the most revenue earning departments in an organization; hence many organizations heavily invest on their sales force and its performance factors so that top line achievements can be achieved, (Galea 2004). Hence, there is a shift in resource allocation from marketing to sales function(Webster, Maker, and Ganesan 2003). Accordingly, researchers are focusing on improving the performance of sales employees and other organizational factors associated with superior salesperson performance. Consistent revenue shortfalls and rising sales force costs have spurred sales managers' interest in improving or relooking the performance of their sales employees.

Since companies are focusing on sales achievement; it is common that sales employees confront different kinds of stress to meet the performance target. By acceptable performance, we mean an employee performing at the minimum standard or level for continued employment; by sub optimal performance, we mean performing below the minimum standard or level for continued employment, Campbell, McHenry and Wise (1990). The <https://assignbuster.com/study-of-challenging-and-hindrance-stress-psychology-essay/>

relationship between stress and performance at work is considered to be an interesting subject for many researchers but we are yet to reach a consensus on the same (Jex 1998). Managers who view sub optimal performance issues will spend valuable time and money trying to find ways to influence their achievement orientation. Tyagi (1985) proposed that a sales employee's attitude and belief explained a significant proportion of variation in performance, this proportion averaged 29 percent. If this cycle of mismatched performance achievement is allowed to continue, a worst case scenario, in the form of what social psychologists call "learned helplessness," may occur. (John R Schermerhorn, Gardner, Martin). The learned helplessness refers to the tendency of people who are exposed to repeated punishment or failure to believe that they do not possess the skills or competency needed to succeed at the job. As a result they become negative in their work, and tend to remain so even after situational changes occur that makes success once again possible. A feeling is beyond one's own control, when in fact they are not, is the essence of learned helplessness. People become convinced that they are doomed to fail no matter what they do. While learned helplessness is a worst-case scenario, it exemplifies the serious complications that can arise if managers fail to address sub optimal performance in a constructive way. (Schermerhorn, Gardner, Martin).

To explain low performance of sales employees and their retention along with Organization Citizenship Behavior, Lepine, Podsakoff 2005 proposed the model of 2 types of stressors, i. e challenging and hindrance stress. LePine et al. (2005) used the challenge stressor- hindrance stressor framework to explain inconsistent research findings regarding the relationship between

work stressors on the one hand, and employee motivation and job performance, on the other. Researchers have found that stressors that people tend to appraise as potentially promoting their personal growth and achievement (i. e., challenge stressors) should be distinguished from stressors that people tend to appraise as potentially constraining their personal development and work-related accomplishment (i. e., hindrance stressors) because these two types of stressors are differentially associated with employee job attitudes (e. g., job satisfaction and loyalty; Boswell, Olson-Buchanan, & LePine, 2004; Cavanaugh et al., 2000). Cognitions (e. g., intentions to leave; Boswell et al., 2004), and behaviors (e. g., job search and task performance; Cavanaugh et al., 2000; LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005). Stumpf and Dawley (1981) and Dreber (1982) suggested that low performance and high absenteeism were the best predictors of employee turnover. Using meta-analysis, these authors found that hindrance stressors were negatively associated with performance, and challenge stressors were positively associated with performance and also that the differential effects on performance could be attributed to differential stressor effects on motivation. Although this study did not examine retention criteria, it is important because it supports the validity of the challenge stressor-hindrance stressor framework as a theoretical explanation for inconsistent stressor relationships with important individual-level criteria. Robert T Keller (1984) suggested that low performers, or those who perceived their job as stressful, or who had an internal locus of control orientation attribute the causes of their problems to themselves, or perhaps those who had some combination of these conditions tend to be prime candidates to leave the job situation. It seems quite reasonable moreover, to expect that the awareness

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of sub optimal job performance was a major source of job stress for employees with an internal locus of control orientation. The normal trend of treating non performers is by replacing the sub optimally performing sales employees (Hyman & Sagar 1999). Rober T Keller in his research suggested that direct examinations should be conducted on the impact of low performance on stress.

According to Rotter (1966) locus of control is a generalized belief that people contribute their outcomes to their efforts and abilities or external factors such as fate, chance and density. Therefore, locus of control has two aspects: internal and external (Di Zhang & Bruning, 2011). Studies show that individuals with internal locus of control can cope better in stressful situations or on the other hand they have more abilities to adapt themselves with problems and events that they experience in their work place (Lam & Schaubroeck, 2000). Similarly, Meier, et al (2008) found that people with an internal locus of control do not suffer musculoskeletal pain, in fact they display high job control to avoid physical illnesses, in contrast people who have low job control suffer musculoskeletal pain. Additionally, increasing internal locus of control is related positively to adaptation in stressful work places (Parkes, 1986). Finally, Work Locus of Control has been found to be related to health outcomes like stress (Berg, Hem, Lau, Håseth, & Ekeberg, 2005) as well as well-being (P. E. Spector, et al., 2002). It is viewed as an element to deal with work demands and provides a better well-being and performance for employees (Daniels, Beesley, Cheyne, & Wimalasiri, 2008). The employees tend to attribute sub optimal performance to external reasons, such as inadequate support, and external market scenario.

Among the variables associated with salesperson performance, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has attracted the attention of most researchers (e. g., see Mac- Kenzie, Podsakoff, and Ahearne 1998; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Paine 1999). Organ (1988) conceptualized OCB as “ individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization” While progress has been made in understanding salespersons OCB antecedents and consequences, several important research questions still remain unanswered as to how OCB may be linked to salesperson performance.

There are many researches available to explain the relation of stress to performance of sales employees. Moreover, it has been established that high stress forces employees to explore other options to avoid stress, hence high attrition. The employees' organization citizenship behavior will be positive while they work under less stress and perform better. However there is little research to show that poor performance of sales employees leads to stress which in turn affects retention and OCB. There is very little study to show that sustained lower performance may lead to learned helplessness and stress. The Lepine model of challenging stress and hindrance stress will explain how employees look at obstacles to achieve and learn. The current research proposes to study whether low performance leads to stress/pressure for performance and how sales personnel view stress (hindrance stress or challenging stress) to arrive at an outcome of attrition and OCB. The study proposes whether low performers take sub optimal performance as a challenge stress to prove themselves or hindrance stress

to continue in the same manner, where the worst case scenario in the form of what social psychologists call “learned helplessness” may occur. The study also proposes how locus of control affects the relationship of low performance and different types of stress and outcomes of stress.

Literature Survey

1 A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE

The researchers gave a framework for individual performance as individual performance equation: $\text{Performance} = \text{Ability} \times \text{Support} \times \text{Effort}$. Central to the mathematical equation is the principle that high level of work performance achievement is a combination of a person's job-related abilities, various forms of organizational support, and individual work efforts. The multiplication signs indicate that all three factors must exist for high performance to occur. Individual abilities are the skill sets and other personal characteristics employees use in a job. If the person lacks the requisite baseline abilities, it will be very difficult for even extraordinary effort and support to produce high performance. The second but frequently overlooked high-performance factor is support. Even the most hard-working and highly capable individual will be unable to maximize their performance if they do not have the necessary support. In searching for the causes of marginal performance, managers need to examine two major dimensions of support. First, they must ask if they have done their part to create a physical work setting that supplies employees with broad opportunities to fully use their abilities. Second, managers must give proper attention to the social aspects of the work environment. Recent research into job stress, for example, suggests that social support is critical for sustained high performance. <https://assignbuster.com/study-of-challenging-and-hindrance-stress-psychology-essay/>

Emotional support from a person's supervisor and co-workers, as well as from non-job sources (i. e., spouses, family, and friends), can have long-term positive effects on job performance. Effort is the final, and perhaps most commonly emphasized, individual performance factor. Here, effort refers to the amount of energy (physical and/or mental) a person applies to perform a task. In other words, it represents someone's willingness to work hard. Effort is necessary to achieve high-performance results. Capable, well-supported, but uninspired employees are no more likely to succeed than the hard-working person who lacks ability and/or support.

To define marginal performance or sub optimal performance it is first necessary to define performance. A review of the organizational behavior literature yielded two definitions of performance. Kane (1986) defines performance on a job function as: the record of outcome achieved in carrying out the job function during a specified period (p. 237). Campbell, McHenry and Wise (1990) define performance as: observable things people do (i. e. behaviors) that are relevant for the goals of the organization. The behaviors can be scaled in terms of the level of performance they represent

The organizational behavior literature suggests two ways to define MPS: by performance or by rule infraction. Regarding performance-based definitions, Steinmetz (1969) offers a definition that is partially behavioral and tempered by subjective qualifiers such as " reasonable quantity" and " capabilities." He defines a marginal performer as: any employee who is recurring, although, infrequently, fails to produce a reasonable quantity of acceptable work in line with his capabilities and expectations of the management (Steinmetz 1969,).

Marginal performance occurs over a period. Given the temporal and
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systematic nature of performance it is reasonable to expect that different patterns of MP occur (Campbell 1990; Hofman, Jacobs, and Baratta 1993). Three types of MP patterns seem plausible: calculative, dynamic, and creeping. The calculative pattern is a low variability MP pattern; it parallels the sales group's moving average of median performance at a lower level. The dynamic and creeping patterns are high variability MP patterns. On the upswings, the dynamic pattern feigns improvement; the creeping pattern entails gradual improvement. Despite extended periods of marginal or sub marginal performance, studies suggest that sales managers will not recognize the dynamic and creeping patterns as MP patterns.

Challenging and hindrance stress frame work

Drawing primarily from the transactional stress perspective (e. g., Lazarus, 1966; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, Kanner, & Folkman, 1980), we define stress as an individual's psychological response to a situation in which there is something at stake for the individual and where the situation taxes or exceeds the individual's capacity or resources. The psychological response in this definition reflects emotions that occur as the situation is appraised with respect to whether it is potentially challenging- beneficial or threatening- harmful. The psychological response is also a function of elevated levels of information processing focused on appraising and coping with the situation.

Empirical findings on the relationship between stress and performance have been inconsistent in terms of magnitude and direction (Beehr, 1985; Jex, 1998; Sullivan & Bhagat, 1992). One explanation for this inconsistency is rooted in early research on learning that suggests that stress increases
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arousal, which increases performance up to some point, after which there will be over arousal, strains, and then a decrease in performance (e. g., Yerkes & Dodson, 1908). According to this framework, stress-performance relationships may be positive, null, or negative, depending on the range of stress experienced by participants in a given study. However, despite the intuitive appeal of an inverted-U relationship between stress and performance, it has not received much empirical support in direct tests (Beehr, 1985; Teigen, 1994).

Another explanation for the inconsistent findings on the relationship between stress and performance is that the relationship may depend on the nature of the stress (Jex, 1998). On the one hand, scholars have consistently reported negative relationships between performance and stress associated with factors such as role ambiguity, role conflict, and hassles (Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000; Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001; Jex, 1998; Villanova, 1996). And on the other hand, scholars have occasionally reported positive relationships between performance and stress associated with the level or the demands of the work itself (e. g., workload; Beehr et al., 2000; Beehr, Walsh, & Taber, 1976; Dollard, Winefield, Winefield, & de Jonge, 2000; Iverson, Olekalns, & Erwin, 1998; Mughal, Walsh, & Wilding, 1996; Sargent & Terry, 2000; Spector, Dwyer, & Jex, 1988). This pattern of findings is consistent with research suggesting that stress may be distinguished as to whether it is appraised as hindering or promoting mastery, personal

growth, or future gains (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Scholars have differentiated the former type of stress (henceforth, hindrance stress) from the latter type of stress (henceforth, challenge stress) <https://assignbuster.com/study-of-challenging-and-hindrance-stress-psychology-essay/>

with respect to important attitudes and behavior (e. g., Beehr et al., 2001; Boswell, Olson-Buchanan, & LePine, 2004; Cavanaugh et al., 2000; Quick & Quick, 1984; Selye, 1982; Simmons & Nelson, 2001; Simmons, Nelson, & Neal, 2001). However, there has been no research where hypotheses have been made about the effects of the two forms of stress on learning performance. There has also been no research focused on identifying potential mechanisms through which the relationship between different stress and learning performance can be explained

Learned Helplessness

When experience with uncontrollable events leads to the belief that the future events will also be uncontrollable, disruption in motivation, emotion, and learning may occur. This phenomenon has been called learned helplessness (LH; Peterson, Maier, & Seligman, 1993). First described in the 1960s, LH has given rise to several lines of basic and applied research with both animals and human participants. Experiments with human participants were modeled closely on those performed on animals (Rehm, 1990). After being exposed to aversive events such as bursts of loud noise, electric shocks, or difficult problems, human participants were tested on tasks that involved one or more of the disruptions attributed to LH (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Miller & Norman, 1979). According to the original LH model, LH is inferred when people who experience uncontrollability first learn that their outcomes elude their control and then generalize this belief about their own helplessness to new situations, where it produces difficulties for them (Peterson, 1993).

In early research on human LH, participants showed helplessness in various tasks, such as noise-escape learning; various problem-solving tasks, including anagrams; intelligence tests; digit-letter substitution; and discrimination learning. The helplessness model has been used to make sense of a variety of human adaptation failures such as depression, academic failure, victimization, poor work performance, illness, and even early death (Klein & Seligman, 1976; Peterson et al., 1993; Qian & Alvermann, 1995; Seligman & Schulman, 1986).

Helplessness-caused deficits in humans might be manifested in different domains: behavioral, motivational, cognitive, and emotional (Maier & Seligman, 1976). Broadly speaking, the behavioral and motivational effects include passivity, giving up, and procrastination; the cognitive effects include decreased problem-solving ability, frustration, and lowered self-esteem; and the emotional deficits usually involve dysphasia or depressed mood following negative outcomes (McKean, 1994). Having defined LH as a “laboratory model of depression in man” (p. 11), Klein and Seligman (1976) began to look for ways to reverse its negative effects. They found that experiencing solvable discrimination problems following induction of helplessness under laboratory conditions served as a kind of therapy that reversed the negative effects of helplessness. Their interpretation was that “a procedure that showed subjects that their responses produce reinforcement reversed human helplessness” (p. 18). Other experimenters have also investigated the potential of prior experience being able to control outcomes in “immunization” against helplessness induction (Buchwald, Coyne, & Cole, 1978; Jones, Nation, & Massad, 1977; Ramirez, Maldonado, & Martos, 1992).

Because there are individual differences in human LH, the original theory was reformulated, assigning causal attributions a mediating role in the process by which uncontrollable events produce deficits (Peterson & Seligman, 1984). According to the reformulated theory, people who display a tendency to attribute negative outcomes to internal (“ It’s me”), stable (“ It’ll last forever”), or global (“ It’ll affect everything I do”) causes are more likely to experience a depressive reaction in response to a negative life event than are people who typically attribute negative outcomes to external, unstable, or specific causes (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978). In addition to causal attributions, some researchers have also identified personality variables that may mediate the effects of helplessness on performance, such as achievement motivation, locus of control, extraversion, IQ, and learned resourcefulness (Cohen, Rothbart, & Phillips, 1976; Kuhl, 1981; Pittman & Pittman, 1980; Rosenbaum & Jaffe, 1983; Tiggemann, 1982; Winefield, Barrett, & Tiggemann, 1985).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organ’s (1988) conceptualization of OCB provides the foundation for sales research involving this construct (e. g., MacKenzie et al. 1999; Netemeyer et al. 1997). Netemeyer et al. (1997) indicated that the conceptual domain of the OCB construct is still evolving, but that the construct displays these characteristics: (1) behavior which is above and beyond that which is formally prescribed by a person’s organizational role, (2) discretionary behavior on the part of the employee, (3) behaviors not directly or explicitly rewarded in the organization’s formal reward system, and (4) behaviors important for the effective and successful functioning of the organization.

Helping (normally a higher order construct comprising altruism, courtesy, and peacekeeping), sportsmanship, and civic virtue are the OCBs most often considered in marketing studies (MacKenzie et al. 1999), although Netemeyer et al. (1997) included conscientiousness as a separate OCB dimension. LePine, Erez, and Johnson (2002) in a recent meta analysis found that there is little consistency in the OCB dimensions reported in the research literature, either in the behavioral dimensions studied or the labels used. Our dimensions of altruism, civic virtue, and sportsmanship match prior sales research. In addition, we have developed a team-building construct to represent a distinct subgroup of OCBs, relating to behaviors supportive of the sales team, rather than to the individual beneficiary or to the broader organization (e. g., preventing problems by consulting people, encouraging others, helping resolve disagreements). This dimension of OCB includes items used in prior research to indicate cheerleading, peacekeeping, and conscientiousness dimensions of OCB (Netemeyer et al. 1997). More important, these are discretionary behaviors by the individual, which are unlikely to be part of a formal job description.

Furthermore, the identification of an OCB dimension related to team building appears consistent with the increased importance of team-based sales activities in many organizations (Corcoran, Petersen, Baitch, and Barrett 1995). However, there is an important distinction between team building as a discretionary behavior (extra role performance) and teamwork (in-role performance), which we conceptualize as a component of salesperson IRB performance (e. g., making joint sales calls, solving customer problems with non sales functions). We would expect the team-building OCB dimension to

be related to team-based performance, but one construct refers to discretionary behaviors supportive to the sales team, while the other is part of the salesperson's task responsibilities. LePine et al. (2002) also underlined the unresolved issue of whether OCB should be assessed as an overall index or as a set of related OCB dimensions. We do both. In our first model, we examine four OCB dimensions as they relate to salesperson performance. Our logic is that OCB dimensions are related to each other but are conceptually distinct, and we believe that researchers and managers are interested in the impact of different OCBs on performance. In the second model, we adopt a composite OCB measure combining all four of our dimensions to reduce complexity in the model. Many prior studies have combined OCB behavioral dimensions in this way, driven primarily by issues of parsimony (LePine et al. 2002; Netemeyer et al. 1997). Support for modeling OCB as a composite comes from the LePine et al.'s (2002) Meta analysis, which found the predictive performance composite approach to OCB to be as good or better in prior research than that of dimensional models.

Locus of control

The concept of locus of control was first proposed by Rotter (1954), which originally was locus of control of reinforcement (2011). Locus of control defined as the general belief that an individual's successes, failures and outcomes are controlled by an individual's actions and behaviors (internal); or perhaps, people's achievements, failures and outcomes are controlled by other forces like chance, luck and fate (external) (P. Spector, 1988). Many studies have been done to explain the locus of control in both aspects

internal and external control; in fact, Control is an important factor for well-being (Meier, Semmer, Elfering, & Jacobshagen, 2008). So, locus of control is divided into internal and external control.

Internal locus of control

Internal locus of control refers to the belief that people have where outcomes and their success and failures are the result of their own actions and efforts (Rotter, 1966). It can be defined as the events and outcomes which can be influenced by people own beliefs and actions (Ng, Sorensen, & Eby, 2006). Individuals with internal locus of control believe that they are able to control and manage their own lives by making decisions about the events (James & Wright, 1993). Additionally, Hsu (2011) found that individuals with high internal locus of control accept that their achievements and failures depend on their own efforts and endeavors or briefly they have ability to determine their own outcomes and they are responsible for what happened.

External locus of control

External locus of control refers to the beliefs that chance, fate, managers, supervisors, organizations and other persons are more powerful to make decisions about an individual's lives and outcomes (Rotter, 1966). Indeed people with perceived external locus of control believe that fate, chance, and luck, friends, and managers determine the outcomes which they themselves experience; so, they attribute their successes, failures and outcomes to external sources (James & Wright, 1993). Hsu (2011) proposed that people with external locus of control believe that external elements such as luck, chance and destiny are stronger to determine their lives, and their failures or successes are not due to their own efforts.

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How locus of control affects on occupational stress

According to Rotter (1966) locus of control is viewed as a generalized belief that people contribute outcomes to their efforts and abilities or external factors such as fate, chance and density. Therefore, locus of control has two aspects: internal and external (Di Zhang & Bruning, 2011) . Studies show that individuals with internal locus of control can cope better in stressful situations or on the other hand they have more abilities to adapt themselves to problems and events that they experience in their work place (Lam & Schaubroeck, 2000). Similarly, Meier, et al (2008) found that people with an internal locus of control do not suffer musculoskeletal pain, in fact they display high job control to avoid physical illnesses, and in contrast people who have low job control suffer musculoskeletal pain. Additionally, increasing internal locus of control is related positively to adaptation in stressful work places (Parkes, 1986). Finally, Work Locus of Control has been found to be related to health outcomes like stress (Berg, Hem, Lau, Håseth, & Ekeberg, 2005) as well as well-being (P. E. Spector, et al., 2002). It is viewed as an element to deal with work demands and provide a better well-being and performance for employees (Daniels, Beesley, Cheyne, & Wimalasiri, 2008).

Model creation

From the research, it has been proven that the performance achievement level leads to stress among sales employees Robert T Keller (1984).

According to Rober T Keller, poor performers have high stress due to non achievement of performance target. To explain low performance of sales employees and their retention along with Organization Citizenship Behavior, Lepine, Podsakoff 2005 proposed the model of 2 types of stressors, i. e

challenging and hindrance stress. The sub optimally performing employees who consider their performance as challenging stress will excel in their performance. On the contra try, the sub optimally performing sales employees, who consider the performance as hindrance challenge, will add frustration and difficulties in achieving their targets. They may continuously fail in their performance. Hence the study propose that sales employee who consider sub optimal performance as a challenging stress will have positive OCB and negative turnover intent. .

The learned helplessness refers to the tendency for sales employees who are exposed to repeated punishment or failure to believe they do not possess the skills or competency needed to succeed at the job. As a result sales employees become negative in their work, and they tend to remain so even after situational changes occur that make success once again possible.

According to the original LH model, LH is inferred when people who experience uncontrollability first learn that their outcomes elude their control and then generalize this belief about their own helplessness to new situations, where it produces difficulties for them (Peterson, 1993). Sales employees, who consistently achieve sub optimal performance, may believe that they are destined to fail (learned helplessness), and may lead to hindrance challenge, resulting to poor performance. Hence the study proposes that learned helplessness will be a mediating variable between sub optimal performance and hindrance stress of sustained low performers.

Expectancy theory, a within-person decision process, leads to expectations that higher performing employees will be less likely to leave voluntarily when there is a clear line of sight between performance and rewards (Lawler, <https://assignbuster.com/study-of-challenging-and-hindrance-stress-psychology-essay/>)

1971; Porter & Steers, 1973; Vroom, 1964). Similarly, equity theory leads to expectations that higher performers will also be less likely to leave voluntarily when their ratio of outcomes to inputs is high (or at least even) relative to the outcomes to inputs ratio of referent others (A