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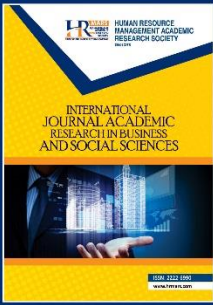
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Abstract

Persons with disabilities (PWD) and workplace issues have always been an endless field of challenges yet gives rise to many interesting topics. They have to face many challenges starting from the initial phase of looking for a job up till they start working. As a result, the turnover rate among them is very high. There are many studies carried out on the factors that prevent disabled people from joining the working force but few studies have discovered the role of emotional intelligence in the influencing of disabled employees' decision to stay at work. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to propose a framework which conceptualizes the influence job embeddedness among employed PWD. Emotional intelligence was proposed to have a significant influence on job embeddedness of PWD. A conceptual framework was developed using the Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory to describe emotional intelligence which is then used to support its connection to job embeddedness. Based on the variables engaged, it is argued that emotional intelligence among the disabled is an important element to be inculcated towards the aim of decreasing the probability of job quitting. It is believed that the limitations might be derived from the theory selected. However, this paper concludes with the proposition of further study to being conducted and this paper's implication for future research. Practitioners could use the outlined framework as a hiring strategy to guide the employment of PWD in their company and to promote their job retention. This paper improves on a practical instrument to conceptualize a new way of looking at PWD's emotional intelligence and extending the conception to confirm its effect on their job embeddedness.

Keywords: Disabled Employees, Job Embeddedness, Emotional Intelligence, Person with Disabilities, Working Disabled

Introduction

Person with disabilities (PWD) have to face many worries and issues at the workplace. There are many researches that provides confirmation on some of the problems on integrating PWD in the workplace such as prejudice that results from stereotyping (Piggott, Sapey & Wilenius, 2005), problems with the building structure and environment (Newton, Ormerod & Thomas, 2007; Kim, 2017), communication barriers (Zahari, Yusoff, Jamaluddin, Radzi, & Othman, 2010) and lack of support (Wilson-Kovacs, Ryan, Haslam & Rabinovich, 2008). Hence, the Disability Act 2008 was enacted to address the rights of PWD in Malaysia. On the other hand, the Welfare Service Department is in charge of the welfare of this group while the Labour Department is responsible towards addressing and remedying the employment matters among them.

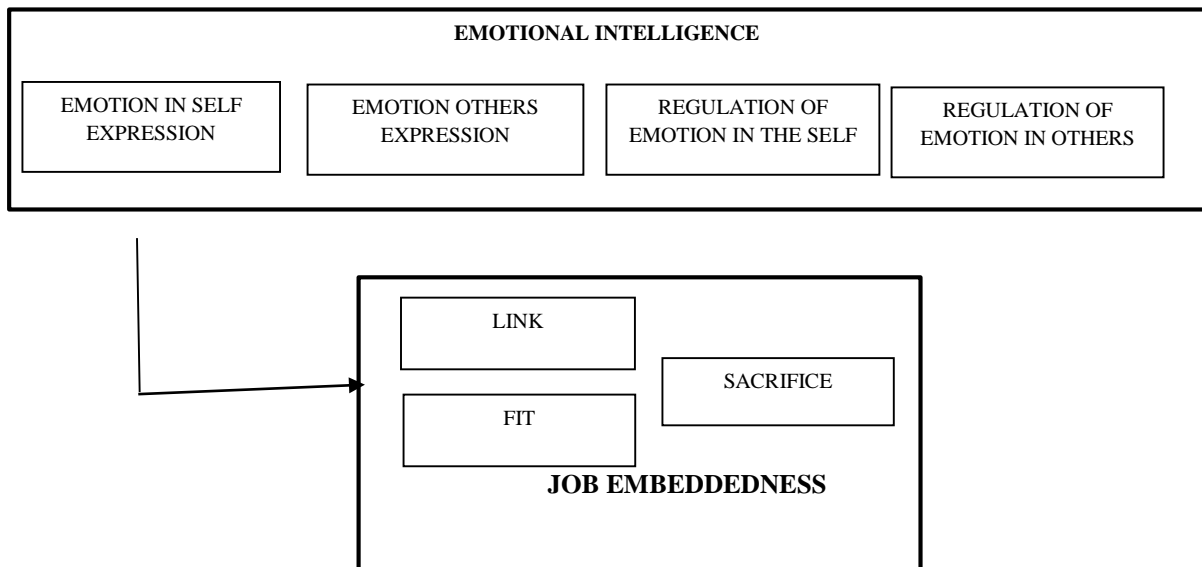
Despite the efforts done to help the disabled in the workplace, the turnover among them is high (Welfare Service Department, 2012). Scholars have investigated ways on how to increase the employment duration among the disabled (Buciuniene & Kazlauzkaite, 2010; Love, Traustadottir & Rice, 2018; Piggott et al., 2005; Ta & Leng, 2013). However, there is a lack of studies focusing on the role of emotional intelligence in ensuring that PWD may stay longer with their job. It is believed that emotional intelligence has a pervasive influence on job performance in diverse career setting as it comprises the factors of consideration in a relationship. Furthermore, Carmeli and Josman (2006) and Wong and Law (2002) have put of some evidence that emotional intelligence has an influence on employee attitudes in the workplace. Therefore, it is believed that emotional intelligence will help disabled employees in handling such feelings without having it swamp their mind.

This paper will focus on the role of emotional intelligence to ensure that disabled employees will be more embeded in their job. Thus, the purpose of this study is to address this gap in literature by proposing a Disabled or PWD Job Embeddedness Model. The theoretical perspective employed is based on the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) to explain how PWD employee's emotional intelligence influences his or her job embeddedness.

A Proposed Conceptual Model

The suggested conceptual model shows the relationship between emotional intelligence and PWD job embeddedness (see Figure 1). This model recommends that emotional intelligence influences PWD job embeddedness. According to prevalent literature, emotional intelligence consists of four key variables (Law, Wong & Song, 2004; Salovey & Mayer, 1990) namely; emotion in self-expression, emotion in others expression, regulation of emotion in the self and regulation of emotion in others. Emotional intelligence is said to be an antecedent of an employee's behavior. For example, it is found that a follower's high level of emotional intelligence will be related to lower turnover intentions (Jordan & Troth, 2011). Hence, this belief may positively influence an employee with disability's perception about their job embeddedness.

Fig 1: Emotional Intelligence and PWD Job Embeddedness Conceptual Model



Theoretical Background

Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory

Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory’s basic principle is that “people strive to retain, protect, and build resources and that what is threatening to them is the potential or actual loss of these valued resources” (Hobfoll, 1989, p.516). This theory states that employees really appreciate their valuable resources (Harris et al., (2011). The allocated and accumulated precious resources will motivate an employee’s behavior and lead to positive outcomes (Harris et al., 2011; Hobfoll, 1989). Even though the COR Theory suggests that an employee can be motivated by abundance of resource received, however it might bring negative consequences as well if the employee perceives with such in negative situations (Harris et al., 1989) such as feeling threatened with resource losses or not being able to have sufficient resources in return with what they have invested or if no replenishment is done towards the diminishing resources (Hobfoll, 1989).

Based on COR Theory, it is argued that job embeddedness is most likely to occur in situations where there is an abundance of inner resources received (emotional intelligence). Furthermore, this theory recognizes the importance of an employee with disability’s emotional intelligence to enhance their motivation to be attached longer to the organization. For instance, disabled employees who have high level of emotional intelligence could create more excitement at workplace as it fosters understanding and acceptance of other people’s surroundings as well as their own.

Literature Review Emotional Intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence is not new. However, it has received a considerable interest among researchers based on its relevance in explaining the impact it has on attitudes in the workplace (Wong & Law, 2002). According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), emotional

intelligence is defined as the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own feeling and other's feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. It is focused on the human competencies that human use to facilitate their abilities in dealing with the realities of life. However, emotional intelligence has received much claims and criticisms regarding its contribution to the success of organizational effectiveness (Antonakis, Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2009; Cherniss, Extein, Goleman & Weissberg, 2006; Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts, 2004). On the other hand, many researches have established that emotional intelligence has its validity in management studies (Jordan & Troth, 2011; Maamari & Majdalani, 2019; Webb, 2009).

For instance, Kunnanatt (2008) argued on the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace. He contends that the intelligence quotient (IQ) alone could not guaranty an excellent human performance or future job advancement. It is clearly stated here that emotional intelligence is essential in advancing one's career successfully. Emotional intelligence is believed to influence organizational effectiveness based on some research findings. For instance, Mishra and Mohapatra's (2010) study on executives from the private and public sector sample found that emotional intelligence contributes to predicting overall job performance. Furthermore, O'Boyle Jr., Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver and Story (2010) and Lee and Chelladurai (2017) argued that emotional intelligence is significantly and positively correlated with job performance.

The key dimensions of emotional intelligence are perceived emotions, which is the ability to accurately recognize emotions, and the use of emotions which focuses on the way ones feelings influences the way they think and, understand emotions, in another words the ability to understand information projected by emotions and lastly, manage the emotions, which is the ability to regulate moods and emotions in oneself and other people (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). It is believed that emotionally intelligent people have the ability to cultivate within them better attitudes, clear perceptions as well as productive social relationships which are important to enhance the quality of their career and life (Goleman, 1995; Serrat, 2017; Tissa, 2019). Besides that, emotional intelligence has received vivid claims on its contribution to organizational effectiveness and its impact in work success (Goleman, 1998). Despite some of the criticism positing that it is irrelevant (Antonakis et al., 2009), it is believed that the central issues of emotional intelligence is still being developed and established.

Job Embeddedness

The content of job embeddedness was introduced by Mitchell and Lee (2001). This concept explicates on factors that make people stay on with their jobs. The three important dimensions of job embeddedness are links or the connection which individuals have with other people, the abilities of how fit a person is in the environment and finally the sacrifices that the person has to tolerate upon leaving the organization. These three dimensions, links, fit and sacrifice can be disaggregated into two major components namely on-the-job embeddedness and off-the-job embeddedness.

There are many studies carried out (Chen, Chou & Wang, 2010; Dechawatanapaisal 2017; Harris et al., 2009; Lee, Hom, Eberly & Li, 2018) which confirm on job embeddedness capacity in

the workplace. For instance, the practical importance of job embeddedness is that it can help to predict turnover better (Yang, Ma & Hu, 2011) and affects intention to quit both directly or indirectly (Knight & Leimer, 2009).

Development of Research Propositions

The Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Disabled Employees Job Embeddedness

There are evidences that emotional intelligence has an influence on attitudes in the workplace (Wong & Law, 2002; Lee & Chelladurai, 2017) such as leadership style, turnover intention and job satisfaction. Polychroniu (2009) for instance found a link between emotional intelligence among supervisors which is positively associated with their leadership style. This leadership style is also found to influence their team effectiveness with employees. Moreover, Jordan and Troth (2011) found a relationship between the high level of employees' emotional intelligence and lower turnover intention. They argued that employees with a high level of emotional intelligence are less likely to have an intention to leave their workplace. Similarly, Sy, Tram and O'hara's (2006) report fully supported the relationship between employees' emotional intelligence and their job satisfaction. Furthermore, Yip, Stein, Cote and Carney (2019) suggested that low emotional intelligence may lead to maladaptive decision-making which it is based on the appraising physiological arousal incorrectly. Based on these analyses, it is found that a high level of emotional intelligence will encourage positive employee work behavior. In line with prior researches, it is posited that:

Proposition 1: Higher levels of disabled employees' emotional intelligence will be positively associated with their job embeddedness.

Conclusions and Implications of the Study

Theoretical and Contextual Contribution

This study suggests a conceptual model that will serve as a basis for developing practical human resource tools for evaluating the possibility of improving hiring and retention of PWD in an organization. This model provides a framework for understanding on how employees with disability apply their emotional intelligence and how this involvement might stimulate their job embeddedness. Furthermore, this study provides practical application for the PWD and the organization's decision makers. More specifically, the finding of this study provides insight into how PWD should apply their emotional intelligence to help them stay longer on their job. Clearly, they can benefit from attempting to improve their feeling and emotion in their daily life. It is argued that emotionally intelligent disabled people can promote a high level of engagement in their job. Thus, managers should interact closely with their disabled employees to form high quality relationships with them as well as to ensure that they feel appreciated and perform on a high level of commitment.

Existing literature on disabled employment (e.g., Buciuniene & Kazlauskaite, 2010; Dibben, James & Cunningham, 2001; Newton et al., 2007; Vila, Pallisera & Fullana, 2007) offers a convincing case that few changes can be done in the employing of PWD which would help them to stay longer in a workplace. While recent studies give concentration on the same unsolved barrier issues on

PWD (e.g., Schur, Kruse, Blasi, & Blanck, 2009; Shier, Graham & Jones, 2009; Zahari et.al, 2010), a systematic analysis based on the PWD inner reaction is still limited. Therefore, this study provides a theoretical basis for understanding PWD emotion in the context of remaining with the same job and the same employer longer.

It is also important for the employers to understand that employees with disability's job embeddedness might be related to their emotional intelligence. The relationship of this concept suggests that the inner strength of these employees with disabilities shows their willingness and enthusiasm to be like other nondisabled people. This is based on the assumption that emotional intelligence may help them display remarkable empathy in their feelings and changes their approach towards their colleagues accordingly (Nguyen, White, Hall, Bell & Ballentine, 2019). Disabled employees also should be given more opportunities to show their real talent and succeed in their jobs. On the other hand, employers must fulfill their responsibility to improve the working environment (Ma et al., 2018) to be more disabled socially friendly to the disabled as theorized in COR Theory. In a nutshell, this model contributes to the way we understand how emotional intelligence plays an important role in influencing PWD to stay longer in their job.

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