

Fostering Employee Pro-Environmental Behaviour: Does Emotional Intelligence Matters?

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Abstract

Although theories and researches on pro-environmental behaviour in the workplace has generated high expectations and promising findings, the problem related to environmental preservation in organization remain unsolved. Several researches suggested the anticipated role of emotion in Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) might strengthen the behavioural predictability. Addressing this particular gap in this literature, this paper examines existing literature pertaining emotional intelligence that contribute towards behavioural formation. In particular, this paper discusses the significant role of emotional intelligence in TPB construct that can lead towards fostering employee pro-environmental behaviour.

Keywords: Pro-environmental behaviour; Employee; Organization

Introduction

Research identified with emotion may impact representative pro-environmental behaviour through different procedures which are unique in relation to cognitive parts of attitude that can will lead towards creating quantities of new exploration (Russell and Griffiths 2008; Robertson and Barling 2013). Along with these advancements in affective literature, emotion or affect, has been considered as a motivational factor that may influencing environmental behaviour (Hipolito, 2011). Meanwhile, Inoue et al., (2015) proposed that review on exploring role of emotion, might want to appreciate chances to propel the environmental literature related to workplace environmental behaviour. Even thought, employees will be energized, inspired to make a difference in the natural environment quality, and are motivated to engage in workplace pro-environmental behaviours when the employees influence by positive emotion (Robertson and Barling, 2013). However, in most environmental literature, the significant role of emotion is scarcely being discuss (Searles, 2010). Accordingly, one of the main limitations of the problem examining pro-environmental behaviors using attitude theories is that they largely neglected the emotional aspects and to the best of researcher knowledge, only few research in the context of environmental literature that have the attempt to understand how the effects of emotion can contribute towards environmental behaviour (Onwezen et al., 2013; Bissing-Olson et al. 2013; Robertson and Barling, 2013; Aguilar et al., 2014; Han et al., 2016).

Parallel to this, substantial attention in a rising area of study has been generated through the construct of “emotional intelligence” even though the analysis interaction between cognition, emotion and behaviour is not new (Aguilar et al., 2014). In spite of the logic of this argument,

there are, to the researcher knowledge, studies have been done to observed the role of emotional intelligence towards fostering pro-environmental in workplace remain scarce.

What Is Emotional Intelligence

To begin with, the meaning of emotion as discussed by Salovey and Mayer (1990) can be comprehended as a composed reaction, surpass different mental subsystems constraints, including physiological, motivational, subjective, and experiential frameworks. Meanwhile, George (2006) advocates that emotions and moods are connected and basic components of behaviour. In fact, George clarified further that emotions can be treasured in controlling one's attention in specified situation, contribute towards decision making and assist it several types of natural aware or insensible processes. Even though several scholars have their own opinion regarding specific characteristics of emotion, however most of them settle with a decision that emotion as one of the significant contribution of element in human being. Meanwhile, the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has been discuss in many studies regards to scientific and psychology literature. There are some definitions that can best describe the meaning of emotional intelligence for example; Bar-on (2000) stated that EI is the individual abilities and skills which can influence the ability in managing environmental pressure and demand. Besides that, Goleman¹³ describe EI as the capability to encourage individuals and control own emotion when communicate with other people. However, the researcher agrees with Mayer and Salovey¹⁴ definition of EI, which is the ability to reason about emotion to improve thinking that incorporates the capacities to precisely control own emotion, regulate emotion towards decision making, to comprehend emotion and direct emotion to advance enthusiastic and intellectual development.

Parallel to this, (Aguilar et al., 2014) suggested that future studies should clarify the anticipated role of emotional intelligence in engaging in pro-environmental behaviour (PEB). Thus, it would appear to be consistent to suggest that intelligent control over emotions may likewise have a basic influence towards formation of belief, attitudes and PEB, thereby enhancing environmental sustainability (Aguilar et al., 2014).

Linking Emotion In Theory of Planned Behaviour

Basically, Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extended version of the well-established Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). TPB explains that people's intention is the main factor that influence of behaviour, where by it assume that people's intention signifies the willingness degree of a person to perform specific behaviour. TPB is constructed with behavioural intention that antecedent by attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. Previous research (Kashif and De Run, 2015; Knowles, Hyde and White, 2012) mentioned that TPB is beneficial in foreseeing extensive range of behaviour (Kashif and De Run, 2015). In addition, the investigation and prediction on various types of workplace behaviours has been using TPB extensively because TPB is viewed as one of the extensively used theories among researchers that study management (Shahriar Ferdous and Polonsky, 2013).

However, Kashif et al., (2016) mentioned that, TPB main constraint lies with their consecutive nature regardless the wider acknowledgment and use of the behavioral model. Parallel to this, several researches suggested that anticipated the role of emotion towards intention formation may improve and strengthen the predictability towards TPB construct (Aguilar et al., 2014; Ravis et al., 2009). This is because, a person who has the ability to control their emotion may influence their intention towards realizing their intended behaviour or do the otherwise which is not to perform the behaviour. In fact, some sustainability literature mentioned that the component of intentions may not directly affect actual organizational behaviour (Schelly et al., 2011; Hsu, 2012; Schröder et al., 2014). For instance, Paris and Van Den Broucke (2008) in their study mentioned that people driving behaviour not absolutely influence by their intention. In relation to this, Kim et al., (2013) results shows that the construct of TPB are not completely adequate for clarifying intention, but rather additionally element that might contribute towards people buying intention is more unpredictable. Kim included that, anticipated emotion evidently gives critical impulse to buyer intention process because emotion are motivators in decision making (Kim et al., 2013). Despite of the influential role of emotion towards behavioural intention and action / behaviour. However, research on the effect of emotion towards environmental behaviour remain scarce.

Table 1

List of previous research with in various context that confirm the relationship between emotion, intention and behaviour.

| Path | Previous Research |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Emotion → Intention | Han and Back (2007), Palmatier (2009), Ladhari (2009), Wang (2009), Chang (2010), Moons and De Pelsmacker (2012), Fröhlich (2012), Carrera (2012), Londono (2017) |
| Intention → Emotion → Behaviour | Schröder (2014), Mohiyeddini (2009), Farley (2003) |

Based on table 1, it is believed that the role of emotion can be used to overcome the argument regarding intention and behaviour. Hence, the existence of emotion would strengthen the relationship between intention and behaviour in TPB.

Emotional Intelligence and Employee Pro-Environmental Behaviour

Basically, pro-environmental behavior (PEB) at work encompasses extensive series of actions and this involves substantial elements of employee behaviours, because it enables and may contribute towards organizational plan to preserve natural resources and the environment. PEB also can be describe as a cautious action that seeks to minimize the undesirable impact on the environment Kollmuss and Agyeman, (2002). Moreover, Ciocirlan (2016) used the term “green employee” in her research that described green employee has an environmental identity, an intrinsic motivation to protect the environment through work, and aims for consistency

between home and work environmental behaviours. In general, employees tend to be pro-environmental behavior by their own interest and feeling of care about the environment without influence by other people or reward by the management (Boiral, 2009). The effectiveness of PEB in an organization highly depends on the involvement of the employees in the programs and activities that implement in organization. Moreover, voluntary basis of employees which act without concerning with any benefit and reward will contribute towards success of organization that aim operate in their business in preserving nature (Daily et al., 2009).

Based on the relevant literature that study the relation between emotion and environmental aspect, the researcher believes that PEB can be influence not only by cognitive factors but also by individual's emotion (Aguilar et al., 2014). Therefore, the process related to environmental representation become highly applicable in explaining PEB, which depends not only on the awareness and knowledge regarding environmental conditions, but also related to emotional practice associated with these conditions. Furthermore, Fröhlich et al., (2013) mentioned that, the anticipation of emotion played an important role in behavioural intention that may lead people became more aware of environmentally friendly behaviour. Meanwhile, several researchers agreed that the ability of TPB construct to predict behavioural of person is more significant when it anticipated the element of nature with in the investigation, along with emotional factors related with the environment (Stets and Biga, 2003). Hence, the researcher belief that, the role of emotion will contribute towards fostering employee PEB.

In this study, EI can be linked as significant attribute towards the ability of an employee to regulate, direct and control their emotions and use such emotions in guiding their thinking and action in preserving the environment in workplace. The potential of EI should also be consider as connection of role between environmental beliefs, pro-environmental intention and behavior. In relation to the research by Schultz et al. (2004), the emotional factors can be part of beliefs formation due to the motivational factor that will lead towards PEB. However, this would only be true if the employee is aware and shows high capabilities to intelligently used the emotions generated as well as being able to regulate them appropriately, that is, if the person shows high EI.

Discussion and Conclusion

The solution in fostering employee PEB remain unsolved because in previous study, research have been contemplated in both private sphere and general society, but rarely in work setting despite of it's potential at contributing towards environmental sustainability (Ones and Dilchert, 2012). As of now, the environmental literature experiences the way that no precise exertion has been made to comprehend a study that confirmed the components and conditions influencing employee PEB (Inoue et al., 2015). To generalize the research's finding based in the household to the workplace may be tempting, but the motivations to behave pro-environmental manner at work and home might be different (Greaves et al, 2013). Furthermore, the problem of existing model is that they are not applied in the workplace

sufficiently but it is applied to explain PEB in household's perspective (Blok et al., 2015). To achieve sustainability in organization, it is important to minimize the negative impact of actions taken by the employee towards the natural and built environment because employees spend about one third of their daily life at their workplace (Blok et al., 2015). However, there is a literature gap in the explanation of PEB exclusively in the workplace.

As mentioned, TPB is one of the theory that most widely used to examine human behavior, but TPB is not without criticism. Theoretically, the factors included in the TPB are not sufficient and it is possible to measure some of other factors and add them to the theory in order to improve prediction (Ajzen, 2016). Besides that, although the relationship between intentions and behaviour are consistently correlated to one another, the relationship it is not perfect. In fact, to increase the predictability of intention and behavior, support adding more constructs (e.g. exogenous, mediating and moderating) to the TPB when they are theoretically based (James et al., 2016; Herath, 2010). In the context of environmental behavior, the anticipated role of emotions that are derived from one's assessment towards a possible behaviour and person feelings of responsibility for the destructive consequences of not engaging the behaviour, contribute to obtaining individual moral obligation to perform PEB (Onwezen et al., 2013). Meanwhile, Kim et al., (2013) mentioned that, previous research has criticized the TPB for ignoring the emotional determinants of behaviour due to anticipated forms of feelings frequently considered to be self-conscious emotions are believed to be strongly relevant to the pro-environmental decision-making process and behaviours.

Parallel to this research, employee that has emotional experiences when engaging in a particular action, and they also anticipate emotions/ feelings they will experience when engaging in a specific behaviour (Onwezen et al., 2013). The anticipated emotional process is an important aspect in intention formation (Perugini and Bagozzi, 2001) and its function is particularly essential in the pro-social/pro-environmental decision-making process (Han and Ryu, 2012; Harth, Leach, and Kessler, 2013; Kim et al., 2013). Furthermore, Mohiyeddini (2009) clarifies that, the mediation effect of emotion emphasizes on the role of intention as the main predictor towards behaviour can improve the predictive validity of the traditional TPB model.

This research added emotional intelligence which represents the ability to regulate, direct and channel emotions and to discern such emotions and use them guide thoughts and behaviour. Besides that, employee with high levels of trait emotional intelligence tend to have more rewarding interpersonal relationships with other colleague and demonstrate more prosocial behaviours. In other words, employee may use their intelligence in controlling their emotion to evaluate certain environmental issues and make decision how to act upon it. Hence, employee who is highly environmental concern in organization can use their emotional intelligence skills to feel more responsible to preserve the environment and may proceed their intention to preserve the environment and lead towards PEB in workplace. In line with these theoretical issues, the researcher belief that anticipated the role of emotional intelligence would

contribution towards TPB literature to examine other related variables or antecedences that may strengthen the relationship within the construct of TPB model.

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