

A REVIEW OF THE LINKAGE BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

This article reviewed the past studies that were conducted in the recent years (2010-2016) on the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. Organizational citizenship behaviour has been recognized as the important element for an organization due to it can affect the effectiveness of the organization. It becomes the concern in organizational behaviour studies and it has been used as dependent variable frequently. Emotional intelligence has potential influence onto organizational citizenship behaviour. However, there is a lack of attention onto the research of emotional intelligence, especially in Malaysia. Thus, this paper intends to highlight the needs to make further investigation on the linkage between these two variables. Some suggestions were provided for future studies.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Organizational Citizenship Behaviour; Malaysia; Manufacturing; Review Paper

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, organization has been striving to become competitive in order to secure a long term success with the help of technology development, as well as with the assistance of employees (Hussin, 2011). Employees are known as the backbone of an organization in order to function and being productive in the business (Chin, Anantharaman, & Tong, 2011). It is crucial for an organization to have the employees who are engaged and dedicated in order to remain competitive in this fast paced era (Hooi, 2016). Thus, organizational citizenship behaviour issue should be concerned in one organization in order to be successful in long term and increase productivity (Hooi, 2015). In Malaysia manufacturing industry, there is a need to investigate the antecedents of organizational citizenship behaviour. This is because it is reported that the biggest human resource problem in Malaysia manufacturing industry is lacking of dedicated employees (Hamid *et al.*, 2008; Chin *et al.*, 2011). In other words, organizational citizenship behaviour issue happened in Malaysia manufacturing industry.

Organ (1988) explained that, a good citizen tends to remain a good attitude even when nobody is watching him or her. This suggests that the employees who engage in organizational citizenship behaviour will behave in good manner although they are not under supervision or monitoring from the

management. Kumar (2014) believed that, such good and voluntary behaviour may boost the efficiency and effectiveness of the company. Besides, Borman and Motowidlo (2014) realized that, a company may grow and develop efficiently because the good citizen in the organization will give constructive ideas to the management. Kumar (2014) claimed that, a company with good citizens will create pleasant working environment, which may help to retain the employees, thus decreasing the turnover rate. From these statements, it can be seen that organizational citizenship behaviour brings a number of benefits to an organization and it plays an important role in the growth of company. Thus, the management should concern the factors that boost organizational citizenship behaviour among the employees. As organizational citizenship behaviour level is fluctuating, the level can be increased or decreased due to dispositional, attitudinal, and/or contextual variables (Mohammad *et al.*, 2015).

Emotional intelligence is considered as one of the antecedents of organizational citizenship behaviour (Siddiqui & Hassan, 2013). In other words, emotional intelligence is an influential variable in affecting organizational citizenship behaviour to be increased or decreased. Emotional intelligence is known as one of the effective tools to develop one's social relation among the workers, thus increasing one's tenure in the organization (Siddiqui & Hassan, 2013). When one's tenure is prolonged, the employee might want to perform extra duties voluntarily, which will increase the tendency to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviour in the organization (Carmeli & Josman, 2006). Emotional intelligence is defined as the capability to perceive, regulate, understand, and access the feelings as well as emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Nearly two decades ago, the concept of emotional intelligence has been investigated and it has been proved its contribution onto life outcomes such as the well-being of human, and academic achievement (Song *et al.*, 2010; Gallagher & Vella-Brodrick, 2008; Johnson, Batey, & Holdsworth, 2009). There are some studies had found out the positive linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour (e.g., Bosman, 2003; Carmeli & Josman, 2006; Chin *et al.*, 2011; James, Velayudhan, & Gayatri Devi, 2010). This brings a meaning that, if the employee has higher emotional intelligence, the employee is more likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviour.

Although emotional intelligence is recognized as one of the contributors to the success of organization, it received less attention in the discipline of management, especially in the field of employees' behaviour (Meisler, 2013). Emotional intelligence in Malaysia organization is not investigated widely (Jamaluddin *et al.*, 2015). Most of the emotional intelligence studies in Malaysia were conducted in education field among students (Abdullah *et al.*, 2015). However, obtaining data from students is significantly different with obtaining data from real corporate personnel (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). Ng, Ke, and Raymond (2014) claimed that, very few studies had examined the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. They added, inconsistent findings were found in the past studies which had triggered the need for more assessment on the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship

behaviour. In other words, some scholars revealed that, there is significant relationship between the variables, while some scholars did not find any significant linkage between the variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Organizational citizenship behaviour is known as the employees' behaviour which is not restricted, improving the effectiveness of organization as a whole, and not being recognized by the formal reward system explicitly (Organ, 1988). In later time, the earlier definition was improved, where organizational citizenship behaviour is defined as the employees' behaviour that supports the environment of organization in terms of social and psychology (Organ, 1997). A further definition was set by Kinicki and Kreitner (2008), where organizational citizenship behaviour is defined as the behaviour of employees that is beyond the formal responsibilities, such as helping co-workers, and taking care of organization's property. Dick and Ellis (2006) concerned that, organizational citizenship behaviour should be the behaviour that maintaining and developing the relationship among employees, as well as improving their job performance indirectly. Luthans (2011) emphasized that, organizational citizenship behaviour should be in the form of voluntary, instead of being recognized by the official reward system in organization.

Organizational citizenship behaviour is recognized as an important and unique aspect of the employees' activities that influence the satisfaction of employees as well as the outcomes of organization (Mishra, Mishra, & Kumar, 2010). Luthans (2011) believed that, an employee with organizational citizenship behaviour will receive better appraisal in performance, will behave better than others, and will be allocated more rewards. Mishra *et al.* (2010) also supported that, organizational citizenship behaviour can affect the overall organizational performance and effectiveness. While, Tsai and Wu (2010) mentioned about the stakeholders. They explained that, organizational citizenship behaviour is about the willingness of employees to act beyond their formal responsibilities in order to satisfy the stakeholders of company. This statement is supported by another scholar that they believed an employees with organizational citizenship behaviour will obtain stakeholders' satisfaction, increase productivity, and reduce unnecessary costs in company (Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2011).

Emotional Intelligence

In these current years, there has been an emerging study in the Salovey and Mayer's (1990) concept of emotional intelligence, where emotional intelligence can help in recognizing emotional information and emotions that are important to solve problems as well as to adapt to life. Emotional intelligence is described as the capability of an individual to process the information of emotion proficiently, and adopt the information of emotion to

conduct cognitive activities, such as problem-solving (Salovey *et al.*, 2002). Emotional intelligence is essential in life because it can forecast our behaviour and life outcomes. This is supported by Ciarrochi *et al.* (2001), where the scholars claimed that, an individual with poor emotional intelligence will have poorer relationship, weaker mental health, and being less successful in career.

Followed by continuing research after Salovey and Mayer's (1990) work, the description of emotional intelligence was revised. Emotional intelligence is described as the capability to know the motive of emotion, and to improve thinking through emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). They continued, an individual with emotional intelligence can distinguish feeling precisely, is able to create emotions to support one's thinking, to comprehend the knowledge about emotions, and to control emotions thoughtfully in order to stimulate intellectual as well as emotional growth. This definition has been accepted widely in academic study that intended to measure emotional intelligence. Mayer and Salovey (1997) cautioned that, emotional intelligence should be integrating the capability of an individual to process emotions and the function of cognitive.

Linkage between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Emotional intelligence has been known as one of the elements that helps an organization to have higher level of work outcomes (Sabahi & Dashti, 2016). Radford (2010) claimed that, emotional intelligence is important because it can help the employees to manage and regulate their emotions, as well as others' emotions. From this statement, it can be seen that, if the employees can control their emotion, their work behaviour will be improved. This is supported by Carmeli and Josman (2006) where they found that, there is linkage between emotional intelligence and the dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviour. However, Ng *et al.* (2014) argued that, although emotional intelligence is known as crucial element in an organization, there are limited studies conducted to examine the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour.

There are researchers found that there is significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. Chehrazi, Shakib, and Azad (2014) revealed that, emotional intelligence is related to organizational citizenship behaviour. This indicated that when the employees have higher emotional intelligence, they will tend to exert citizenship behaviour. They claimed that, when an employee is able to manage self-emotion, the employee is prone to have higher citizenship behaviour, such as helping the colleagues. While, another study of Hanzae and Mirvaisi (2013) showed that there is a very low relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. Unlike the previous study, the scholars did not measure organizational citizenship behaviour by dimensions, they measured organizational citizenship behaviour as a whole. From this difference, it can be seen that, the intensity of linkage could be different if the measurement method is different among the scholars.

Besides measurement method, the theory that was used by the scholars can make a difference in terms of result as well. The previous study that was done by Hanzaee and Mirvaisi (2013), they used Bar-On emotional intelligence theory to measure emotional intelligence of the respondents. While, James *et al.* (2010) used Goleman emotional intelligence theory to measure emotional intelligence. Both studies had revealed different results, where James *et al.* (2010) obtained a higher intensity of linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour, as compared to Bar-On theory. This can be seen that Bar-On theory might have lower relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. This is supported by another study of Ziaee *et al.* (2013), where they used Bar-On theory to test emotional intelligence as well. They revealed that one of the dimensions of emotional intelligence, that is self-management, has low relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour. Besides, another dimension of emotional intelligence, which is social awareness has low relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour as well.

Apart from that, Haider (2015) also claimed that emotional intelligence has low impact onto organizational citizenship behaviour. They did not measure from one dimension to another, they measured the overall emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. Their result was parallel with Antony's (2013) study, where Antony (2013) also mentioned that there is low relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. Antony (2013) measured emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour as a whole when the relationship between the variables was examined. From these, it can be seen that, the intensity of relationship between the variables might be low if the scholars measure the variables unidimensionally, instead of measuring from one dimension to another. This can be seen from the study of Sabahi and Rashti (2016). They measured the relationship between the variables from one dimension to another. It is revealed that almost all the emotional intelligence dimensions have high relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour, for example, self-motivation, self-awareness, self-control, and social conscientiousness (Sabahi & Rashti, 2016).

In addition, Firozjaee *et al.* (2014) revealed that there is positive and moderate relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. In their study, they measured organizational citizenship behaviour from one dimension to another. They combined two theories for organizational citizenship behaviour, where they adopted Organ's (1988) organizational citizenship behaviour theory and Fareh's organizational citizenship behaviour theory that was mainly used for China context. As for emotional intelligence, they measured emotional intelligence as a whole. It was revealed that emotional intelligence influenced civic virtue the most. However, although several scholars have mentioned the emotional intelligence is related to organizational citizenship behaviour, Tofighi *et al.* (2015) argued that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. Some of the organizational citizenship behaviour dimensions, which are Sportsmanship and Courtesy are negatively

influenced by emotional intelligence. The result is not parallel and consistent with the past studies, where the past studies found that there is relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour, and the relationship is mostly positive.

On the other hand, Salajeghe and Farahmand (2014) claimed that there is linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. However, the linkage is not as strong as previous study. There are two dimensions of emotional intelligence showed low relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour, which are self-awareness and self-management. While, other two dimensions of emotional intelligence showed moderate relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour, which are social awareness and relationship management. The relationship is not as high as previous study might be due to different theories that were used by the scholars. Salajeghe and Farahmand (2014) adopted Podsakoff's *et al.* (2000) theory to measure organizational citizenship behaviour, while previous studies mostly adopted Organ's (1988) organizational citizenship behaviour theory. This suggests that different theories that consists of different dimensions might affect the findings.

However, every scholar might obtain different findings due to different contexts. There is another study that was conducted by Sepehrikiya *et al.* (2016), no significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. Contradictory with previous study such as the study of Salajeghe and Farahmand (2014), the dimensions of emotional intelligence, which are self-management and relationship management, indicated no significant relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour. This could be due to different working contexts, where Sepehrikiya's *et al.* (2016) respondents were from banking sector, while Salajeghe and Farahmand's (2014) respondents were from a security agencies. From these studies, it can be seen that the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour are remained ambiguous due to the findings of linkages are not consistent among the scholars.

Last but not least, Ng *et al.* (2014) had reported a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. They adopted Mayer and Salovey's (1990) emotional intelligence theory to measure emotional intelligence, with dimensions of perceptions of emotion, managing own emotions, managing others' emotions, and utilizing emotions. Although the relationship is significant, the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour is low. Especially the dimension of Perceptions of Emotion, it has the lowest relationship with organizational citizenship behaviour.

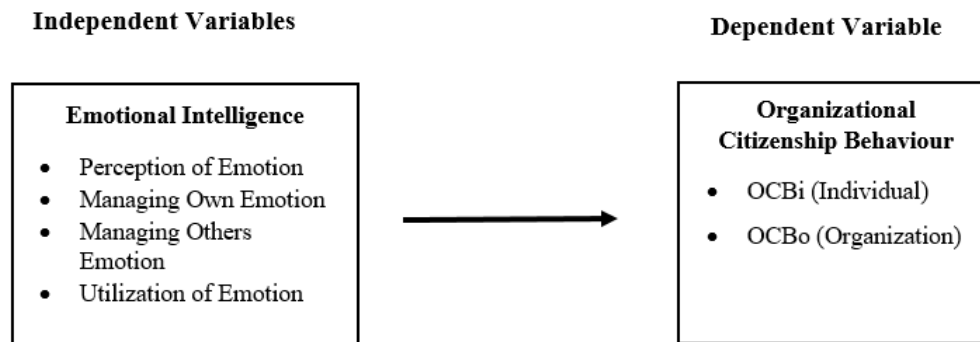
Overall, the impact of emotional intelligence on organizational citizenship behaviour is remained unclear in the past studies. There are inconsistent findings on the linkage of emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behaviour. Specifically, this paper focuses on reviewing the empirical studies that were conducted to examine the linkage between the variables. It excludes those studies which involved the samples of

schools' students and those variables which are unrelated to this study. The detailed methodology is discussed in the next section.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the method that was used to conduct the literature review of this paper. We adopted a three-step process to look for articles that are relevant to our literature review. Firstly, we conducted a comprehensive search at journal databases such as Elsevier and Scopus by using specific terms adapted from previous studies. The specific terms included emotional intelligence, along with its dimensions that we were looking for, such as managing own emotions, managing others' emotion, perceiving emotions, and utilizing emotions. While, another term that was included in this study is organizational citizenship behavior, together with its dimensions, such as OCBi (individual) and OCBo (organization). Secondly, we collected the articles that are itemized on the Reference list of past studies. Followed by the third step, we manually searched all the journal articles that were included in the Reference list of past studies. Since we targeted on recent studies, we looked for the past studies from the year of 2010 to the year of 2016. In order to prevent duplication of data, we do not use overlapping data in our literature review.

There are five exclusions that we concerned when we did the searching of articles. The first exclusion is, we excluded those studies which are not empirical. Second, we excluded the studies which were conducted on students sample or educational settings because the linkage between the proposed variables will be concerned on corporate personnel. It is argued that collecting data from students is significantly different from corporate personnel. Thus, the result of study might not be accurate. Third, we excluded the topics which are not relevant to our variables. Although some variables are similar with our variables, such as spiritual intelligence, we excluded the topic because it is not relevant to our topic. Fourth, we excluded the studies which their variable of organizational citizenship behavior was rated by co-worker or superior. This is because we focus on self-rated organizational citizenship behavior. Different sources of raters might have different result. Fifth, we exclude those studies which did not report the reliability and validity of their instruments due to it might affect the validity of the studies' result. By adopting the methods and exclusions as mentioned above, the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior is expected to be existing, thus the conceptual framework is developed in Picture 1.



Picture 1 Conceptual Framework

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, several empirical studies from the year of 2010 to the year of 2016 had been reviewed on the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior. Through the literature review, understanding onto the linkage between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior is enhanced. It can be seen that, there are inconsistent findings found among the past studies. Some researchers found that there is a linkage between the variables, while some researchers found that there is no linkage between the variables. This is because different contexts or different dimensions that were used by the researchers might affect the result of study. Future studies might help to reduce the gaps as mentioned so that comprehensive understanding can be provided to both academic world and manufacturing industry in Malaysia after the real study has been conducted. Due to the scarcity of studies regarding the linkage, more empirical studies are needed in future to test the linkage between the proposed variables to obtain more empirical evidences, especially in Malaysia manufacturing industry.

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