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Factors Affecting Organizational Citizenship Behavior among Malaysian Bank Employees: The Moderating Role of Islamic Work Ethic

Jihad Mohammad^a, Farzana Quoquab^{b,*}, Rosmini Omar^c

^{a, b, c} *International Business School, UTM, Jalan Semarak, 54100, KL, Malaysia*

Abstract

The inconsistent relationships between distributive justice, procedural justice and organizational citizenship behaviour have inspired this research to introduce a new moderator variable. This study includes Islamic work ethic as a third variable that has the potential to resolve conflict in the existing literature. To achieve the objectives of this study, data was collected through a survey of 192 employees at Islamic banks in Malaysia. The partial least square technique was employed to analyse the data. The results of this study revealed that distributive justice and procedural justice predicts organizational citizenship behaviour. The findings also suggested that Islamic work ethic predicts organizational citizenship behaviour. However, contrary to expectation, Islamic work ethic does not moderate the relationships between distributive justice, procedural justice and organizational citizenship behaviour. The limitations and suggestions for future research are discussed here.

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1. Introduction

Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and organizational justice (OJ) are important topics in organizational

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +6-032-180-5049.

E-mail address: fqhbabib@ibs.utm.my

sciences which has received extensive attention from researchers for the last four decades (Carpenter et al., 2014; Podaskoff et al., 2009). This concern can be ascribed to the significant contribution of OCB and OJ to organizational success, progress and prosperity (Podaskoaf et al., 2014). Nonetheless, concepts and definitions of OCB and OJ are varied, and hence, have yet to attain theoretical solidity. To illustrate, Mohammad, Quoquab, Nik Abd Rahman, and Idris (2015, p.1), defined OCB as “helping the organization to sustain in the future effectively, efficiently, and competitively by adopting a set of moral, constructive, and positive behaviors that transcend employees’ formal job requirements”. On the other hand, Greenberg and Colquite (2005) refer to OJ as the employees’ perception of fairness with respect to distribution of organizational resource and procedure that used to distribute these resources. Streams of research (see Organ, 1988, Podaskoff et al., 2000; Chen & Jin, 2014) found a positive and significant relationship between employees’ perception of justice and their citizenship behavior. Nevertheless, other researchers like Schappe (1998), Tansky (1993), and Hassan and Mohd Noor (2008) found that fairness has no direct effect on OCB. Thus, it is essential to consider a third variable that could help resolve this inconsistency in the current literature. This study suggested Islamic Work Ethic (IWE) to reconcile this contradiction.

IWE is defined as a set of moral principles prescribed in the *Quran* and *Sunnah* that guides employees’ attitude and behaviors at their workplace (Quoquab & Mohammad, 2013). At the workplace, it emphasizes and advocates the noble and sublime values like honesty, flexibility, fairness, generosity, and responsibility (Yousef, 2001). Moreover, Islamic work ethic is a crucial factor that can boost the effectiveness, efficiency, and capability of all types of organizations (Al-Modaf, 2005). Additionally, Abeng (1997) indicated that organizations could work at high levels of productivity and competency by adopting an Islamic ethical framework that guide and help to organize their work.

Despite the development of IWE, the majority of studies related to work ethic which encapsulates its relationship with individual and organizational variables still focus on Western context, with Protestant work ethic (PWE) taking center stage. Undoubtedly, these consistent empirical works are valuable to the growth in understanding issues of work ethics. However, such concentrations of thoughts may neglect the gaps in understanding other contexts, dissimilar and non-linear with western perspectives. The scanty attention toward IWE leads to existing debates (Ahmad, 2011; Ali & Al-Owaihian, 2008). As such, the current study aims to address the important role of IWE and its effect on individual’s behavior at the workplace. More specifically, this study aims to achieve two objectives: (i) to predict the effect of distributive justice and procedural justice on OCB, (ii) and to examine the moderating role of IWE on the relationship between two types of justice (distributive justice; procedural justice) and OCB.

The rest of the paper is fivefold. First, hypotheses are developed based on a brief literature review. Next, methodology utilized in this study is discussed followed by findings and discussion. Lastly, a conclusion is reached and limitations and future research directions are highlighted at the end of the paper.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses development

2.1. *Distributive justice, procedural justice, and organizational citizenship behavior*

In general, employees evaluate an organization’s fairness based on the fair ratio of outcome they receive from the organization (e.g., salary, promotion, bonus, recognition, and job status) compared to their input (e.g., intelligence, experience, training, skill, education) (Adams, 1965). Other studies found that employees are also concerned about the fairness of organization regarding procedures, methods, and policies that determine organizational outcomes (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Lind & Tyler, 1988). The first example is considered as distributive justice whereas; the latter is ascribed as procedural justice. Past studies that connect organizational justice to OCB found inconsistent results. For example, Farh, Early, and Lin (1997) and George (1991) found that distributive justice (DJ) is positively correlated with OCB, whereas, others found no relationship between the two constructs (Moorman, 1999; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). Moreover, Brockner and Adist (1986) and Konovsky and Pugh (1994) found that employees’ perception of procedural justice (PJ) is significantly related to an increase in their citizenship behavior. Additionally, Schappe (1998) alleged that PJ is not able to predict OCB.

In general, organizational variables may hold different meanings in different cultures, hence, exhibit differences in term of their relationships (Nik Abd Rahman, 2001). Therefore, Korsgaard, Meglino, and Lester, (2010) stressed the importance of studying OCB in different contexts, since this behaviour is rooted in the culture of the country.

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