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The Impact of Ethics towards Job Creativity: A Case Study of “A” Hotel in Samutprakan Province, Thailand

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Abstract

This research focuses on how to understand Job Creativity of employees. The research questions were raised based on an emotional intelligence when interacting among colleagues in the same level as well as senior level. Moreover, based on the pilot study, employees are concerned about ethical behavior and ethical leadership towards job creativity of employees. This study use census population whom are employees working in “A” hotel. The questionnaire was distributed to 100 employees. There were no respondent restrictions in demographic aspects. This study found that there are two factors affected job creativity comprising emotional intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level and ethical Leadership. This research is limited only to A Hotel which is located in Samutprakan province. Therefore, it is not in a rural area for which the business behavior will be more seasonal in terms of tourist intensity by season. That could affect the employees’ behavior and personality. However, this research cannot comprehensively conclude that employees of hotels in different locations will have similar results to this study. Another limitation is that this study is made in particular period of time which is from May to August 2018. The employees’ behaviors collected from the questionnaire do not cover a long period of time, meaning that over the longer period of time or at a different time, results could be difference.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Ethical Behavior, Ethical Leadership, Job Creativity, Ethics

Introduction

It was learnt that in an outperforming organization, creativity is fundamental to success. People are most creative in an environment where individual capacity is recognized, modern approaches are always welcome and leaders set an example, by focusing on the challenges of long-term (Alba & Chruthachail, 2018). Job Creativity which is one of the most important factors in running businesses. The focus of this research will be on the mental aspects of employees, which are difficult to be understood. However, they can be learnt and understood in order to help the “A” hotel’s performance improve in many aspects. Understanding the relations among the psychological factors will determine the possible outcomes and help us plan and improve service processes along with interactions to maximize business achievements. This is because the hotel business depends mostly on human resources from the backstage to the interactions between employees and customers.

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional Intelligence was studied earlier in many articles. Emotional Intelligence was described as a combination of different abilities that assist a person in interpersonal interactions. Emotional Intelligence is the

pivot of leadership since it affects leader-follower relationships (Humphrey, 2002). Emotional Intelligence is more important than people would expect. It includes four united emotional skills which are: perception, absorption, recognition and management of self and other's emotions (Mayor & Salovey, 1997).

H₁: Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in the same level has no significant relationship with Job Creativity.

H₂: Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level has no significant relationship with Job Creativity.

Ethical Behavior (EB)

Ethical Behavior is defined by the way that the organization analyzes and judges things whether they are morally correct or not (Fraedrich, 1993). It is a very complicated problem which requires deep understanding from various factors which contribute to employees' decisions to behave ethically or unethically (Stead *et al.* 1990).

H₃: Ethical Behavior has no significant relationship with Job Creativity.

Ethical Leadership (EL)

Ethical Leadership is defined as the determiner of normatively suitable conduct by way of personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such behave to followers by way of two-way communication, support, and decision-making (Brown, 2005). Leaders are naturally in a position of power both on and off the job, so Ethical Leadership must focus on how leaders leverage this power in the decisions they make, actions they engage in and ways they influence others. Leaders are responsible for influencing followers to perform actions, complete tasks, and behave in certain manners (Parsons, 2013).

H₄: Ethical Leadership has no significant relationship with Job Creativity.

Job Creativity (JC)

Job Creativity was described as initiation of organizational change efforts (Frohman, 1997). It has also been explained that Job Creativity, in an organizational study, refers to the generation of novel and potentially useful ideas (Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993). In this study, Job Creativity of employees of A Hotel is a situation where employee has a new and innovative thought. It can be either positive or negative perspectives. However, creativity could possibly lead to different perspective in terms of new outcomes.

Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses

Figure 1 shows the constructive framework considering the relationships among Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in the same level, Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level, Ethical Behavior, Ethical Leadership and Job Creativity.

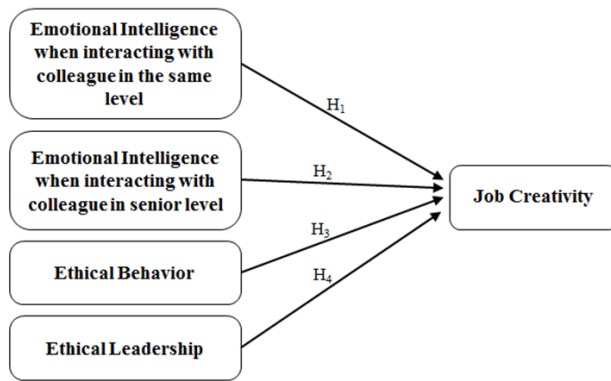


Figure 1: The conceptual framework designed by pilot study and literature review created by the first author

Research Methodology

In this study, the author uses an exploratory research paper. The exploratory research is conducted to achieve new insights, highlight new ideas and/or improve knowledge about a phenomenon (Burns and Grove, 2003)

According to Berman (2017), exploratory research sequential Mixed Method Research (MMR) design was selected in order to broadly explore and understand data management practices, behaviors, and preferences of employees of this hotel. The reason why the author selected the exploratory method is to achieve new insights, ideas and/or knowledge about the employees and their perceptions of Job Creativity. The author collected the data by applying a survey sampling questions based on non-probability sampling techniques which is convenience sampling. A survey is a data gathering method which collects, analyses, and defines the opinion of a group of people coming from a target population. The survey method uses the questionnaire to ask questions to the sample group. The author chose to set the questionnaire on paper as author believes that respondents would have more concentration and would give answers more honestly than an online questionnaire where there are many distractions.

This research used mixed method research (see Figure 2) which consists of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data to study and investigate the same phenomenon (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Furthermore, mixed methods research design is reasonable and philosophical hypotheses. Regarding the methodology, it involves philosophical hypotheses that steer the direction of the collection, analysis of data and the mixture between qualitative and quantitative study into a single study in series. Its main assumption included that the usage of both quantitative and qualitative approaches provides a greater understanding of research problems than approaching alone in either qualitative or quantitative approach (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

Qualitative Research is primarily exploratory research. It helps understanding of reasons, point-of-view and motivations of respondents. It provides understandings of problems and helps create ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. Also, Qualitative Research can be used to uncover trends in thought and opinions. With more thoughts and opinions, the interviewer will be able to go deeper into the problem. For Qualitative Research, the sample size is generally small, and respondents are chose to fulfil a given quota (DeFranzo, 2018).

Quantitative Research is utilized to evaluate the issue by way of creating numerical data or information that can be transformed into usable statistics. It is utilized to measure attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and other defined factors - and generalize results from a bigger sample population. Quantitative Research uses quantifiable data to define facts and reveal patterns in research. Quantitative data collection methods are much more organized than Qualitative data collection methods (DeFranzo, 2018).

Population and Census

Polit and Hungler (1992) define the population as the total objects, subjects or members that fit precise requirements. A census is a study of every unit, everybody or everything, in a population. It is known as a complete count, which suggests a total number (Australian Bureau Statistics, 2013). Census is normally used when the study wants the accurate information of man subdivisions of the population. The author chose to target the population of A Hotel employees, both male and female, of any ages, marital status, education level and working experience. In total, population is approximately 100 individuals. This study used a questionnaire as an instrument to gather the data required for analyzing dependent and independent variables. The data were collected from employees of 'A' Hotel. The purpose of the questionnaire is to find the relationships between Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in the same level, Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level, Ethical Behavior and Ethical Leadership towards Job Creativity which is the dependent variable.

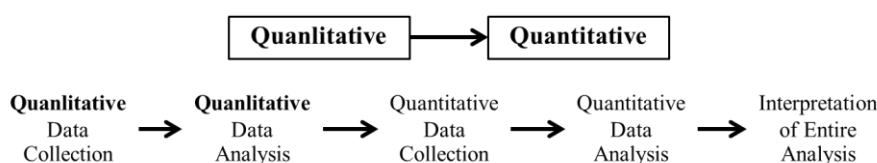


Figure 2: Sequential Exploratory Design

Reliability

The results of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test of all variables were analyzed both in the pretest period when the number of respondents was 30 (N = 30) as well as ending period when the number of respondents was 100.

Table 1 Reliability Test with Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient result

Variables	No. of questions	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient result		Difference (%)	Difference ²
		n=30	n=100		
Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in the same level	10	0.751968	0.713452	-5.12	26.235
Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level	10	0.771764	0.736916	-4.52	21.283
Ethical Behavior	8	0.774780	0.765122	-1.25	1.554

Table 1 (Con.)

Variables	No. of questions	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient result		Difference (%)	Difference ²
		n=30	n=100		
Ethical Leadership	8	0.828326	0.727172	-12.21	147.52
Job Creativity	10	0.803598	0.765941	-4.69	21.96

Research Results

Descriptive Analysis: This study had summarized total of five demographic factors which are gender, age, marital status, education level and working experience. From total of 100 respondents, there were 44 male respondents. It also meant that 44 % of respondents are male. There were more female respondents than male respondents. Female respondents equaled 56 people and 56 %. Regarding total respondents by age, the most frequent age was 25 to 29 years old with frequency up to 57 respondents and 57 %. The second highest age range was 35 years old and above. There were 26 respondents and 26 %. The third highest age range is 20 to 24 years old. There were 9 respondents and 9 % for this age range. And the lowest age range of respondents was 30 to 34 years with 8 respondents and 8 % of age in this range. 66 respondents were single. This accounted for 66 % of total respondents. There were 34 respondents which were married meaning that 34 % of respondents were married. 50 respondents finished bachelors' degree as their highest education level. This is equal to 50 % of total respondents. There were 31 respondents finished masters' degree or in other word 31 %. The rest of 19 respondents or 19 % have finished high school or below as their highest education level. There were 39 respondents with two to four years of working experience. This is equal to 39 %. The second highest working experience range is zero to two years with 31 respondents and 31 %. The third highest is respondents with ten years or more working experience with 20 respondents and 20 %. Lastly, the lowest working experience range is five to nine years with 10 respondents and is equal to 10 %.

Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) Analysis: Backward Elimination Step 2 had two degree of freedom. Step 2 was different to step 0 as step 0 had four degrees of freedom. P-value had become 0.0300 from the beginning of Step 0 that p value was 0.0881. P value became 0.0300 which is lower than 0.05 ($0.0300 < 0.05$). This means that from Backward Elimination Step 2, the independent variables reliably predicted the dependent variable at confidence level of 95% which was satisfying. The remaining two independent variables had become mean of Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level and mean of Ethical Leadership, respectively.

The Multiple Linear Regression equation is presented as the following:

$$Y_i = 3.81792 + (0.31568)(X_1) + (-0.24406)X_2$$

Where Y_i or JC = Job Creativity

X_1 or EI2 = Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level

X_2 or EL = Ethical Leadership

Multicollinearity Analysis

Three multicollinearity indicators comprising tolerance, eigenvalue and variance inflation (VIF). The tolerance of Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level and Ethical Leadership were both 0.76129. Both values were higher than 0.1 ($0.76129 > 0.1$) meaning that they were not approaching perfect linear combination of the independent variables in the equation. Eigenvalues for Job Creativity, Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level, and Ethical Leadership were 2.99147, 0.00432 and 0.00420, respectively. All values are less than 10 ($2.99147, 0.00432, 0.00420 < 10$) meaning that they were still not multicollinearity. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level and Ethical Leadership were both 1.31355. Both of them were less than 5 ($1.31355 < 5$).

Implications and Discussions

Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in the same level towards Job Creativity:

Variables were tested by using Multiple Linear Regression Correlation test. And it was found that there was a weak relationship between Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in the same level and Job Creativity. The relationship was very low and not significant.

Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level towards Job Creativity:

It was found that there was relationship between Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level and Job Creativity. Employees of A Hotel seemed have patience and maturity in dealing with senior colleagues. Jordan and Troth (2004) also made an important assumption and study that relationships occurred from the better quality relationships. It was likely that quality relationship could be formed by employees with better Emotional Intelligence abilities.

Ethical Behavior towards Job Creativity: It was found that there was a weak relationship between Ethical Behavior and Job Creativity. The relationship was very low and not significant. The relationship was opposite (or negative) relationship.

Ethical Leadership towards Job Creativity: It was found that there was relationship between Ethical Leadership and Job Creativity. The relationship was opposite (or negative) relationship. For A Hotel, employees view employers and senior colleagues with respect and a positive attitude. Lu and Lin (2013) also studied The Effects of Ethical Leadership and Ethical Climate on Employee Ethical Behavior in the International Port Context. Results from their study indicated that that Ethical Leadership had a significant impact on Ethical Climate and the Ethical Behavior of the company employees.

Conclusions

The research studied the respondents who were employees of A Hotel in Samutprakan province. The employees studied were from all departments of the hotel and without any restrictions regarding demographics of respondents. It was found that Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level and Ethical Leadership were the independent variables that affected the dependent variable which was Job Creativity.

The trend of international tourist arrival in Thailand each year has been growing for more than decade. From 2005-17, the tourist arrivals in Thailand grew from about 12 to 35 million tourists accordingly (Centre, MarketView & 2018, 2018). It meant that the trend of international tourists coming to Thailand was positive, making the hotel business to be a business with high prospects for the future. However, as the hotel business is in the service sector, it requires high attention and high quality work and services from employees. The author is interested in Job Creativity. And from the study of Dul and Ceylan (2011) which explained that the working environment and other factors can heighten employees' creativity, the author of this study became interested in Emotional Intelligence, Ethical Behavior and Ethical Leadership whether they would affect Job Creativity or not. This study created a questionnaire and they were distributed in paper form directly to employees. Then after getting feedback, results from the questionnaires were tested by SAS software in many regards.

Recommendations

The sharing and the relationship parts between employees and their senior colleagues could be improved. More open interactions or conversations could be helpful. Also, the company's maintenance of ethical standards was not at the highest level. Even the mean was in the positive side of 6-point Likert scale, the mean score was only 3.89. This was important and requires attention to improve ethical standards within the company.

The future research can look for more variables that can affect Job Creativity. Furthermore, as it was learnt that Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level and Ethical Leadership affected that Job Creativity of employees, here in Table 2 shows examples of issues and possible solutions to the issues.

Table 2 Example of issues and proper responses with Emotional Intelligence when interacting with colleague in senior level

Issue	Senior level	Junior Employees
How junior handle upon issue raised by senior level?		
1. Power distance (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior colleagues order junior to work with non-courteously manner e.g. impolite words used with junior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> React in neutral or nicely to prevent conflicts between senior and junior level Junior should react more politely to reassure mutual goal
2. Unethical behavior (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior colleagues behaved unethically manner towards either the company or other employees e.g. corruption, extra-long breaking hour, apply company resources for his/her own personal usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe and creatively think of better solutions by approaching senior colleagues to privately discuss about issue(s).

Table 2 (Con.)

Issue	Senior level	Junior Employees
3. Physical and oral harassment (negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Senior colleagues harass junior colleague in any types. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay calm and try to cool down the situation first ● Make some positive/creative comments to solve the situation
4. Explicitly expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Senior colleagues give good comments/helps junior regarding to works (positive) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Praise the senior colleague realistically and sincerely

Source: Modified by authors based on Appendix 1

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