ABSTRACT

The success of the hospitality industry is dependent on its employees and their management towards the achievement of the organization’s objectives. One of the perplexing concerns gripping the hotel industry is the dearth of qualified managerial and non-managerial human resources that drastically affects the job performance of the hotel employees and the organization as a whole. In the hospitality industry, especially hotels, where guests are treated with passion, the employees’ organizational citizenship behaviour plays a crucial role to influence their job performance. This study is aimed at investigating the employees’ psychological empowerment traits and their organizational citizenship behavior traits that influence their job performance. The conceptual model of the study is based on social exchange theory. The study’s propositions will help review the policies of the hotel industry in terms of human resource management, add value to the existing body of literature, and give strategies for managers and supervisors in the hotel industry to achieve the desired performance through their employees.

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INTRODUCTION

The need for broadening skill sets in terms of nurturing the talents beyond the core functional skills to compete in a more complex operating environment is on the rise. It has been highlighted that there will be a significant 0.20% of labour shortage in Malaysia in the Travel and Tourism industry (Singapore Tourism Board, 2013). It has also been estimated that by 2028, the direct contribution to Travel and Tourism employment that includes employment by hotels, travel agents, airlines and other transportation services will account for 923,000 jobs (WTTC, 2018). The need for nurturing the behavioural competencies arises. The employees Psychological Empowerment is imperative for the progress of the organization as the millennials form the industry’s major workforce and they demand a sense of belonging and instant gratification, (Singapore Tourism Board, 2013).

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour drives the employees towards the enhancement of the organizational goals (Lemmon & Wayne, 2015) and it is also claimed that employees act with integrity and treat guests and colleagues fairly (Monga & Cilliers, 2016). Hence, it is essential to study OCB among the Tourism and Hospitality industry in Malaysia. Malaysia’s Hotel Industry and Link analysis, (2017) has reported that the Malaysian hotel industry with a good percentage of employee turnover is constantly on the lookout for strategies to maximise the employee’s satisfaction to increase the job performance.

BACKGROUND

Psychological Empowerment (PE): The approaches to empowerment basically took two broad perspectives (Ahearne, Mathieu & Rapp, 2005) the structural construct that eases decision making and delegation to employees (Kanter, 1979; Cunningham, Hyman & Baldry, 1996; Forrester, 2000; Nielsen & Pederson, 2003; Melhem, 2004), and the psychological construct that links the motivational state of the employees in any organization (Kanter, 1983; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spretizer, 1995a; Amenumey & Lockwood, 2008).

The construct of empowerment, particularly the psychological facet of employee empowerment in organisations, is always in the limelight of attention among the organizational psychology researchers (Hashemi, Nadi & Hosseini, 2012). Psychological Empowerment (Psychological Empowerment), derived from the Self-Efficacy theory of Bandura (1977), explains that employees are basically confident about the performance at work (Spretizer 1995a; Conger & Kanungo 1988; Chebat & Kollias 2000, Lashley, 2000; Klidas, 2001; Lee & Koh 2001).

Empowerment was regarded as a motivational variable for subordinates according to Conger and Kanungo (1988), based on the theory of self-efficacy Bandura (1977), it was claimed that psychological empowerment is a process, that creates conducive working environment for employees (Spretizer, 1995) and enable employees deliver their appointed tasks effectively (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). The theory builds on the fact the psychological procedures, whatever their form, alter the level and strength of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

A comprehensive review of literature resulted in few studies in psychological empowerment among hospitality employees. It all started with Brymer (1991), who linked employee empowerment to customer service, Fulford and Enz (1995), studied about the empowerment outcomes in club managers in the Eastern region of USA. Fulford and Enz (1995), claimed that the three variables of psychological empowerment namely meaning, competence and influence enhanced satisfaction, performance, loyalty