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Research Article

Talent Management at Service Sector: Linking Organizational Based Self-esteem to Servant Leadership, Interactional Justice and Job Dedication

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Abstract

Background and Objective: On numerous occasions it has been suggested that individual's self-esteem formed around study and organizational experiences plays an important role in determining employee's study motivation and dedication. The antecedents of organizational based self-esteem are, to some extent controllable at the organizational level. The main objective of this research is to investigate the antecedent and outcome of organizational based self-esteem in the services sector in Malaysia. **Materials and Methods:** This study examines the antecedents and outcome of organizational based self-esteem focusing on the services sector in Malaysia. Self-administered online questionnaire was used involving 119 individuals working in the services sector in Malaysia. **Results:** The results obtained shows that both servant leadership and interactional justice have significant positive relationship with organizational based self-esteem. Consequently, organizational based self-esteem is significant and positively effects job dedication which is the outcome of the study. **Conclusion:** From this research work it is concluded that this study could be used as a guideline for organizations particularly for leaders to enhance employees' organizational based self-esteem which subsequently leads to better employee job dedication. Theoretical, practical and societal implications are also discussed.

Key words: leadership, interactional justice, self-administered online questionnaire

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INTRODUCTION

Work is performed by people and for each of those distinctive individuals there is an intricate of reasons for them to perform their work in a certain way, standards and with levels of energy and enthusiasm. This complex interaction can be summed up in one word as "Job dedication". Employee job dedication is an individual's tenacity, positive emotions, state of well-being curbing from reoccurring cognitive and affective appraisals of several various job and organizational situations. The combination of these elements will result in coherent, constructive work objectives and behaviors¹.

Employees tend to leave companies and seek for other opportunities elsewhere for several reasons, including lack of trust in leadership, limited opportunity for advancement and career development and because the job wasn't what the employee thought it would be. Employees usually do not leave for more money, most of the time they leave because they are no longer motivated and are no longer dedicated to work for the organization². Employee job dissatisfaction and poor job dedication have been recognized as significant issues, it is important to explore the reasons and avenues to improve them.

Job dedication is particularly important in the services sector where the products are intangible and the services performed by the employees are the main contributor for the company. In Malaysia, the services sector will continue to lead economic growth. Malaysia emphasizes the importance of the service sector by reviewing the Tenth Malaysia Plan and Eleventh Malaysia Plan.

Leadership effectiveness and employee job dedication are two criteria's that have been regarded as fundamentals for organizational success. A great and capable leader provides direction for the organization and lead employees towards accomplishing desired goals. Similarly, dedicated employees are more likely to put in the extra effort in their day-to-day assigned tasks and pursue organizational interests³. Servant leadership emphasizes that great leader is portrait as servant first and that particular trait is the key towards great leadership⁴. Servant leadership behavior has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and is positively associated with trust in leader⁵.

Trust is an important aspect in a relationship between leaders and subordinates. A trustworthy leader will be more likely to create and maintain a high degree of interactional justice between the leader and subordinates which could foster productive work behavior. Interactional justice has been described as feelings of fairness of an individual on how he or she is treated in an organization typically by their supervisor or manager⁶.

Organizational based self-esteem is the degree of which an individual or employee believes that he or she is significant, capable and worthy to the organization⁷. Previous studies substantiated that there is a significant influence between organizational based self-esteem with job performance, intrinsic motivation, organizational citizenship, commitment and satisfaction. Thus, this study will try to examine the relationship or the link between servant leadership, interactional justice as antecedents of organizational based self-esteem and job dedication as the outcome in the services sector in Malaysia. Thus, the specific objectives of this study are:

- To examine the influence of servant leadership on organizational based self-esteem
- To examine the influence of interactional justice on organizational based self-esteem
- To examine the influence of organizational based self-esteem on job dedication

Service sector: The services sector is also known as the tertiary sector of the economy. Conventional economic literature defines services as intangible goods. The services sector consists of the provision of services to businesses and also to final consumers. In general, the main characteristic of the services sector is that this sector does not produce end products but instead produce services. In Malaysia, the services sector will continue to lead economic growth because of its large size and sustained high growth in recent years, the services sector is expected to play a bigger role in generating income and employment as well as in leading economic growth in the future. In line with the pro-active measures to strengthen the services sector and also with the increasing domestic demand, the contribution of the services industry to the Malaysian economy will further increase, consistent with the developments seen in the services industry in the major developed economies, such as the US, Europe and Japan⁸. Malaysia emphasizes the importance of the service sector by reviewing the Tenth Malaysia Plan and Eleventh Malaysia Plan. The services sector contributed 53% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and grew 6.3% annually during the Tenth Malaysia Plan, 2011-2015). Referring to The Eleventh Malaysia Plan, 2016-2020, the services sector will still be the economic growth primary driver (Economic Planning Unit, 2016).

According to The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), the services sector in Malaysia comprise of construction, architecture, engineering, healthcare, education, oil and gas, franchising, ICT, logistics and transportation as well as business services. The Malaysian

government had liberalized the services sector on April, 2009 due to the importance of this sector. The liberalization of the services sector will not only strengthen the competitiveness of the sector but will also help to attract foreign investors and bring professionals and technology.

Job dedication: Scholars have defined job dedication in various ways in previous studies. The relativity strength between an individual's identification with the organization is defined as the employee's job dedication. Issues such as high employee turnover, which then contributes to high labour costs and poor services by employees, are often associated or caused by poor employee job dedication⁹. The study on the impact of transformational leadership and the level of employee dedication in the hospitality organization showed that there is a positive relationship between employee's dedication level with the implementation degree of transformational leadership. In order to achieve desirable outcomes, dedication is exchanged in a relationship between the individual and the organization¹⁰.

In a study regarding to the Balance Score Card (BSC) and employee's job dedication, job dedication is defined as the relative strength of identification that employee demonstrates towards their organization. Job dedication is also defined as the psychological identification, psychological importance and performance importance related to individual's self-image¹¹. There are many positive outcomes that relates to employee's job dedication in an organization such as decrease in number of absenteeism and employee turnover¹², increase the performance of individual in an organization¹³, improve the employees' attitude towards their job and strengthen the employee and organization's relationship¹⁴.

Dedication alludes to the feeling of positively involved or attached in one's work or job by experiencing the feeling of significance, enthusiasm and challenge. Absorption on the other hand refers to being fully focused and happy without feeling obligated in performing one's job. Therefore, a person who possesses these characters experience difficulties to detach oneself from work as time passes by quickly with being noticed¹⁵.

Servant leadership: The concept of servant leadership is not a relatively new concept. The concept of servant leadership was introduced through essay entitled "The servant as leader"¹⁶. In which servant leadership is described as a way of life instead of a management technique^{16,17}. According to researcher, the way of life starts with a "natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first" which then, consciously will aspire one to lead by example. Putting one's subordinate's

highest priority needs before one's own while exemplifying profound commitment and ethical imperatives. Author expresses his enthroned vision that leaders are mentors, meaning that they act as role models, build trust and interact with his or her followers on an individual one-to-one base to apprehend the follower's abilities, goals, desires and potential¹⁸. The knowledge gained from the relationship with the followers will be used by servant leaders to bring out the best out of their followers in order to sanction their full potential granted. Author's vision of a service-oriented philosophy may have been a very welcome sight, it was only in the last decade that servant leadership models and measurements emerged^{19,20}. The model developed had identified seven dimensions namely emotional healing, empowering, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting subordinates first, creating value for the community, conceptual skills and finally behaving ethically¹⁸. The emphasis from this research framework is that it could be used as a guideline on how leaders inspire their subordinates, organization culture and ultimately the community. The multi-dimensional model developed have been adopted and adapted in many of the recent researches^{21,22}.

Empirical research on one of the findings was that servant leadership have indeed a positive effect on interactional justice, optimism and, subsequently, commitment to change²³. According to another author, empirical research has found promising relationships between servant leaders and employee commitment, self-efficacy and organizational citizenship behavior²⁴. Furthermore, another finding suggested that servant leadership seems to be the key element towards organizational trust²⁵. Another finding was a positive relationship between servant leadership, trust and team commitment²⁶. There is a promising connection between servant leadership leader trust and organizational trust²⁷. Another author is very optimistic that servant leadership may lead to procedural justice climate and this in turn affects unit-level organizational citizenship behavior²⁸. The research findings were that servant leadership will motivate focus, creative behavior and helping behavior²⁹. Liden *et al.*¹⁸ findings suggest that servant leadership enhances performance and commitment to the organization¹⁸. Another researcher empirically test the effect that servant leadership has on team potency and effectiveness and conclude that not only is this effect encouraging, but also it builds team performance and organizational citizenship behavior³⁰. A theoretical review on servant leadership concludes that only servant leadership seems to incorporate the key characteristics that combine a drive to be a leader with an explicit and central focus on serving followers' needs³¹. It is

specifically addressed that the theoretical conceptual overlap between servant leadership and transformational leadership and found that servant leadership mediated its unique effect through overall basic need satisfaction whereas transformational leadership did not³². There are several positive outcomes through the essential concept of caring for others of servant leadership such as it positively increases organizational based self-esteem, family satisfaction and quality of family life³³.

Interactional justice: Interactional justice is defined as "interpersonal behavior in the enactment of procedures and the delivery of outcomes"³⁴. Interactional justice has been expressed in operational point of view as empathy³⁵, the effort put in by an individual in order to resolve a situation³⁶, personnel's demonstration of courtesy and politeness³⁷, the willingness of the organization in explaining a situation that occurred within the organization to the employees³⁸. In a simpler way, interactional justice is also defined as honesty³⁹. Interactional justice refers to the degree of communication transparency between organization particularly leaders or managers with the employees and how the process influences employee's perception as being treated with dignity and respect.

However, in this study, interactional justice refers to employees' perception of justice in the organization as opposed to customers' level of interactional justice. In reference to this, interactional justice can be related to the fair process effect. However, this effect only emerges in situations where people's expectations of the exchange outcomes are hazy, unclear and in doubtful situations. In situations such as this, social comparison information present and these information gained through the presence of the social comparison information provides an external reference point where people benchmarks this point to judge the exchange outcomes which ultimately affects the perceived interactional justice. As opposed to this concept, in a situation where the exchange outcome are perceived as clear and firm, a self-referent standard of evaluation of the outcome is adopted and these self-evaluations suppresses the fair process effect even though in the presence of social comparison information⁴⁰.

The recent rise of empirical researches shows that interactional justice, as well as other elements, such as optimism and commitment to change was some of the things positively affected by servant leadership²³. Another author defined interactional justice as perceived level of interpersonal treatment quality that employees receive during organizational procedures enactments⁴¹. The interactional

justice concept was further elaborated and refined where author emphasized that interactional justice does not only applicable during organizational enactments procedures but instead relates to daily organizational encounters that concerned employees' interpersonal treatment⁴¹. Author proposed the dimensions for his definition of interactional justice namely derogatory judgements, deception, invasion of privacy and disrespect as opposed to the previous two dimensioned description which includes respect and propriety. Through the updated definition of interactional justice, author does not limit the perception solely in regards of the context of decision making. The updates redefinition of interactional justice is consistent and aligned with the definition provided by other researchers⁴². Another researcher performed the justice meta-analysis, defined interactional justice as the method or way of the human side organizational practices of the management in terms of managing rewards and resources towards its recipients in the sense of justice.

Previous studies also showed the advantages or positive outcome of a positive leader-subordinate relationship. A positive or good relationship between a leader and his or her subordinates will produce beneficial outcomes towards the organization^{43,44}. Trust in a relationship particularly in the leader-subordinate relationship emerges through the perceived treatment of fairness which subsequently leads to better employee commitment which includes extra-role behaviors^{44,45}. Therefore, from the literature review, this can be related that the elements posited from interactional justice could enhance the employee's perceived of being valued and worthy to the organization or in other words enhance employee's organizational based self-esteem.

Organizational based self-esteem: Organizational based self-esteem is the degree of which an individual or employee believes that he or she is significant, capable and worthy to the organization⁷. In other words, organizational based self-esteem means the assessment of an individual's worthiness as an organizational member. Previous studies proved that there is a significant influence between organizational based self-esteem with job performance, intrinsic motivation, organizational citizenship, commitment and satisfaction⁷.

Uncertainty in an organization such as job insecurity or anticipated organizational changes may lead to detrimental in employee's dedication. A study was initiated on organization-based self-esteem as an individual difference moderator⁴⁶. In a relationship between insecurity which is characterized as one of the organizational uncertainty and the outcomes, locus of control moderates this relationship.

Adverse external situation such as job uncertainty and job insecurity does not pose a significant effect towards people with internal locus⁴⁷.

Organizational based self-esteem is quite self-explanatory as the term "self-esteem" or feeling good about one self is applied towards the context of the organization and often fabricated from past experiences such as accomplishments or failures in completing any given tasks. Therefore, in each and every individual that possesses a high level of organizational based self-esteem, there is a belief in individuals as being accounted and important in the organization.

It was investigated that the relationship between the role of uncertainty which as part of identified and known organizational constructs with the outcomes and founded that organizational based self-esteem moderates the relationship⁴⁶. Based on a study on 155 employees working with the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation of Tennessee, it was concluded through that there is a positive relationship between organizational based self-esteem towards global self-esteem, growth potential or need for achievement, behavior related to organizational citizenship, dedication towards the organization, employee's motivation and education⁴⁸. In another research, organizational instrumentality was strongly associated with organizational based self-esteem⁴⁹. Organizational instrumentality in their research context refers to the effectiveness of the organization in obtaining and securing desirable results and outcome for themselves which are perceived by the employees. In other words, organizational instrumentality refers to the employee's perception of how well and efficient the organization in achieving the targeted goals.

Another researcher characterized self-esteem as multifaceted and hierarchical in nature therefore each and every individual have the tendency to develop a self-assessment of themselves based on their experience physically or socially in different life arenas⁵⁰. Self-appraisals are unique and levelled differently in one's personal hierarchy depending on the individual's self-values and is influenced by the mental calculus of the global self-appraisal⁵¹.

The complexity of a job is related positively with organizational based self-esteem⁵². Empirical evidence also show that organizational based self-esteem positively relates to positively oriented work related behaviors such as job satisfaction, job performance, dedication towards organization. The research was based on the self-verification theory posits that high level of organizational based self-esteem along with strong job focus concurrently improves employee's work related behavior and elevates one's feeling

of worthiness towards the organization. A more recent study on the effect of servant leadership and job social support towards employee spouses shows that there is a positive relationship between those variables with organizational based self-esteem³³.

Strong job focus and attention of employees elevates and strengthen the relationship between perceived complexities of a particular job and organizational based self-esteem⁵². Consequently, It may be conclude that affectionate employees who are focused on their jobs, reacts positively towards developing organizational based self-esteem through their perceived job characteristics as opposed to distracted employees who focuses more on off-job matters.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

By integrating the discussion and theoretical concepts discussed to this point, a conceptual model of the expected relationships between the key variables is proposed as shown in Fig. 1. To summarize, we expect that servant leadership and interactional justice are antecedents of organizational based self-esteem and job dedication as the outcome of the study.

This study comprises of two independent variables, one is antecedent variable and other is dependent variable. The two independent variables or antecedents of this study are servant leadership and interactional justice. The antecedent variable is organizational based self-esteem. The dependent variable or the outcome in this study is job dedication.

A self-administrated questionnaire survey was conducted to collect empirical data from individuals working in the services sector in Malaysia. There are 5 main sections in the questionnaire where section one of the questionnaire, the respondent's profile were acquired. Section 2 focuses on the organization or company's profile. Section 3-5 concentrates on the variables of the study which include servant leadership, interactional justice, organizational based self-esteem and job dedication.

In order to test the proposed inter-relation among the variables, IBM SPSS version 20 was used. The respondent's background profiles and organizational background were analyzed in regards of the background profile. The ordinal data which are the measurements of the variables through the usage of 5 point Likert scales were transferred and computed as cumulative scores. Consequently, factor analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis were performed. The consistency of item can be measure by across the time and other various items by using Cronbach's alpha. Alpha values equal to or greater than 0.70 are considered sufficient to measure reliability of items used in a construct⁵³. The

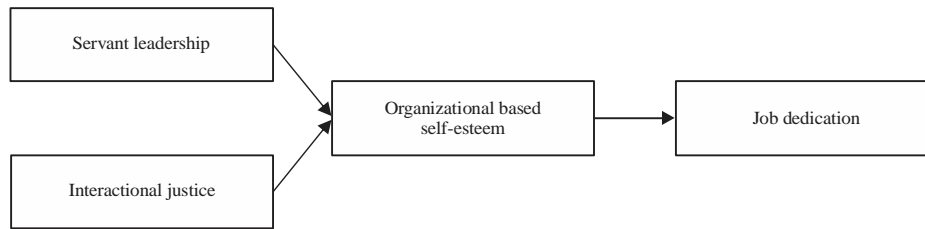


Fig. 1: Research theoretical framework

results for the correlation analysis shows how inter-related the variables are. The significance of the relationship between servant leadership and interactional justice towards organizational based self-esteem was tested using standard regression analysis. The relationship between organizational based self-esteem towards job dedication was also tested using standard regression analysis. Significant value at $p < 0.01$ shows that the relationship is significant.

RESULTS

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed using e-mails and the questionnaire was setup using online Google Form Survey. Out of 300, only 119 participants answered the questionnaire. Target respondents are individual who are currently working for service sector only. The Response rate was about 40%.

There are 62 male respondents (52.1%) feedbacks higher than the female respondents (47.9%). Majority of respondents are in the range of 26-35years old followed by 17.6% in 36-50 years old. Remaining 2.5% of respondents are below 25 years and 0.8% is above 50 years old. Majority of respondents are Malay employees (55.5%) who study in service sector, followed by Chinese 37.8%. Indian and Iban took up remaining of 5.9 and 0.8%, respectively. Overall questionnaire answered by respondents who hold executive position (59.7%) and only 3.4% answered by Director/CEO/General manager. Majority of the respondents are working in the information and consulting type of service industry (35.3%) and second highest are in other type of industries with education and healthcare among the most mentioned.

Respondents majority hold Bachelor's Degree (70.6%) followed by 16.0% post degree education and remaining 10.9 and 2.5% Certificate/Diploma and Secondary Level of education. Majority of the respondents have working experience less than 10 years (85.7%).

Table 1, 2, 3 and 4 summarizes the results for cronbach's alpha results, correlation analysis and standard regression

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha results

Description	Number of items	Number of items deleted	Cronbach's alpha
Servant leadership	7	N/A	0.888
Interactional justice	8	N/A	0.917
Organization-based self-esteem	6	N/A	0.893
Job dedication	7	N/A	0.901

N = 119

Table 2: Correlation analysis

Variable description	Mean-SL	Mean-IJ	Mean-OBS	Mean-JD
Servant leadership	1			
Interactional justice	0.775**	1		
Organization-based self-esteem	0.667**	0.623**	1	
Job dedication	0.501**	0.561	0.724**	1

Table 3: Hypotheses testing for Servant Leadership and Interactional Justice towards Organizational based self-esteem

Variables	Std beta
Predicates: Servant leadership	0.461***
Interactional justice	0.292**
R	0.704 ^a
R ²	0.496
Adjusted R ²	0.487
Significance F change	0.0000

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 4: Hypotheses testing for Organizational Based Self-Esteem towards job dedication

Variables	Std beta
Predicates: Organization-based self-esteem	0.654***
R	0.654 ^a
R ²	0.428
Adjusted R ²	0.423
Significance F change	0.0000

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

analysis results for hypotheses testing. The Cronbach's Alpha for the variables ranges from 0.888 to 0.917 which indicates the variable's inter-item consistency. Table 2 represents Servant Leadership, Interactional Justice, Organization-based self-esteem were found significantly and positively correlated to Job Dedication and all result is significant at the 0.01 level. Table 3 indicates that Servant leadership and interactional

justice are significant to the Organization-based self-esteem with significant value at $p < 0.001$ respectively for both variables. Table 4 indicates that organizational based self-esteem is significant to the outcome of job dedication.

Based on the results of the standard regression analysis, Servant leadership and interactional justice are significant to organizational based self-esteem with significant value at $p < 0.001$. Subsequently, organizational based self-esteem is significant to job dedication with significant value at $p < 0.001$.

DISCUSSION

Through this research, the findings showed that servant leadership and interactional had a significantly positive relationship towards organizational based self-esteem which subsequently affects employees' job dedication. This study fills the gap on servant leadership and interactional justice as antecedents of organizational based self-esteem and job dedication as the outcome of organizational based self-esteem. This study provides a better understanding on how leaders which includes managers and supervisors can improve employee's job dedication in an organization, retain employees and help companies establish a good image.

The antecedents of organizational based self-esteem in this study were identified as servant leadership and interactional justice while the outcome is job dedication. Leaders play an important role in influencing employee's organizational based self-esteem³². Based on the analysis performed using IBM SPSS version 20 such as the descriptive analysis, factor analysis, correlation analysis and the hypotheses testing via multiple standard regression analysis, findings obtained through this research showed that servant leadership had a significantly positive relationship with organizational based self-esteem. Interactional justice plays an important role as well towards influencing employee's organizational based self-esteem³³. The result from this research shows that interactional justice has a significant positive relationship with organizational based self-esteem. The relationship of organizational based self-esteem which is the antecedent variable for this study was examined and analyzed towards the outcome of job dedication²³. The results obtained showed that there is a significant positive relationship between organizational based self-esteem and job dedication. Factor analysis is performed to examine how well the results obtained based on Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index. KMO index with ranging 0-1 and value 0.6 and above is considered good factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity should be significant at $p < 0.05$ to be considered as appropriate⁵⁴. All the relationships show significant value at $p < 0.001$ which indicates as significant between the variables.

CONCLUSION

The impact of this research work is significantly more relevant in the services sector where there products are intangible and human interaction plays a crucial role in determining the company's success. The findings obtained through this research could be used as a benchmark for organizations to further elevate employees' motivation and job dedication by implementing suitable strategies and approaches.

SIGNIFICANT STATEMENT

This research work discovered that servant leadership and interactional justice are antecedents of organizational based self-esteem and job dedication is the outcome of organizational based self-esteem.

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