



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND JOB EMBEDDEDNESS IN
INFLUENCING DEVIANT WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR***

MASTURA MOHD YUSOF

GSM 2016 15



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By

MASTURA MOHD YUSOF

**Thesis submitted to Graduate School of Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia
in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

August 2016

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

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Chairman : Associate Professor Ho Jo Ann, PhD
Faculty : Graduate School of Management, UPM

Job insecurity has been widely studied in the literature where many of the studies focused on its effect on individual and organizational outcomes. However, empirical study within the Malaysian context remained scarce therefore this study investigated the effect of job insecurity on deviant workplace behavior through affective commitment and job-related tension on employees from retrenching organizations. This study also explored the effect of emotional intelligence and job embeddedness as moderating variables. Respondents were selected from organizations that had undergone retrenchment located in Johore, Penang and Selangor as these three states had the highest number of retrenchment cases in the country. List of organizations that had undergone retrenchment was obtained from the Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia. A total of 243 completed questionnaires were received back out of the 630 sets being sent out. Hypotheses testing were carried out using Partial Least Square using the software Smart PLS 2.0. The results showed that job insecurity was negatively related to affective commitment ($-0.37, p < .01$) and positively related to job-related tension ($0.21, p < .01$). Results indicated no relationship between affective commitment and deviant workplace behavior however job-related tension was found to be positively related to deviant workplace behavior ($0.44, p < .01$). Emotional intelligence did not moderate the relationship between job insecurity and affective commitment; job insecurity and job-related tension. However, emotional intelligence moderated the relationship between affective commitment and deviant workplace behavior ($-0.31, p < .05$); job-related tension and deviant workplace behavior ($-0.44, p < .05$). Also, job embeddedness moderated the relationship between job-related tension and deviant workplace behavior ($-0.30, p < .05$). Organization must be aware on the impact of job insecurity on deviant workplace behavior. Therefore, it is beneficial for organizations to lay out programs that may improve employees' emotional intelligence and job embeddedness since both displayed moderator traits.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sains

**PERANAN KEPINTARAN EMOSI DAN KETERLIBATAN DALAM KERJA
DALAM MEMPENGARUHI PERILAKU INGKAR DI TEMPAT KERJA**

Oleh

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Kajian ilmiah yang meluas telah dijalankan terhadap rasa tiada jaminan kerja dimana kajian difokuskan pada kesannya terhadap individu dan organisasi. Namun, disebabkan oleh kekurangan kajian empirical didalam konteks Malaysia, kajian ini mengkaji pengaruh rasa tiada jaminan kerja terhadap perilaku ingkar ditempat kerja melalui komitmen afektif dan ketegangan perihal kerja pada pekerja di organisasi yang melakukan pemberhentian pekerja. Kajian ini juga meneliti kesan kepintaran emosi dan keterlibatan dalam kerjas ebagai pembolehubah moderator. Responden dipilih dari organisasi yang telah melalui proses pemberhentian pekerja di Johor, Pulau Pinang dan Selangor memandangkan ketiga-tiga negeri ini mempunyai kadar pemberhentian pekerja yang paling tinggi di Negara ini. Senarai organisasi yang melakukan pemberhentian pekerja diperoleh dari Kementerian Sumber Manusia Malaysia. Sejumlah 243 borang kajiselidik yang lengkap telah diterima kembali daripada 630 set soalan yang telah dihantar. Pengujian hipotesis dilakukan menggunakan tatakaedah pemodelan kuasa dua terkecil Separa (KDTS) menggunakan perisian SmartPLS 2.0. Keputusan menunjukkan rasa tiada jaminan kerja berhubung secara negative dengan komitmen afektif ($-0.37, p < .01$) dan berhubung secara positif dengan ketegangan perihal kerja ($0.21, p < .01$). Keputusan juga menyatakan tiada hubungan diantara komitmen afektif dengan perilaku ingkar di tempat kerja, walau bagaimanapun ketegangan perihal kerja dilihat mempunyai hubungan positif dengan perilaku ingkar di tempat kerja ($0.44, p < .01$). Kepintaran emosi tidak menjadi moderator bagi hubungan diantara rasa tiada jaminan kerja dan komitmen afektif; rasa tiada jaminan kerja dan ketegangan perihal kerja. Walaubagaimanapun, kepintaran emosi didapati menjadi moderator hubungan diantara komitmen afektif dan perilaku ingkar ditempat kerja ($-0.31, p < .05$); ketegangan perihal kerja dan perilaku ingkar di tempat kerja ($-0.44, p < .05$). Dan juga keterlibatan dalam kerja member kesan moderator di antara ketegangan perihal kerja dan perilaku ingkar di tempat kerja ($-0.30, p < .05$). Organisasi harus sedar kesan rasa tiada jaminan kerja terhadap perilaku ingkar di tempat kerja. Oleh itu, adalah menguntungkan bagi sesebuah organisasi untuk mengadakan program yang mampu meningkatkan kepintaran emosi pekerja dan keterlibatan dalam kerja memandangkan kedua-duanya menunjukkan sifat sebuah moderator.

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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 4 August 2016 to conduct the final examination of Mastura Mohd Yusof on her thesis entitled “Role of Emotional Intelligence and Job Embeddedness in Influencing Deviant Workplace Behavior” in accordance with the Universities and University colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Degree of Master of Science.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	= Affective commitment
AVE	= Average Variance Extracted
CR	= Composite Reliability
CTS	= Career Transition Scheme
DWB	= Deviant workplace behavior
EI	= Emotional Intelligence
JE	= Job Embeddedness
JI	= Job insecurity
JRT	= Job-related tension
MSS	= Mutual Separation Scheme
PLS-SEM	= Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling
VIF	= Variance Inflation Factor

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study and the issues that need to be addressed. The gaps from previous studies will be the platform for this study and are discussed in the problem statement section. This chapter also deals with the research objectives, the significance of the study which covers both the theoretical and practical significance. Lastly, the definitions of the main concepts in this study are also included.

Organizations globally have been downsizing, restructuring, and merging with increasing frequency in order to reduce costs and increase short-term financial performance. This is one of the recurring effects of the 2008 global economic downturn (Murphy, Burton, Henagon and Briscoe, 2013). Therefore, downsizing has become a norm in organization's strategy to remain competitive and to be more efficient in the global marketplace (Karren and Sherman, 2012). Even when the economy starts to pick up, organizations still engage in downsizing activities as part of their cost reduction strategy and acts as a tool to improve the organization's performance (Cascio, 2010).

Globally, one of the most reported news on downsizing was the Hewlett-Packard (HP) mass layoffs plan in 2012. The initial plan was to eliminate 27,000 jobs across all HP's product division and geographical locations but it expanded to 29,000, then 34,000 and the number kept on increasing with a final number of 45,000 – 55,000 employees being let go as of December 2014 (Business Insider, 2014). Although it has been reported that HP retrenchment activities will subside by 2015 with its CEO, Meg Whitman stating, there will be no more downsizing activities for HP once this cycle completed (Business Insider, 2014). In 2015, the CEO stated that the although majority of retrenchment activities have completed subsequent retrenchment activities will still take place over the next couple of years for the purpose of fine-tuning the organization but did not disclose the number of job cuts at stake (CNNMoney, 2015)

In 2013, Maxis Bhd announced their layoff plan in Malaysia to let go 10 percent to 15 percent of its 3,500 employees with the vision of simplifying their management structure in order to be more agile (The Star Online, 2013). Two phases of downsizing were executed with each phase involving 500 employees being offered the Career Transition Scheme (CTS), which every employee received a compensation package. Similarly, RHB Capital Bhd has offered CTS to its permanent employees in Malaysia and 1,812 applications were approved in September 2015 with an estimated cost of RM309 million (The Star Online, 2015). Affected employees were released in between November 2015 until January 2016 (The Star Online, 2015). According to its Managing Director, CTS is voluntarily in nature aimed "to strengthen our fundamentals, improve our productivity and optimize our manpower in order to remain relevant, competitive and resilient" (The Star Online, 2015). Furthermore, other banks that were reported with retrenchment

activities were CIMB Group Holdings Bhd which had offered Mutual Separation Scheme (MSS) to 1,891 of their employees in Malaysia while Standard Chartered Plc, a London based financier announced their plans to reduce the number of headcount in Malaysia by 11 percent (The Star Online, 2015; BloombergBusiness, 2015). Another major retrenchment activity in 2015 was the Malaysian Airlines' (MAS) that resulted in 6,000 employees being made redundant as a result of its restructuring strategy. Also, the hiring process in the year 2015 declined and recruitment was only aimed to fill necessary positions within critical business units (The Star Online, 2016). These repeated rounds of layoffs may result in severe adverse result on employees morale by creating an environment fueled with fear of losing their job. Besides, retrenchment ultimately leads to unemployment for a certain period of time given the fact that to find a new job might take longer due to the economy downturn.

1.2 Background

In Malaysia, the unemployment rate had gone through a series of ups and downs from the year 2010 until 2015 as displayed in Figure 1.1. In January 2010, the unemployment rate was 3.6 percent and gradually declined to 3.2 percent in December 2010 (Department of Statistics, 2011). The unemployment rate increased to 3.4 percent in January 2011 and remained inconsistent throughout the year with an average of 3.0 percent (Department of Statistics, 2012). In 2012, the rate started off at 3.0 percent and remained in between 3.0 to 3.2 percent before declining to 2.7 percent in September and rose back to 3.3 percent in December (Department of Statistics, 2013). There was a steady rate of 3.0 percent to 3.3 percent in the first half of 2013 but the rate decrease drastically to 2.7 percent in July and gradually rose to 3.4 percent at the end of the year (Department of Statistics, 2014). In 2014, the rate started off at 3.3 percent in January and declined gradually to 2.7 percent in November before it rose to 3.0 percent in December (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2015). The rate remained at 3.0 percent until January 2015 before it increased to 3.2 percent in February and remained inconsistent throughout the year with an average of 3.2 percent. The year 2015 ended with an unemployment rate of 3.3 percent (Department of Statistics, 2016).

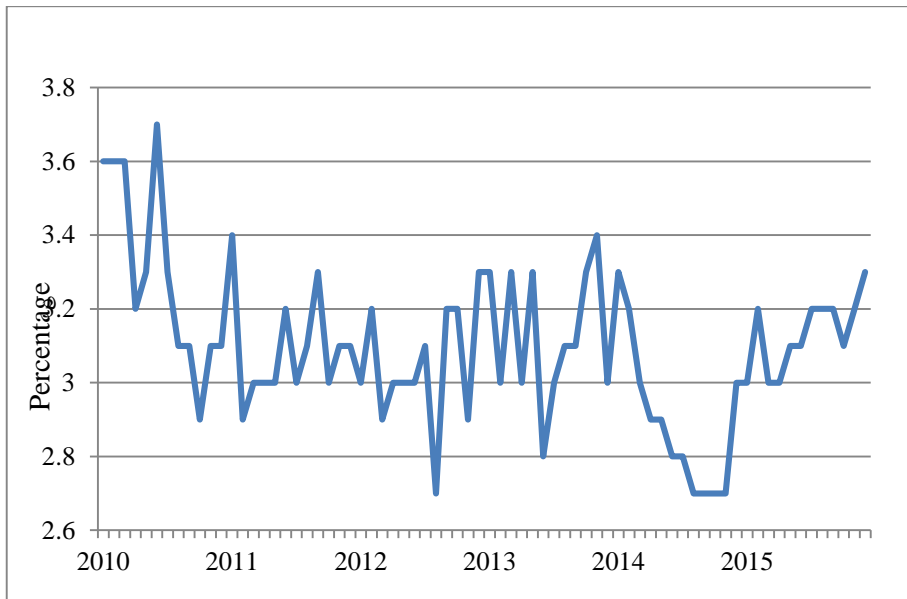


Figure 1.1: Malaysia's Unemployment Rate from 2010 to 2015
 (Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia)

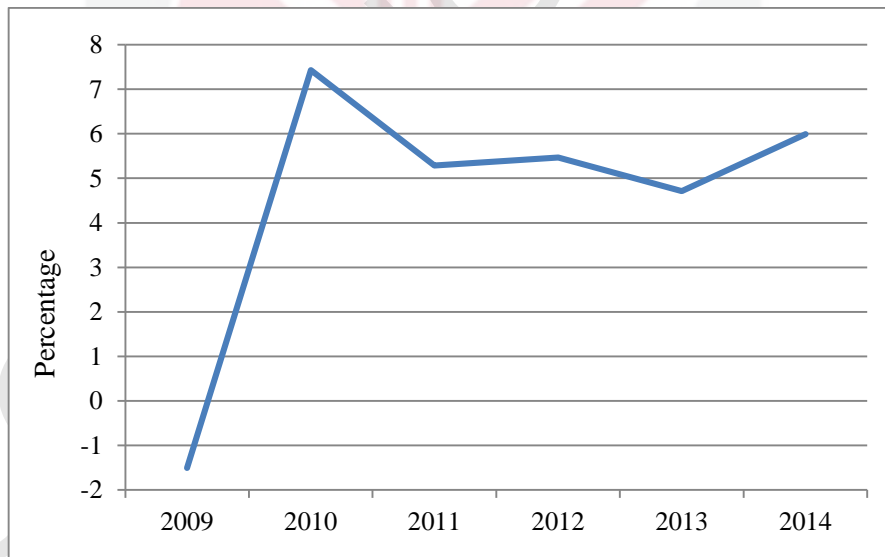


Figure 1.2: Malaysia's Economic Growth from 2009 to 2014
 (Source: The World Bank)

Despite the increase in Malaysia's economic growth from 2009 to 2014 (Figure 1.2) unemployment rate remained inconsistent with major rises and falls throughout the years. This can be attributed to the continuous retrenchment strategy levied upon international organizations that are based locally in Malaysia among other factors. Although slow economic growth drives employers to opt for retrenchment to reduce costs and streamline operations, organizations at present are said to embark in retrenchment strategies not only during economy downturn but even when economy growth is rising purposely to streamline their workforce for reasons that are specific to them or the industry (Greenhouse, 2008; Karren and Sherman, 2012). Such strategic changes are known to affect millions of workers each year; both the remaining employees and the ones laid off with the latter associated directly with unemployment and job loss (Karren and Sherman, 2012; Pugh, Skarlicki and Pasell, 2003). Alternately, the remaining employees of retrenching organizations are left in fear of losing their job making job insecurity a prominence in their mind. Job insecurity is the feeling of helplessness as a result of the difference between the employee's desired employment condition and the actual condition that the employee is facing (Tian, Zhang and Zou, 2014). It has impacts on both the employee and organization; it affects the employee's well-being and work health, causes job dissatisfaction, triggers negative attitudes toward the organization, reduce the employee's willingness to stay with the organization and impacting the organization's performance (Sverke, Hellgren and Naswall, 2002). Furthermore, job insecurity triggers negative emotions within an employee that it weakens the employee's affective commitment with the organization and imposes stress on employees (Tian et al., 2014; Murphy et al., 2013). Job stress has been linked to job-related tension (Beehr and Newman, 1978) such that tension is a response to stress (Margolis, Kroes and Quinn, 1974). Additionally, job-related tension has been documented as a representative of job stress (Van Voorhis, Cullen, Link, and Wolfe, 1991; Grossi, Keil, and Vito, 1996).

Since job insecurity is a prevalent organizational stressor, employees may get overwhelmed by the feeling of job insecurity forcing them to engage in negative behaviors in the form of deviant workplace behavior (Chiu and Peng, 2008; Lawrence and Robinson, 2007). Deviant workplace behaviors are voluntarily behaviors intended to harm both the people and the organization (Spector and Fox, 2002). Over the years, various theoretical perspectives regarding negative workplace behaviors has emerged and one of the most commonly used term in describing these behaviors is counterproductive behavior (Spector and Fox, 2002). According to Marcus et al. (2013), the content similarity between measures of workplace deviance and counterproductive work behavior seems almost perfect therefore both terms can be used interchangeably in the context of workplace behavior.

Deviant workplace behavior is an occupational crime that consists of actions that varies along a range of minor to major severity (Bennett and Robinson, 2000). These behaviors can be as minor as leaving early from work, taking longer breaks, gossiping, or embarrassing co-workers to more serious actions such as sexual harassment, sabotages and thefts (Bennet and Robinson, 2000). Over the last decade, more studies have shown interest concerning deviant workplace behavior due to its prevalence and harmful effects on organizations (Nasurdin, Ahmad and Razalli, 2014). In a similar manner, deviant workplace behavior contributes to economic, psychological and sociological

implications (Greenberg, 2010; Abdul Rahman and Aizat, 2008; Appelbaum, Iaconi, Moutosek, 2007; Henle, 2005; Dunlop and Lee, 2004; Griffin and Lopez, 2004) such as decreased productivity, high turnover, absenteeism, stress-related problems, low employee morale, decreased employee's performance, loss of productivity and causing damage to the organization's reputation. Spector and Jex (1998) and Spector and Fox (2002) had developed a job stress/emotion/deviant workplace behavior model which suggested that deviant workplace behaviors are outcomes of job stressors. With the massive retrenchments taking place, job insecurity will increase and it is most likely to lead to deviant workplace behavior.

In Malaysia, the issue of misbehavior has received attention in the past few years from main media and has been reported extensively in newspapers. Among the issues that has been brought to attention are cases concerning dishonesty (New Straits Times, 2005), corruption (The Star Online, 2016), poor work attitudes (The Malay Mail Online, 2013) and low productivity (Malaysian Productivity Corporation, 2013). Furthermore, the Malaysian Labor Department has also received reports pertaining to misbehavior at the workplace such as sabotages, fighting at the workplace, assaults, harassment and abusive language (Abdul Rahim, Shabudin and Mohd Nasurdin, 2012). Besides, the issue of deviant workplace behavior has received attention by the Ministry of Human Resource Departments and National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) due to its detrimental consequences towards productivity (Shamsudin and Rahman, 2006).

Although it is widely reported that employee deviance has damaging effects on organizational efficacy together with the extensive media coverage on misbehavior issues, published studies pertaining to this subject within the context of Malaysia remains sparse (Nasurdin et al., 2014; Moorthy et al., 2011; Ahmad and Norhashim, 2008; Shamsudin, 2003). Majority of the empirical work on deviant workplace behavior is based on Western settings. Therefore, this study aims to extend the research by including an array of potential predictors and moderators towards deviant workplace behavior. Specifically, the effect of job insecurity, affective commitment, job-related tension, emotional intelligence and job embeddedness on deviant workplace behavior is studied.

1.3 Scope of Study

This study targeted employees from organizations that had undergone retrenchment in the last five years. Based on the retrenchment statistics by the Ministry of Human Resources, Johore, Penang and Selangor has the highest number of retrenching organizations from the year 2012 to 2014 thus this study focused on employees from these three states (Ministry of Human Resources, 2014). The lists of retrenching organizations were obtained from the Ministry of Human Resources.

1.4 Problem Statement

In 2013, it has been reported that the Malaysian Labor Force generally spend more hours at work compared to their counterparts in other countries, but surprisingly being less productive (TheStar Online, 2013). Similarly, the Malaysian Productivity Report (2011/2012) provided the statistics acknowledging that Malaysia's productivity level in 2011 was a lot lower than benchmark countries such as the United States, Japan, United Kingdom, South Korea and Singapore, with workers in these countries outperforming Malaysian workers almost six times over (refer Figure 1.3) (MPC Productivity Report, 2011/2012). Certainly, looking at the data provided by the Department of Statistics, the productivity growth is definitely increasing by each year but the concern is that it does not measure up to the level of resources in hand (MPC Productivity Report, 2011/2012; MPC Productivity Report 2014/2015). According to the recent MPC Productivity Report (2014/2015), our productivity level was still far behind USA's performance in 1980 which is attributed as the international benchmark for productivity growth (MPC Productivity Report 2014/2015). According to MPC's Director-General Datuk Mohd Razali Hussain, Malaysian employees spent long hours at work without producing quality work which was a waste of productivity resources. Correspondingly, Malaysian employees were reported to prolong their tea breaks during normal working hours thus forcing them to stay on after office hours to complete their tasks (TheStar Online, 2013). In the context of deviant workplace behavior, having a prolonged break than acceptable during work is categorized as production deviance. Such misbehavior can affect the organization's productivity in the long term besides causing harmful effect on organization's business performance, which will be costly to bear (Sparks et al., 2001; Dunlop and Lee, 2004). Hence, there is a need for investigations on predictors of deviant workplace behavior within the Malaysian employees.

Little is known about the relationship between job insecurity and deviant workplace behavior. Job insecurity has become a crucial issue globally and widely studied in the literature (Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt, 2010). Many of these studies focused on the adverse effect of job insecurity towards personal and organizational outcomes. Among the much studied outcomes are job dissatisfaction (Borg and Elizur, 1992), poor health (Cobb and Kasl, 1997), high tendency to leave, strong resistance to change, reduced work effort and commitment among employees (Ashford, Lee and Bobko, 1989; Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans and Vuuren, 1991; Borg and Elizur, 1992; Rosenblatt and Ruvio, 1996). However, whether job insecurity plays a role on the likelihood of an individual to take part in deviant workplace behavior has been sparsely studied. The nature of how job insecurity results in deviant workplace behavior is not fully understood.

Past studies have documented that job insecurity affects employee's affective commitment (Tian et al., 2014; Ito and Brotheridge, 2007; Konig, Probst, Staffen and Graso, 2011). However, these studies were conducted in a non-retrenching environment hence this study intends to examine the impact of job insecurity on employees from organizations undergoing retrenchment. This is because employees from organization with financial strains or have undergone retrenchment were reported to be less contented with their job as compared to employees from organization with no economic issues (Bussing, 1999; De Cuyper, De Witte, Vander Elst and Handaja, 2010). Additionally,

most studies on job insecurity have focused on its impact on health and well-being, job satisfaction, intention to leave, job search behavior and work performance (Cheng and Chan, 2008; De Witte, 1999, 2005; Sverke et al., 2002; Adkins, Werbel and Farh, 2001). These studies however did not address the question of whether job insecurity causes job-related tension. Hence, this study addresses the above limitations by examining the relationship of job insecurity and job related tension and also job insecurity and affective commitment. Additionally, this study also examines whether job insecurity leads to deviant workplace behavior.

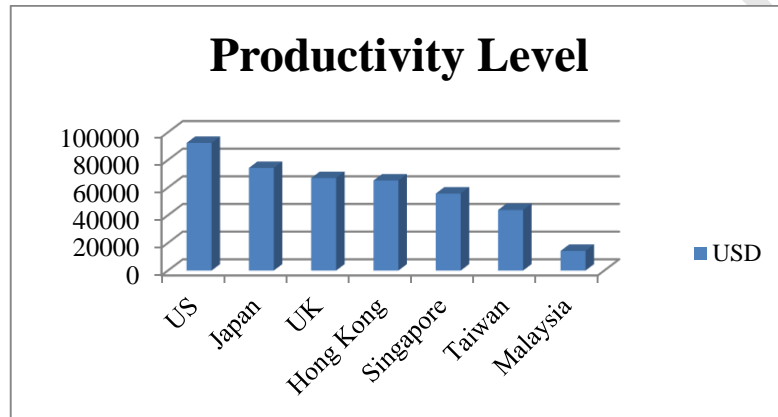


Figure 1.3: Comparison of Productivity Levels between Benchmark Countries
(MPC Productivity Report, 2011/2012)

Despite the importance of job insecurity, there remains a paucity of evidence on the role of the individual's emotions on his/her job insecurity. Furthermore, Sverke, Hellgren and Naswall (2006) suggested for future studies on job insecurity to focus on factors that are likely to lessen the detrimental effect of job insecurity. Past research that responded to this suggestion has so far focused on individual factors, to act as moderators that may reduce the adverse effect of job insecurity. Among the individual factors that have been investigated are locus of control (Ashford, Lee and Bobko, 1989; Naswall, Sverke and Hellgren, 2005; Ito and Brotheridge, 2007), self-esteem and optimism (Makikangas and Kinnunen, 2003), coping styles like self- negative and positive affect (Roskies, Louis-Guerin and Fournier, 1993; Mak and Mueller, 2000; Naswall et al., 2005) and cultural values such as individualism and collectivism (Probst and Lawler, 2006). However, these studies have failed to address the emotional states that arise from job insecurity or how emotions play a role in deviant workplace behavior.

Apart from Cheng, Huang, Lee and Ren (2012), there is a general lack of research in emotional intelligence as a moderator. According to Cheng et al. (2012), emotional intelligence has been posited to have a positive effect in dealing with stressful situations and a key factor to avert negative behaviors (Martin, Knopoff and Beckman, 1998; Huy, 1999). Besides, an increase in emotional intelligence has been said to reduce deviant behaviors related to organizational tasks (Mayer, Caruso and Salovey, 2000). Hence, this study aims at exploring the relationship of job insecurity and deviant workplace behavior

with the moderating effects of emotional intelligence. Therefore, it is vital to give more research attention on the potential buffering outcomes of emotional intelligence.

Job embeddedness has been reported to influence employee's turnover intention and subsequently his/her actual turnover (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski and Erez, 2001). However, only a small number of studies have focused on the impact of job embeddedness on deviant workplace behavior. According to Hanisch and associates, individuals tend to withdraw from negative events at the workplace by increasing tardiness, absenteeism and reducing work effort rather than quitting the job (Hanisch and Hulin, 1990; Hanisch, Hulin and Roznowski, 1998). However, Burton, Holtom, Sablinski, Mitchell and Lee (2010) argued that even during negative times, individuals who were highly embedded would continue to put more effort in work to achieve their goals because they were highly involved with their organizations and had high expectations for a strong relationship with the organization in the future. Sherif and Nebergall (1965) also stated that employees who are strongly attached to the organization are less affected by negative events in the workplace. To date, very few studies have focused on job embeddedness as a potential moderator in the effort to understand deviant workplace behavior resulting from job insecurity. By examining the influence of job embeddedness on deviant workplace behavior, the impact of deviant workplace behavior resulting from job insecurity may be reduced.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. Are job-related tension and affective commitment influenced by job insecurity?
- ii. Is deviant workplace behavior influenced by job-related tension and affective commitment?
- iii. Does emotional intelligence moderate the relationship between job insecurity and affective commitment and between job insecurity and job-related tension?
- iv. Does emotional intelligence moderate the relationship between affective commitment and deviant workplace behavior and between job-related tension and deviant workplace behavior?
- v. Does job embeddedness moderate the relationship between job-related tension and deviant workplace behavior?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between job insecurity towards deviant workplace behavior and whether this relationship is moderated by emotional intelligence and job embeddedness. More specifically this study seeks to investigate:

- i. The relationship between job insecurity with affective commitment and job-related tension.
- ii. The influence of affective commitment and job-related tension on deviant workplace behavior.
- iii. The moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between job insecurity towards affective commitment and job-related tension.
- iv. The moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between affective commitment and job-related tension towards deviant workplace behavior.
- v. The moderating effect of job embeddedness on the relationship between job-related tension and deviant workplace behavior.

1.7 Significance of Study

This study assessed the moderating role of emotional intelligence and job embeddedness on the effect of job insecurity on an individual's emotional reactions in terms of their affective commitment and job-related tension as well as their behavioral reaction i.e. deviant workplace behavior. The significance of this research will be looked from two perspectives: the theoretical and managerial significance.

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

There are four important areas where this study contributes to theory. First, this research offers some important insights into the relationship between job insecurity and deviant workplace behavior. Job insecurity is a prevalent and chronic organizational stressor (Tian et al., 2014) which previous studies have reported to affect one's life satisfaction and causes psychological distress (Silla, Cuyper, Gracia, Peiro and Witte, 2009). Job insecurity induces heightened stress due to the prolonged anticipation of the organizational change which makes individual more susceptible to negative emotions in the workplace (Strazdins, D'Souza, Lim, Broom and Rodgers, 2004). Similarly, Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) discussed that job insecurity caused employee to express negative emotional responses which consequently affect their work efficiency. Previous studies had reported that job insecurity led to an increase in turnover intention (Cheng and Chan, 2008), reduced organizational efficiency (Kinnunen, Mauno, Natti and Happonen, 2000), lowered affective commitment (Tian et al., 2014) and job dissatisfaction (Ouyang, Sang, Li and Peng, 2015). Apart from these studies, there is

little literature on the effect of job insecurity towards deviant workplace behavior. Thus this study fills the gap by extending the literature on the impact of job insecurity towards commitment, health and deviant workplace behavior with the inclusion of emotional intelligence and job embeddedness as moderator variables.

Second, this study sheds light on the variables which act as moderators on the relationship between job insecurity and deviant workplace behavior. Jordan et al. (2002) in his model argued that the difference in one's level of emotional intelligence tempers the adverse effect of job insecurity on the individual's health and commitment. To the author's knowledge, there is only one known research (Van Zyl, Van Eeden & Rothmann, 2013) that had empirically tested the proposed model by Jordan et al. (2002). The study provided evidence to support the proposed relationships between job insecurity, affective commitment, job-related tension and negative coping behavior (Van Zyl, Van Eeden & Rothmann, 2013). However, the role of emotional intelligence as a moderator was not conclusive as it did not buffer the employee's emotional reactions but only affected the employee's behavioral reactions. Another research by Cheng et al. (2012) also tested on the moderating role of emotional intelligence on job insecurity towards health and commitment. However their research failed to find any significant results among the variables. This was probably due to their sampling respondents which only comprised of female nurses. According to Naswall and De Witte (2003), men and women have different reactions towards job insecurity such that men were reported to be less insecure as compared to women (Naswall and De Witte, 2003). Another possible factor lies within the nature of the nursing profession that requires the individual to possess a strong emotional stability which means that the study by Cheng et al. (2012) would be unlikely to provide support for the job insecurity - emotional intelligence relationship. Based on this argument, it seems that the effect of emotional intelligence on job insecurity is not conclusive. Thus, the researcher attempts to examine this relationship with a different sample for the purpose of validating this issue.

Third, this study fills a gap in the literature by examining the influence of job embeddedness as a moderator on the job-related tension – deviant workplace behavior relationship. More recent research has been expanding the concept of job embeddedness to further study its predictive capacity on other work related outcomes. Such studies for example had focused on absenteeism, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and performance (Lee, Mitchell, Sablinski, Burton, Holtom, 2004; Sekiguchi, Burton and Sablinski, 2008) and found interesting insights job embeddedness has on employee's intention to leave (Mitchell et al., 2001). This study contributes to the body of knowledge by including job embeddedness as a moderating variable in the relationship between job insecurity and deviant workplace behavior to expand the application of job embeddedness concept. Although there are numerous studies predicting employee's turnover (Crossley, Bennett, Jex and Burnfield, 2007) however not much is known about the workplace behavior of highly embedded employees who remained in organizations during the occurrence of negative events such as organization restructurings or layoffs. However, it is imperative to observe the effect of job embeddedness on deviant workplace behavior because the construct of job embeddedness is all about the tendency of an employee to stay with the job and their attachment towards the organization despite any negative events at the workplace. Hence, job embeddedness might act as a

motivation for an employee to remain productive and positive and less likely to engage in deviant workplace behavior during difficult times in the organization.

Finally, this present study provides empirical evidence on the application of Jordan's conceptual model in explaining employee's engagement in activities counter-productive to organization. Jordan et al. (2002) proposed the conceptual model in 2002 however to the best of our knowledge, only one known study had investigated the applicability of the proposed model (Van Zyl et al., 2013). This study intends to empirically test the model in a different context and therefore increase the explanatory power of the model in organizational behavior research. Furthermore, this study answers the call by Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) to give more attention on the role of emotion in organizational research. Emotional intelligence is expected to give a better understanding concerning the conflicting results from previous researches as it is argued to be different from any other form of intelligence and personality (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). Also it responded to Sverke et al. (2006) to understand potential factors that can reduce the impacts of job insecurity by including job embeddedness.

1.7.2 Managerial Significance

The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will assist managers of retrenching organizations to understand the impact of job insecurity on the employee's emotional reaction. Therefore, it may be possible for managers and organization to minimize the negative outcomes of job insecurity by providing programs or activities that can help employees cope with job insecurity in a positive way. Likewise, employee's emotional intelligence may increase with the aid of suitable training programs in a way that such programs benefits their mental and physical health (Schutte, Malouff and Thorsteinsson, 2013). Therefore, the results from this study will be useful for human resource practitioners during the recruitment of new employees as they can assess the level of emotional intelligence for future usage especially in determining programs and activities that are suitable to improve the employee's emotional intelligence. If emotional intelligence is found to reduce deviant workplace behavior, it would be justifiable for organizations to invest on programs that can improve employees' level of emotional intelligence.

In addition, this study also focuses on the concept of job embeddedness which benefits the managers and Human Resource practitioners of an organization. Managers can benefit from this study by focusing on ways to strengthen employees' job embeddedness towards the organization by creating an organizational setting that boosts the employees' fit, links and sacrifice (Holtom, Mitchell, and Lee, 2006). Employees that are highly embedded are known to be more productive as they feel more attached to the goals and values of the organization, comfortable with their working environment and are less likely to leave the organization even in the face of difficulties (Mitchell et al., 2001). Besides that, by exploring the causes of deviant workplace behavior and the moderating variables that may lessen its impact will give new insights to managers and organization on how they may assist stressful employees handle negative situation better and proactively. For example, managers may provide opportunities for the employees to express their concerns without the fear that they are jeopardizing their position in the

organization. This is rather useful to prevent employees from succumbing to deviant workplace behavior. If job embeddedness is found to reduce the tendency employees engage in deviant workplace behavior, organizational can be more effective in reducing deviant workplace behavior by designing organizational structure and compensation in such a way where employees' job embeddedness are enhanced.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Job Insecurity

Job insecurity is a state of anxiety felt by an employee that feels as though they are about to lose their current job or characteristics of the job (Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt, 1984). It is a feeling that originates from the employee's perception of the change in the job environment and their rationale towards it (Mauno, Kinnunen, Mäkikangas, and Natti, 2005). This study proposes that job insecurity is the employee's feeling of inability to counteract the threats concerning the continuity of their employment or the job features.

Affective commitment

In this study, affective commitment is defined according to Meyer and Allen (1997) as an attitudinal process whereby an individual comes to think about their relationship with the organization in terms of values and goal congruency. It is one of the three-component models of organization commitment where it usually influences employees to engage in actions benefiting the organization due to their attachment to, identification with, or shared values with the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

Job-related tension

Kenis (1979, p.712) defines job-related tension as being "tension arising from psychologically stressful circumstances in the job environment". In other words, job-related tension arises when an individual is psychologically bothered by work-related factors which cause them to experience negative emotional reactions towards the related work problems (Vossel and Froehlich, 1979, p. 200). Also, the term job-related tension in this study acts as a representation of job stress. This study proposes that job insecurity is one of the work-related factors that cause job-related tension to an employee.

Deviant workplace behavior

Deviant workplace behaviors are voluntary behaviors that violate the organizational norms and rules which subsequently harm the well-being of both the employee and organization (Robinson and Bennett, 1995). These behaviors are categorized in to four types of deviance namely production deviance, property deviance, political deviance and personal aggression. In this study, deviant workplace behaviors are with accordance to the typology of deviant workplace behaviors by Robinson and Bennett (1995). Such behavior includes non- attendance to work, leaving early from work, stealing, sexual harassment and wasting resources (Robinson and Bennet, 1995).

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is one's capability to comprehend emotions felt by other individuals besides being able to feel and express suitable emotions (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). Emotional intelligence consists of inter-related capabilities that include the ability to identify one's own emotion and of others, to link the thinking process with emotional intelligence, to understand and manage the emotions of self and other individuals (Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

Job embeddedness

Job embeddedness is made of a wide range of factors influencing a person's decision to remain with a job. The construct of job embeddedness includes how a person fits with the organization they work in as well as the community they live in, the links a person has with colleagues and community, and the sacrifices they have to bear upon leaving the organization and community (Mitchell et al., 2001).

1.9 Organization of Thesis

The structure of the study follows an arrangement of Chapter One until Chapter Six. Chapter One addressed the background of retrenchment and the productivity level of Malaysian labor force. This chapter also outlined the problem statements, objective of the research, research questions and the significances of the research. In Chapter Two, the review of literature and past studies pertaining to the variables in the study were discussed. Chapter Three contains the theoretical framework and the relationships between each variable in the study with the specific hypotheses statements. The research methodology is discussed in Chapter Four together with the details of the statistical procedure taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. Then, results and analysis of data collected are covered in Chapter Five whilst Chapter Six deals with the discussion of the results, conclusions and recommendations.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter brought the attention on the issue of deviant workplace behavior which is one of the negative outcomes of job insecurity. It is crucial to study the impact of job insecurity especially during this global economy downturn so that preventive actions can be taken to minimize the negative impact it has on organization's productivity. Therefore, this study aims to uncover the overall picture as to how job insecurity leads to deviant workplace behavior by looking at some potential moderating variables. This will provide insights as to what programs or actions the managers, regulators and policymakers can put in place in order to overcome such negative behaviors. The next chapter discusses the literature review on issues that have been brought up in the problem statement of this study. Although, there are studies that have been done to explore and understand these issues, gaps in the body of knowledge still remain. Therefore, the focus of this study is to provide information on these gaps and contribute to the development of future models of organizational behavior.

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