
DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ISLAMIC WORK ETHICS INFLUENCE EMPLOYEE PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR ?

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Abstract

Environmental concern has become a dominant phenomenon around the world and is now identified as one of the greatest challenge's human has ever faced. Besides, it is agreed by several researchers that organizations are considered to be one of the highest contributor towards climate change and in the final analysis, going green comes down to individual behaviour because it is only through changing the behaviours of individuals that the problems of environmental issues related to organization outcome can be addressed. Thus, by changing behavior towards pro-environment will not only can contribute towards greening organization but also will help to prevent further environment destruction. By analyzing previous researches, this study attempts to explore the role of emotional intelligence (EI) and Islamic work ethics (IWE) towards Theory Reasonable Action (TRA) in fostering employee pro-environmental behavior (EPEB).

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence; Islamic work ethics; employee pro-environmental behaviour*

I. INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation is not a new issue in this world but yet this catastrophe keeps growing and continue endanger human life. Several research that indicates human activity within organizations is a major cause of ecological degradation today [1, 2]. However, empirical research on developing model or solution to fostering pro-environmental behavior in people is still lacking. Organizations must realize that, there is now growing sentiment that sustainability makes good business sense from the perspective of well-established resource, industry and stakeholder-centric [3]. Thus, it is critical for organization to find ways to foster pro-environmental behaviour among employees in organization in creating organization condition that support environmental sustainability for achieving long-term success.

Employee pro-environmental behavior (EPEB) can be described as an approach or action taken by an employee to reduce the impact of organization towards the environment which include waste management, recycling, minimum use of resources and energy or perform any behavior that continuously seek to reduce impact of employees towards environment in workplace [4]. In addition, Ones and Dilchert [5], explained that EPEB include the following: conserving (i.e., reducing use, reusing, repurposing and recycling); working

sustainably (e.g., changing how work is done); avoiding harm (e.g., preventing pollution); influencing others (e.g., encouraging and supporting others); and taking initiative (e.g., initiating programs and policies).

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) developed by Ajzen is one of the model that most frequently used to explore human behavior [6]. In short, the main TRA assumption is that people will engage in a behaviour when they have a high intention, and their intention is increased when they evaluate a behavior positively (attitude) and believe that significant others want them to engage in it (subjective norm). According to Turaga [7], these two factor that predict behavioural intention which are attitude and subjective norm in turn postulated to be influenced by belief factor.

The study revealed that “behavioural belief” will influence attitude towards behaviour and “normative belief” may influence subjective norm. In particular, the researcher is aware that TRA has already expanded to Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by adding perceived behavioural control (PBC), however, the use of TRA is more appropriate and most suitable with the motivation of this study.

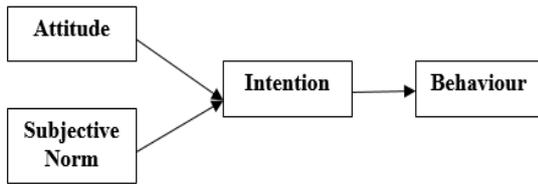


Figure 1: Model of Theory Reasoned Action

Subsequently, emotion play an important role in encouraging human behavioral change. For instance, employee who cares about the environment may use their emotion to communicate and influence other employee's decision in organization to participate in preserving the environment at workplace. Since emotions is one of the elements that influence human behaviour, therefore the role of emotional intelligence (EI) will be further explore in this study. Meanwhile, recent years has witnessed several organizational issues that are attributed to the lack of ethical standards [8].

This can be relate with unethical practice by employee in performing their task that can harm the environment. Moreover, Jalil et al. [9] argued that ethical practices could help organization to sustain in long run. Previous studies show that Islamic work ethics (IWE) positively influence employee's behavior in workplace. For instance, Yousef [10] revealed that IWE is positively related to commitment behaviour and employee attitude toward change.

Besides that, another study reports the positive relationship between Islamic management ethic and employee commitment [11]. However, there are still lack of literature that discusses the relationship between IWE and environmental behavior. Thus, the exploration of the role of Islamic work ethic will expend the knowledge in fostering employee pro-environmental behavior in organization.

This paper is structured as follows. First, the researcher explains the theory and related variables. Then, the researcher describes the relationship between each variables and employee pro-environmental behavior. Finally, explanation though discussion and propose model for this study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional Intelligence and Employee Pro-Environmental Behaviour

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has been discussed in many studies regards to

scientific and psychology literature. Subsequently, different theoretical models of EI has been developed by many researchers. However, the first formal definitions of this model that has generated a substantial number of investigations within the scientific community was given by Mayer Salovey, Caruso and Sitarenios [12] defined it as: "a part of social intelligence that includes the ability to control one's own and others' feelings, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide our thinking and actions." Emotional Intelligence rely on understanding about personal and others, relationship with other people and adapting this understanding with their surrounding that can help individuals in communicating with other people.

In the context of environmental literature, Carrus, Passafaro, & Bonnes [13] mentioned that, environmental awareness that best explaining behavioural change towards pro-environmental behavior, not only constructed by knowledge and perception towards environment, however, the role of emotion also can be associated with these conditions. Moreover, Robertson and Barling [1] stated that, EI is the ability to deal with high tensed environments through cognitively controlled over effective feeling. In addition, EI also is an array of individual skills that can influence other people's attitude to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.

Likewise, Hartig, Kaiser and Bowler [14] concluded, that positive emotions are the strongest element that may influence people's behavioural change. Previous findings concluded that people with high emotional intelligence will be more responsive towards their environment [15]. In the context of workplace, the researcher believe that emotional intelligence has positive relationship with employee pro-environmental behavior. Moreover, people may use their EI to become "role model" in encouraging others to perform same behaviour as what they had shown. For instance, a leader might show and educate their employee the importance of environmental concern and how to preserve the nature [1]. Therefore, this study derive proposition as below:

Proposition 1(a): The antecedence of EI is positively related to employee's attitude.

Proposition 1(b): The antecedence of EI is positively related to employee's subjective norm

Islamic Work Ethic and Employee Pro-Environmental Behaviour

Islamic work ethics is a set of moral principles that differentiate right or wrong and good or bad certain things. Ali and Al-Owaihah [16] describe that, Islamic work ethics is a route of human live in performing their work and the approach that they use to achieve it. The elements of Islamic work ethic are including economic moral and social matters. In Islamic terms, ethic is described as Hayy'a, which means the state of, respect and perform good deeds. In addition, Quddus [17] stated that, Muslim must follow Islamic ethic in performing their life, thus can also be practice in their work place. Therefore, the implementation of Islamic work ethic among employees can bring success towards organization because the ethics in Islam are based on good deeds of individuals that can lead to effectiveness in doing their job. Parallel to this, the philosophy in Islam explains about human responsibility in understanding natural order.

Besides that, Islam teaches individuals to understand the importance of preserving the environment [16]. In fact, when we go in depth regarding Islamic thought, we can discover that even there are many aspects that being covered in human life, the topic of environmental protection is more visible. Quddus [17] stated that, Islamic practice is the most significant way in preserving the environment because as according to Islam, Allah (S.W.T) has absolute sovereignty over man's life and death; however, man has no dominion over his own life or non-human life. Thus, it is believe that, the implementations of Islamic work ethic have the potential to solve the environmental crisis in this world [16].

Moreover, Mohamed et al. [18] revealed that, in effort to promote environmental protection, individual ethics is the most important element in fostering pro-environmental behavior. In addition, Rice [19] discovered that, religion play an important role in assuring a person to display pro-environmental behavior, therefore when a Muslim take seriously the knowledge of Islamic teaching, it may lead them to behave more environmentally in performing their daily task at workplace for instance protecting green zone, influence other people to be more economical in using water, recycling and promote environmental management practice in organization. Therefore, this study derive proposition as below:

Proposition 2: Islamic work ethics are positively related to employee's intention.

III. DISCUSSION

In the context of TRA, empirical evidence suggests that attitude alone is a poor predictor of intentional pro-environmental behaviour [20]. Based on the model, attitude towards a behaviour refers to the degree to which a person has favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behaviour. As mentioned earlier, behavioural belief will influence attitudes towards behavior. In other words, each behavioural belief has its own outcome that associated with the performance of certain behaviour.

In this case, employee that have high EI may use their environmental descriptive norm to encourage other employees to think about the environmental issues and address environmental problem in an appropriate way. Therefore, this will lead to positive change in behavioural belief of an employee regarding environmental issues then will lead to a right attitude to overcome it. Besides that, Armitage & Conner [21] argued despite the strong theoretical basis for a normative construct, studies show that there is weak relationship between subjective norm with behavior. The model describes subjective norm as the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior.

As discussed earlier, normative belief may influence subjective norm of a person. Likewise, normative beliefs are related with likelihood of important referent individuals or groups to agree or disagree with a particular behaviour. In relation to this, employee as an individual or in group that concern about the environment may use their EI in encouraging action that will benefit the natural environment. This employee can serve as a role model for other employees who then will motivate them to engage in appropriate environmental behaviour themselves (subjective norm).

On the other hand, most findings and data related to pro-environmental behavior at workplace have been established in western countries which are different with Malaysia in many aspects. Malaysia is a multicultural and multireligious country which the majority of the population (61.3%) practices Islam. Currently, there are few environmental literatures rooted by religious beliefs and values have been studied. Religion plays an important role in shaping human life.

This is supported by Quddus [17], that mentioned the fundamental beliefs and religion will impact ethical thought of a person, thus, people will follow their religious belief and perform what is required in their religious teachings in performing their daily life. Prior to this, employee that practice religious teaching in their life, will also perform the

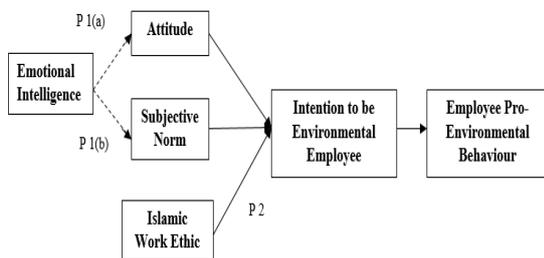
ethical or right way of doing things according to their religion at the workplace. In the context of Islamic teaching, Rahman et al. [23] stated that, Islam teaches all individuals to understand the importance of preserving the environment. This is also supported by Mohamed et al. [18] mentioned that Islam play an important role in preserving the environment as what has stated in Islamic thought.

Even though there are limited studies regarding relationship between religious and environmental behavior, one research in Egypt explained that Islamic teachings are positively related to pro-environmental behavior, therefore lending support to the existence of an Islamic environmental ethic

[19]. In working perspective, Ali and Al-Owaihan [16] revealed that Islamic work ethic (IWE) is an orientation that forms and impacts the way that a believer act in workplace. Many researches [19, 23, 10] adopted the role of IWE in their research mainly on human resource perspective in organization, work and employee related outcomes like, employee job satisfaction, employee commitment, staff turnover. However, there are no studies being done to discusses the relationship between IWE and employee pro-environmental behavior. Therefore, it is fruitful to explore this particular area that can contribute towards pro-environmental behavior literature.

IV. CONCLUSION

In short, this study shows that emotional intelligence can be the antecedence towards attitude and subjective norm in TRA. Employee may use their EI in influencing other employee's attitude and subjective norm that lead towards their intention to care about the environment, then lead towards employee pro-environmental behaviour. Besides that, this study treated Islamic work ethic as a variable that can directly influence employee intention to concern about the environment, thus become employee pro-environmental behaviour. Proposed model for this study as below:



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AUTHOR'S INFORMATION

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 A portrait of Aizuddin Md Rami, a man with short dark hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie, against a red background. The portrait is enclosed in a rounded rectangular frame.	<p>Aizuddin Md Rami Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400, Selangor, Malaysia Emel: ah.aizuddin@gmail.com</p>