

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings from Chapter 4. It also explains the implications of this study for theory development and practice. Finally, this chapter explains the limitations of the study and provides recommendations for future studies. The chapter ends with the conclusion of this study.

5.2 The Focus of this Study

The focus of this study is to examine the effect of organizational factors (organizational learning culture, top management support, Islamic work ethics) and individual factors (motivation, job satisfaction) on service quality in the context of the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate Oman. This study also examines the mediating role of individual factors (motivation, job satisfaction) in the relationship between work environment factors (organizational learning culture, top management support, Islamic work ethics) and service quality.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

5.3.1 The relationship between organizational learning culture and motivation

The first hypothesis in this study assumed that there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational learning culture and motivation. The data analysis shows that organizational learning culture has no significant effect on motivation. In other words, organizational learning culture is not a factor that contributes to the motivation of employees at the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate Oman.

The finding of this study contradicts previous studies that regard organizational learning culture as an essential factor in improving employees' performance (Egan et al., 2004; Joo & Lim, 2009; Guo et al., 2014; Banerjee et al., 2017; Pangaribuan et al., 2020).

The other aspect of the work environment factor could have a greater effect on employees' motivation in this study than on the learning culture. For example, equity in the workplace. According to Adam (1971), employees will feel motivated if there is equity between the efforts they put into a job and what they receive in return. In addition, individual needs could play a more critical role in employees' motivation in this context. The needs include social needs (i.e., friendship and acceptance), esteem needs (recognition, status), and self-actualization needs, which refer to the feeling of self-fulfillment and realization of one's potential (Maslow, 1967; Adams, 1971; Handy, 1991).

5.3.2 The relationship between organizational learning culture and job satisfaction

The second hypothesis in this study assumed a positive and significant relationship between organizational learning culture and job satisfaction. The findings from the data analysis show that organizational learning culture has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. In other words, organizational learning culture can be regarded as a factor contributing to the job satisfaction of employees at the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate Oman.

The finding of this study is similar to previous studies that regard organizational learning culture as an important factor in improving employees' job satisfaction (Joo & Park, 2010; Emami et al., 2012; Egan et al., 2004; Ghahramani et al., 2015; Lin & Huang, 2021).

This finding is consistent with the social exchange theory assumption that argues the favorable treatment (providing a learning culture in the organization) received by employees will obligate them to provide favorable responses (showing a high level of job satisfaction) in return (Gouldner, 1960). The finding is also in line with previous studies that argue that organizational norms, values (Locke, 1976), working conditions (Blum & Naylor, 1968), and the atmosphere in the organization (Pan, 2005; Chinomona et al., 2017) contribute significantly on employees' job satisfaction.

5.3.3 The relationship between top management support and motivation

The third hypothesis in this study assumed that there is a positive and significant relationship between top management support and motivation. However, the data analysis results show that the current study does not support this hypothesis, as top management

support has no significant effect on motivation. In other words, top management support is not a factor that contributes to the motivation of employees at the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate Oman.

This result of the study contradicts previous studies that regard top management support as an important factor in improving employees' motivation (Ali & Dominic, 2017; Chauhan et al., 2018; Schmid & Adams, 2008; Ullah et al., 2017; Basford et al., 2012).

The finding indirectly highlights the need for improvement regarding the support from top management in the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. There are many ways to show support. For example, it has always been to back employees, aid them with problem-solving, create harmonious interactions and cooperation among various job functions, encourage bottom-up idea generation and incentives, and guide unit managers to champion innovation by sending out clear and consistent signals that lay a clear foundation (Rodríguez et al., 2008).

5.3.4 The relationship between top management support and job satisfaction

The fourth hypothesis in this study assumed that there is a positive and significant relationship between top management support and job satisfaction. The result from the data analysis shows that there is a positive and significant effect of top management support on job satisfaction. In other words, top management support has been regarded as the factor that contribute to job satisfaction of employees at the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate of Oman.

This study's findings are similar to those of previous studies that regard top management support as an important factor in improving employees' job satisfaction (Chinomona et al., 2017; Attiq et al., 2017; Qureshi et al., 2018; Ruzic et al., 2018).

There are several reasons to justify the relationship. First, supportive management always helps employees with problem-solving. Second, supportive management will create harmonious interactions and cooperation among employees. Third, supportive management encourages bottom-up idea generation (Rodríguez et al., 2008).

5.3.5 The relationship between Islamic work ethics and motivation

The fifth hypothesis in this study assumed a positive and significant relationship between Islamic work ethics and motivation. The data analysis shows a significant effect of Islamic work ethics on motivation. In other words, Islamic work ethics is recognized as a factor contributing to the motivation of employees at the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate Oman.

The finding of this study supports previous studies that regard Islamic work ethics as a vital factor in improving employees' motivation (Hayati & Caniago, 2012; Heyrani & Hamekhani, 2017; Ahmed, 2011).

It is not a surprise that the Islamic work ethic can influence employees' motivation. It is because those who apply the Islamic work ethic will view work not as an end in itself but as a means to foster personal growth and social relations (Ali & AlOwaihan, 2008). In addition, employees feel motivated because applying an Islamic work ethics can help them perform their tasks well. A study by Yesil and Dogan (2012) showed that the implementation of an Islamic work ethics could influence employees' performance.

Similarly, a recent study by Saban and colleagues (2020) also showed that Islamic work ethics positively and significantly impacted employee's performance.

5.3.6 The relationship between Islamic work ethics and job satisfaction

The sixth hypothesis in this study assumed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Islamic work ethics and job satisfaction. The result from data analysis shows a significant effect of Islamic work ethics on job satisfaction. In other words, the Islamic work ethics is recognized as the factor that contribute to job satisfaction of employees at the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate of Oman.

The finding of this study is similar to previous studies that regard Islamic work ethics as an important factor in improving employees' job satisfaction (Salehi & Babajani, 2017; Amilin et al., 2018; Heyrani & Hamehkhani, 2017; Nasution & Rafiki, 2020).

The positive relationship between Islamic work ethics and job satisfaction is possible because previous researchers such as Blum and Naylor (1968) indicated that the employees' personal characteristics may contribute to their level of job satisfaction in the organization. In addition, employees will feel satisfied with their work because the implementation of Islamic work ethics can facilitate them to deliver better service to their customers. A study by Rokhman (2010) concluded that the implementation of Islamic work ethics has positive effects on service quality.

5.3.7 The relationship between motivation and service quality

The study further hypothesizes a positive and significant relationship between motivation and service quality. The data analysis shows a significant effect of motivation

on service quality. In other words, this study reveals that when the heads of sections in the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman were motivated intrinsically, extrinsically, or even both, they would provide good service to internal customers, who are the employees at their respective sections.

This study's finding is similar to previous studies that regard motivation as an important factor to improve employees' service quality (Durdyeva et al., 2014; Kimando & Njogu, 2012; Barkhuizen et al., 2015). The previous studies argue that a motivated employee will show the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately, be willing to help customers, convey trust and confidence from customers, and show caring and individualized attention to customers.

5.3.8 The relationship between job satisfaction and service quality

The study assumes that there is a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and service quality. The result from data analysis shows an insignificant effect of job satisfaction on service quality. In other words, job satisfaction is not recognized as the factor that contribute to service quality of employees at the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate of Oman.

This study's findings are similar to those of Ariani and colleagues (2015), who also found an insignificant relationship between job satisfaction and service quality. However, most of the studies indicated that job satisfaction is an important factor in improving employees' service quality (Singh et al., 2017; Tasneem et al., 2018; Lin & Huang, 2021; Sohail & Jang, 2017; Joshy & Peterkumar, 2019).

It could be that environmental factors have a greater influence on employees' job satisfaction at the Directorates General of Education in Sultanate of Oman. This is based on previous findings that highlight the importance of work environment factors compared to individual factors when discussing the issue related to job satisfaction. Examples of work environment factors that influence employees' job satisfaction are leadership, work standards, fair rewards, adequate authority (Ostroff, 1992), organizational norms, goals, and values (Locke, 1976), working conditions, promotions related to job, social relations in work, recognition of talents, group relations (Blum & Naylor, 1968), training, communication and care, network resources, and the atmosphere in the organization (Pan, 2005; Chinomona et al., 2017).

5.3.9 The role of motivation and job satisfaction as a mediator

In this study, motivation and job satisfaction have been posited to play the role of a mediator between organizational learning culture, top management support, Islamic work ethic, and service quality. In other words, this study argues that work environment factors such as organizational learning culture, top management support, and Islamic work ethic will increase the employees' motivation and job satisfaction, which in turn can produce service quality. However, these assumptions have not been supported by the data of this study. It could be there is other potential factors able to become a mediator in the relationship, such as work engagement. Several recent studies have already highlighted the ability of work engagement as a mediator (Extremera et al., 2018; Coetze & Van Dyk, 2018). Therefore, it is interesting for future studies to examine the role of work engagement

as a mediator in the relationship between organizational learning culture, top management support, Islamic work ethic, and service quality.

5.4 Implication of the Research

5.4.1 Theoretical implication of the research

From the theoretical point of view, this study provides empirical evidence about the relationship between organizational learning culture, top management support, Islamic work ethics, motivation, job satisfaction, and service quality in a particular context, which is the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. Specifically, this study verifies the importance of organizational learning culture, top management support, and Islamic work ethics on employees' job satisfaction in this context. The importance of the role of the Islamic work ethics in motivation has also been verified in this study. Finally, this study verifies the role of motivation as an important predictor of service quality. All these findings have been found simultaneously in a particular context, which is the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. The previous studies only determined the relationship between organizational learning culture, top management support, Islamic work ethics, motivation, job satisfaction and service quality in separate studies and different context. For example, the relationship between organizational learning culture and service quality has previously been determined in the context of tourism companies by Al Saleem and Al-Juboori (2012). Similarly, the relationship between top management support and service quality has previously been verified in the context of private healthcare providers by Mosadeghrad (2014). The relationship between motivation

and service quality has been tested in the context of the banking sector by Kimando and Njogu (2012).

This study also extends the existing knowledge about the factors that influence service quality, particularly in the context of public sector organizations (The Directorates General of Education) in the Sultanate of Oman. Such effort is very essential because the previous studies have focused on employees from non-public sector context such as private healthcare providers (Mosadeghrad,2014), home improvement sector (Durdyeva et al., 2014), service Agent (Kitcharoen, 2013), extension system (Anaza et al., 2012), tourism Companies (Al Saleem and Al-Juboori, 2012), banks (Kimando & Njogu, 2012), and private universities (Sultan & Tarafder, 2007; OluwoleAdekanmbi, 2014).

5.4.2 Practical implications of the research

From a practical perspective, this study's findings provide essential information to the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman about the factor that contributes to service quality in this context.

The significant factor found in this study is motivation, which consists of intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently exciting and enjoyable. Therefore, in practice, the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman need to make sure that their employees love and enjoy the tasks or responsibilities given to them. It can be determined by observing immediate supervisor and workplace personality tests. Other initiatives to increase the level of enjoyment of employees toward their tasks are giving the tasks or responsibilities that are suitable to their academic qualifications, always recognizing the employees' achievement

every time when they are able to complete the task, provide a good team member for them, and highlight the importance of their task to the achievement of organizational goals.

Regarding extrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome, the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman can provide an attractive compensation (salary, benefit, allowance) package that is suitable for current living costs. In addition, the management team (head of department, supervisor) in the Directorate General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman needs to communicate their expectation to employees, provide regular feedback on employees' performance, show trust and respect to employees under their supervision, and apply effective leadership style that accepted and suitable with employees.

In addition, this study proves that work environment practices such as the organizational learning culture, top management support, and Islamic work ethics are able to increase employees' job satisfaction. Therefore, the management of the Directorate General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman can introduce a learning culture policy that provides a budget and gives opportunities for employees to learn, recognizes employees for taking the initiative, and works together with the outside community to meet mutual needs. Other than introducing the learning culture policy, the employee's level of job satisfaction in this context can be increased through support from top management. The top management must provide all resources to complete the task. The immediate supervisor becomes the mentor who guides and helps employees. The management of the Directorate General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman can also increase the level of their employees' job satisfaction through the implementation of an Islamic work ethics. This type

of work ethics allows employees to work independently, be creative, make decisions, and feel a work-life balance.

5.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

First, the data for this study were collected at one point in time, applying a cross-sectional design methodology. The cross-sectional method that collects data at a single point in time was insufficient to capture the pattern of change and the magnitude of causal relationships between the studied variables (Chiaburu et al., 2010). Therefore, future studies can validate this study by applying the longitudinal study.

Second, this study applies a quantitative research design, with data collected through a questionnaire survey. Future studies should consider collecting more in-depth qualitative data from respondents. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods would provide an opportunity for more in-depth and richer explanations of how the proposed factors influence service quality.

Third, this study only applies to the organization where the research was conducted and does not apply to other organizations. The data of this study was collected from the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. Thus, future studies could replicate the proposed conceptual framework used here in other types of organizations such as the private sector and non-government organizations to validate the findings of this study.

5.6 Conclusion

This study provides a significant understanding of the factors that influence service quality in the context of the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. This study found that the employees' motivation has a direct contribution to service quality at the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. The Islamic work ethics is the factor that can influence employees' motivation in this context. Another important finding in this study is related to the role of organizational learning culture, top management support, and Islamic work ethics as predictors of job satisfaction. On the other hand, if the management of the Directorates General of Education in the Sultanate of Oman wants to increase their employees' job satisfaction, they should implement an organizational learning culture and Islamic work ethics. The management in this context should also continuously provide support to employees in order to achieve the expected performance.