

MANAGERIAL PRACTICES, EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND FIRM'S COMPETITIVENESS IN ASIAN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SME): THE CASE OF MALAYSIA

Firend Al R.^{1*}, Cedric Choong Ee Chun²

¹The American University of Iraq, Sulaimani

²Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author's Email: firend.rasch@auis.edu.krd

ABSTRACT

This research examines the premise of effective managerial practices and its impact on organizational productivity and employee satisfaction within the Malaysian Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) context. The four variables considered in this paper to have an impact towards employee satisfaction are job involvement, teamwork, trust level between employee and employer and work environment. Research findings suggest that managerial practices have an impact on employee satisfaction level, which is highly correlated to employee performance and organization performance. The result of this research recommends that such managerial practices to be taking into consideration not only within SME's but across South-East Asian organizations with similar size and characteristics. Such assertion is because of cultural similarities between Malaysia and neighboring ASIAN countries. This study further concluded that all the proposed variables examined in this research tend to have a significant impact on employee satisfaction within Malaysian SME's. This in turn, is found to be major contributor to the internal strengths of the organization when a firm is not suffering from marketing myopia that deter the firm from focusing on external market forces.

Keywords: *Malaysia, ASIAN, SME, Employee, Culture, Satisfaction*

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Managerial practices are constantly being examined to highlight issues of conflict, productivity and efficiency. Examination of managerial practices proves to be beneficial and pose positive impact to organization particularly where issues of productivity, and employee development are concerned (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2003). Influential factor of managerial practices can positively impact on the level of employee satisfaction, commitment, productivity and organizational effectiveness competitive advantage (Firend & Alkathiri, Hiep & Ameen, 2017). As such, the premise of effective managerial practices shall pose a positive impact towards organizational productivity and profitability needs to be tested within the Malaysian Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) context.

The assumption that management commitment to employee satisfaction implies better work environment, which leads to better organizational commitment, innovation, and improve competitive advantage is widely evident in recent literature. As a result, the challenge of examining managerial practices of SME's in South-East Asia is an area of interest to both, academics and practitioners (Kehoe & Wright, 2013).

Studies have been conducted on Malaysian SME's who tends to focus on certain managerial practices that usually lean towards organizational business models. Armstrong & Taylor (2014) concur to study that describe the managerial practices that contribute to employee's satisfaction and creativity as a mean of competitive advantage.

To that end, the importance of constant assessment and enhancement of employees' skills and abilities is crucial to SMEs as part of creating competitive advantage bases of innovation and creativity (Khalique *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, Noe *et al.*, (2003) asserts that, in this era, it is important to be mindful of the necessity to understand employees' developmental needs to attract and attain effective workforce. The ultimate objective however remains the empowerment of organizations, particularly SMEs, to have a sustainable growth (Noe *et al.*, 2003; Patterson *et al.*, 1997; Bonsdorff *et al.*, 2015).

In the context of Malaysian SMEs, it is not enough anymore to attract and retain hard working, loyal and devoted employees. In the era of artificial intelligence and robotics, employees need to possess the capacity and capabilities of attaining competitive advantage to their prospective organizations. With increasing

employee cross-sector and cross organizational mobility (Moy & Lee, 2002). Moy & Lee (2002) asserted that new graduates view SMEs as “second” option and rather joining larger organizations. As such, such assertion that SMEs would face future challenges in obtaining the cream of the crop would have to be tested. One way to do that is examining current managerial practices and gauging current employee satisfaction. For these reasons, this study is attempting to identify the importance of certain commonly chosen managerial practices, which most likely have an impact on employee satisfaction (Zhou, 2016).

Problem Statements

Small and medium enterprise has generally been classified as the corner stones of the Malaysian economy. Despite that fact, not many academic researches explored managerial practices, and the quality of talent at SME (Karia & Asaari, 2003). Szamosi (2006) argued that because talent can be expendable, the view that a given employee is the most important asset to an organization is obsolete in high-context societies. Although many would argue the opposite to such premise (Szamosi, 2006). As such, it was noticed that many researches would favor a positive managerial practice to improve employee satisfaction (Saridakis, Muñoz Torres & Johnstone, 2013) this is also found in multi-national companies (MNC) and other large organizations (Zhou, 2016).

Previous research done, was mainly concerned with customer orientation and attitude, or employee satisfaction at Western SME's (Akehurst, Comeche & Galindo, 2009; McAdam & Rodney, 2009; Saridakis, Muñoz Torres & Johnstone, 2013; Szamosi 2006). Little research has been conducted on the impact of managerial practices within the Malaysian SME context (Karia & Asaari, 2003). Szamosi (2006) stated that modern organizations view employees as an important asset. However, Firend (2016) asserted that such view is changing in the age of artificial intelligence ‘AI’. This is primarily because modern organizations will continue to depend on AI, and therefore the value of AI based tools would be more valuable overtime than that of human. Hence, the relationship between managerial practices and its impact employee satisfaction in Malaysian SME's emerge as a necessity and central to the scope of this research.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are to investigate the relationship between managerial practices in

Malaysian SME's and employee satisfaction. The variables derived for investigation in this paper are: job involvement, teamwork, trust between employee and manager, and work environment. Subsequently, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To determine the impact of managerial practices on employee satisfaction in Malaysian SMEs.
2. To assess trust level between employee and management and impact on employee productivity.
3. To assess the impact of employee satisfaction factors on firm competitiveness.
4. To identify which of the four chosen variables, tend to have the most significant impact on employee productivity and satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is applying the following four variables: job involvement, teamwork, trust between employee and employer, and work environment. These factors are derived from the literature review and considered by (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2003; Kehoe & Wright 2013; Koys, 2001; Noe *et al.*, 2003; Karia & Asaari, 2006) to have an impact on managerial practices, within the Malaysian SME context. The four stated variables above will be the independent variables, whereas employee satisfaction in SME will be the dependent variable. Subsequently, the concise objectives of the study shall be manifested as follows:

The diagram below illustrates the theoretical framework that guides this research. Figure 1 manifests the impact of various managerial variables on productivity employee's job-related attitude.

Figure 1: Variables Considered in Shaping the Theoretical Framework



LITERATURE REVIEW

Managerial practices are deeply rooted and an integral component of the national culture, which in turn influences organizational culture (Firend, 2016; Firend & Alkathiri, 2017). As such, topics of organizational productivity, employee satisfaction and competitiveness vary amongst cultures and subject to internal and

external environmental forces.

Cascio (2018) described managerial practices as a firm's focal point on gratifying and must ultimately impact customer satisfaction and expectation. Benner & Tushman (2015) emphasized the role of managerial practices in influencing the work environment and adopting positive management approach in shaping firm's culture. Bratton & Gold (2017) further asserted that there are empirical evidences that links managerial practices to employee's moral and behavioral empowerment. While Zhou (2016) and Cascio (2018) argued that a given set of managerial practices such as improvements in work environment, treatment of employee, minimizing work load, involvement and promotion of teamwork spirit, can result in improvements at the organizational level.

Based on several research, the researchers have suggested that managerial practices are linked to organizational productivity and competitiveness. Such practices encompass principles such as focus on problem prevention, continuous organizational improvements, focus on consumer and market forces, employee involvement, and the application of teamwork approach to problem solving (Molina-Azorín *et al.*, 2015). Firend & Alkathiri (2017) asserted that the general criteria for organizational success includes a true commitment by a given organizational management to change, 'change' is viewed as the agent of improvement. Such change includes internal changes that includes higher levels of improvements in the workforce. Armstrong & Taylor (2014) concurred to study that describe managerial practices that contributes to employee satisfaction and creativity as a mean of competitive advantage.

Albrecht *et al.*, (2015); Berger & Berger (2010); Hon & Lui (2016); Kandampully & Duddy (1999); Macey *et al.*, (2011) have classified a few points to serve as a framework that links employee satisfaction to creativity and organizational improvements. These points are namely managerial practices which are deliberately aligned with the business strategy and market orientations. The deeper understanding of the consumer, market forces and employee satisfaction are essential components of firm's competitiveness. The importance of employee understanding and involvement at all levels of the organization, and the importance of management commitment and pursuit of consistency in employee satisfaction as a policy.

The assumption that management commitment to employee satisfaction implies better work environment, which leads to better organizational commitment,

innovation, and improve competitive advantage is widely evident in recent management literature (Mittal & Dhar, 2015). As a result, managerial practices would be the necessary framework needed to better understand the relationship between employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, creativity and innovation and firm's level of competitiveness.

The rationale for examining managerial practices at SME's

There are several reasons attributed to examine managerial practices at SMEs. Studies by Khalique *et al.*, (2015); Lee & Wong, (2015); Regnier, (2015) that have examined SME's in various countries with similar cultural characteristics and economies to that of Malaysia have suggested several motives. These are promotion business growth, and management belief in the principle of employee satisfaction and empowerment, which reflects management commitment to organizational improvements; creating enjoyable work environment; and improving firm's performance (issue of sustainability and competitive advantage).

Factors linking managerial practices to employee satisfaction in SME

There are several criteria considered as contributing factors towards employee satisfaction in SME. In the context of this study, there will be four independent variables that are perceived to pose a significant relationship towards the employee satisfaction SME's. The four proposed factors are work environment, job involvement, teamwork and employee/employer's trust relationship (Ayuso & Navarrete-Báez, 2018; Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2003; Kehoe & Wright, 2013). As far as work environment is concerned, the supporting rationale is derived from the higher levels of satisfaction to improve morale and minimize voluntary turnover (Lande, Shrivastava & Seth, 2016; Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2003; Kehoe & Wright, 2013). The job involvement, according to Lande & Seth, (2016); Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, (2003); Patterson *et al.*, (1997), is the level of involvement of employees with job or psychologically categorization of the given job. Job involvement according to Farhangian, (2016) refers to the values, the essence and the importance of work. Teamwork, however, according to Logan (2016) is an essential component of the managerial framework in achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Trust between employer and employee is frequently discussed in literature as a key factor that influence employee behavior and linked to organizational performance (Fay *et al.*, 2015; Naranjo-Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez & Sanz-Valle, 2016; Bonsdorff *et al.*,

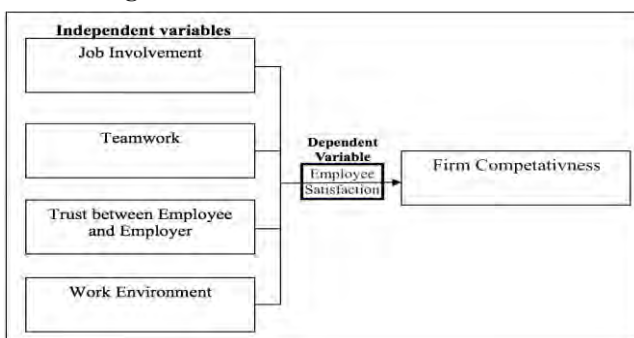
2015). Trust is required to establish a positive impact on work environment, by which it would cultivate job satisfaction and improve commitment to their organizations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on research studies by Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, (2003); Kehoe & Wright, (2013); Koys, (2001); Noe *et al.*, (2003), it has been found that management practices tend to have a correlation with employee's job-related attitude, that includes factors such as, focus on organizational improvements and employee satisfaction, teamwork, work environment, empowerment, delegation, involvement and trust that is directly link to employee satisfaction. This in turn is believed to be a major contributor to internal strengths of the organization.

Literature review also shows that job involvement is found to pose as an independent variable, which would lead to employee overall satisfaction in a given organization. This is directly related to this study. Previous studies listed above shows that job involvement is considered as a measurement of the level of individual's reaction to an opportunity given to participation in decision-making and higher level work-related commitments. As a result, factors such as job involvement, job satisfaction, productivity, trust, and organizational environment are found to be directly correlated to employee's level of satisfaction, productivity and ultimately, organizational competitiveness. Hence, the described framework below, illustrates the independent variables, which are comprising of elements that investigates managerial practices, which is believed to have an impact on employee satisfaction, productivity, and organizational competitiveness in the context of SME's. The proposed model in figure 2 includes job involvement, teamwork, trust between employer and employee relationship, and work environment. The proposed framework would provide the apparent guideline concerned with the scope and objective of this research.

Figure 2: The Theoretical Framework



Data Collection Methods

A questionnaire derived from research framework was used to collect data. A personally administered questionnaire was distributed to respondents with the assistance of researcher. A preliminary study was conducted to determine the ambiguity. This lead to the development of new questionnaire with more precise and clear questions that reduces respondent's agitation and reduces data deviation. Therefore, a succinct and robust questionnaire helped in the post- preliminary stage of data collection.

Sources of Data

The sources of data that was collected for this research paper consisted of primary data collected from a list of registered SMEs', representing nine different industries. Information representing primary data was obtained first-hand over three months time-frame. Total of 65 SMEs in Malaysia were contacted to participate in the study, a total of 106 respondent questionnaires were collected. Total of 6 questionnaires were not completed or missing variables, and hence were excluded from consideration and analysis. A total of 100 accepted questionnaires, all of which consist of small and medium-sized enterprise or companies, that are classified as SME in Malaysia.

Questionnaire Development & Scaling Techniques

A five-point Likert scale was used to gather the required data from questionnaire. The scaling method used was a Multiple-Choice Questions MCQs whereby options are given for the respondents to select. The measuring method used was the five-point Likert scale method, whereby the scale 1 would be labeled as 'Strongly disagree' followed consecutively to the scale 5 as 'Strongly agree'.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Frequency Analysis

Table 1: Frequency

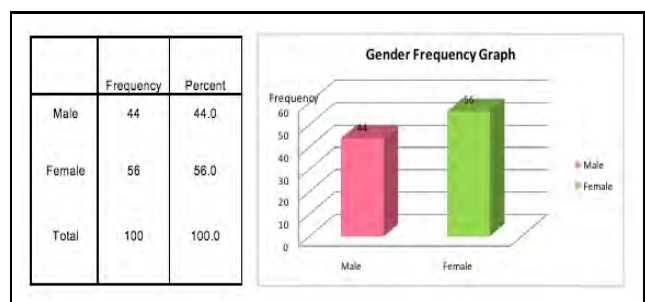


Table 1 illustrates the gender frequency of respondents participated in this study. A total number of 44 respondents consist of male respondent, whereas 56

respondents are female. The figure exemplifies the data in the table, where y-axis represents the number of respondents or the frequency, whereas the x-axis represents the gender classification.

Table 2: Cultural Background

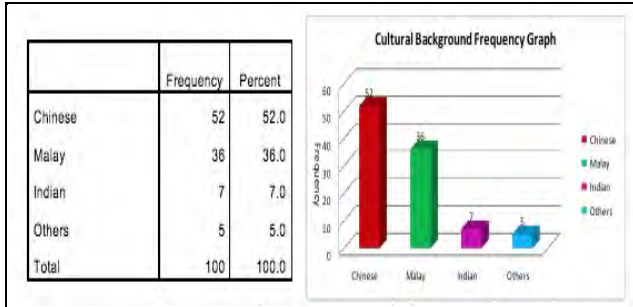


Table 2 shows the cultural background of the accepted respondents. Out of the total of 100 respondents, Chinese had the highest frequency with some 52. On the other hand, respondents that are not classified to be in the 3 main races of Malaysia, namely Malays, Indians and others, happens to have the lowest frequency with a value of 5 respondents.

Table 3: Extent of Satisfaction

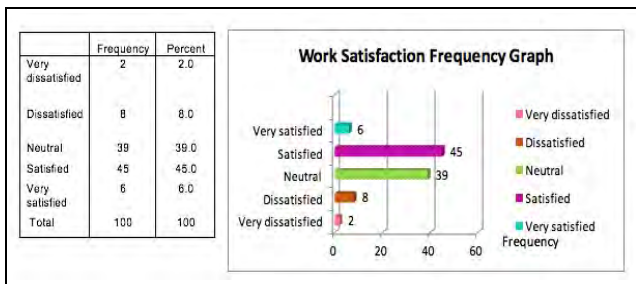


Table 3 shows the frequency of respondents who expressed their extent of satisfaction level towards their work-place. Based on the data, most of the respondents are satisfied with their working place with a frequency of 45 respondents, whereas the least number of respondents stated that they are dissatisfied with their working place, with the frequency of 8 respondents.

Table 4: Respondent Experiencing Problems at their Workplace

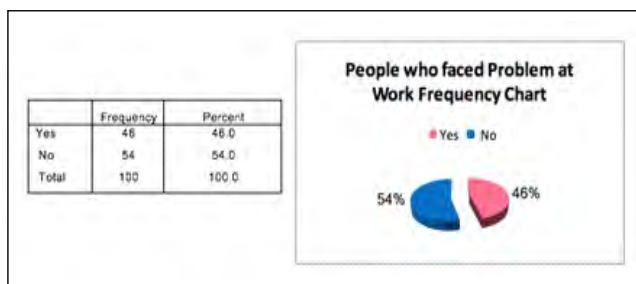


Table 4 shows the frequency of respondents that are experiencing problems at their work-place. Out of the 100 respondents, 54 have responded that they did not face any problem in their workplace, whereas 46 respondents have expressed that they do face problems in their workplace. The figure illustrates the data in the table in the form of a pie chart.

Table 5: Managerial Practices that Likely to Contribute to Employee Dissatisfaction

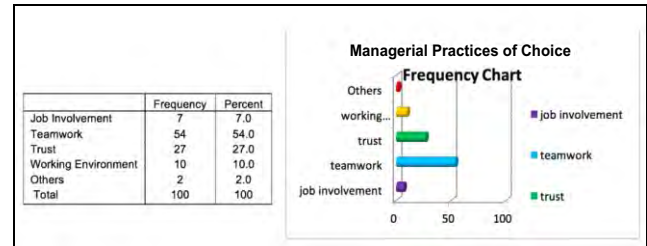


Table 5 illustrates managerial practices that are likely to be a contributing factor that lead to employee dissatisfaction. Most respondents have chosen the criteria of ‘teamwork’ as the main contributing factor that may lead to employee dissatisfaction with the frequency of 54 respondents. Besides the above findings, there are 2 respondents, which happened to be have the lowest frequency of all the options available, who have chosen other criteria other than the four managerial practices given namely- job involvement, teamwork, trust, and working environment.

Table 6: Frequency of Respondents Expressing their Agreement towards Practices Towards Employee Satisfaction

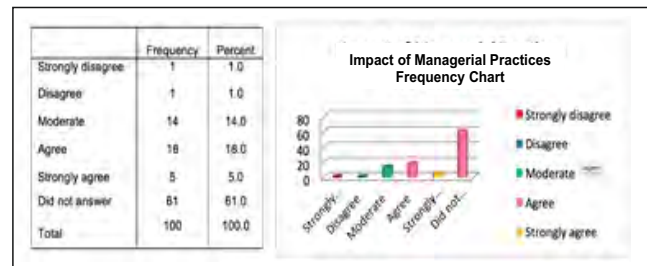


Table 6 represents the frequency of respondents expressing their agreement towards the impact of managerial practices towards employee satisfaction. Total of 39 respondents participated in this element, whereas 61 respondents refused to respond to this element. Out of the 39 respondents who have responded, most agree that managerial practices do impact employee satisfaction, with the frequency of 18 respondents. Whereas, 2 respondents disagreeing to this element; 1 respondent has responded to be ‘disagreeing’, whereas 1 respondent ‘strongly disagrees’. The bar chart to the right, shows the entire data in the table.

Analysis

Correlation Analysis

Table 7: Correlation between Independent and Dependent Variable

		Work Environment	Job Involvement	Teamwork	Trust	Employee Satisfaction
Work Environment	Pearson Correlation	1	0.728**	0.676**	0.645**	0.671**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.00	0.000	0.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Job Involvement	Pearson Correlation	0.728**	1	0.719**	0.679**	0.711**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Teamwork	Pearson Correlation	0.676**	0.719**	1	0.669**	0.706**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Trust	Pearson Correlation	0.645**	0.679**	0.669**	1	0.718**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Employee Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.671**	0.711**	0.706**	0.718**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	100	100	100	100	100

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 7 shows the correlation between the proposed independent and the dependent variable of the study. Whenever the value of the *Pearson Correlation* is closer to 1, the stronger the correlation would be. As shown in the table, ‘*Trust between Employee and Employer*’ has the highest pearson-correlation value of 0.718, whereas ‘*Work Environment*’ has the lowest Pearson Correlation value of 0.671.

Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses testing act as one of the measurements that ensure the validity of the study. The hypotheses testing is conducted through Correlation Analysis.

H0: There is no significant relationship between work environment and employee satisfaction.

H1: There is a significant relationship between work environment and employee satisfaction.

Table 8: Correlation Analysis

Correlations			
		Work Environment	Employee Satisfaction
Employee Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	0.671**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	100	100
Job Involvement	Pearson Correlation	0.671	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	100	100

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlation Analysis is conducted to test relationship between ‘*Work Environment*’ and ‘*Employee Satisfaction*’. It is found that the said variables have a strong relationship with each other and positively correlated at a value of 0.671, as stated in Table 8. Since the *p*-value = 0.000 on which it is smaller than alpha 0.01, *H0* is being rejected at 1% significance level. This indicates that the sample provides sufficient evidence that there is a significant relationship between work environment and employee satisfaction.

Job Involvement vs. Employee Satisfaction

H0: There is no significant relationship between job involvement and employee satisfaction.

H1: There is a significant relationship between job involvement and employee satisfaction.

Table 9: Correlation of Employee Satisfaction & Job Involvement

Correlations			
		Employee Satisfaction	Teamwork
Employee Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	0.711**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	100	100
	N	100	100
Job Involvement	Pearson Correlation	0.711	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	100	100
	N	100	100

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Based on the table 9, it is found that *employee satisfaction and job involvement* variables have a strong correlation and positively correlated at a value of 0.711. Since the *p*-value=0.000 on which it is smaller than alpha 0.01, *H0* is being rejected at 1% significance level. This indicates that the sample provides sufficient evidence that there is a significant relationship between employee satisfaction and job involvement.

Teamwork vs. Employee Satisfaction

H0: There is no significant relationship between teamwork and employee satisfaction.

H1: There is a significant relationship between teamwork and employee satisfaction.

Table 10: Correlation Analysis: Teamwork and Employee Satisfaction

Correlations			
		Employee Satisfaction	Teamwork
Employee Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	0.706**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	100	100
	N		
Teamwork	Pearson Correlation	0.706	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	100	100
	N		

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlation Analysis testing 'Teamwork' and 'Employee Satisfaction' shows a positive correlation at a value of 0.706, as stated in Table 10. Since p -value = 0.000 on which it is smaller than alpha 0.01, H_0 is being rejected at 1% significance level. This indicates that the sample provides sufficient evidence that there is a significant relationship between *Work Environment* and *Employee Satisfaction*.

Trust between Employee and Employer vs. Employee Satisfaction

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between trust between employee and employer with employee satisfaction.

H_1 : There is a significant relationship between trust between employee and employer with employee and employer satisfaction.

Table 11: Correlation between Trust and Employer and Employee Satisfaction

Correlations			
		Employee Satisfaction	Trust
Employee Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	0.718**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	100	100
	N		
Trust between Employee and Employer	Pearson Correlation	0.718	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	100	100
	N		

Analysis shows that 'Trust between Employer' and 'Employee Satisfaction' has a strong relationship with each other where it is positively correlated at a value of 0.718, as stated in the above table. With that, since the p -value = 0.000 on which it is smaller than alpha 0.01, H_0 is being rejected at 1% significance level. This indicates

that the sample provides sufficient evidence that there is a significant relationship between *Work Environment* and *Employee Satisfaction*.

Outcome of data analysis showed that the proposed variables do have significant impact towards the employee satisfaction at Malaysian SME's. As such, it is considered that such managerial practices can yield positive results when applied at SME's, this includes SME's across South-East Asia because of similarity in cultural characteristics. Therefore, it is fair to infer that such variables tested in this study can be considered as positive managerial practices that impacts employee satisfaction at SME level organizations, which leads to better employee performance. Such improvements in performance may contribute to improvements in organizational competitiveness. As a result, the application of the tested variables, which are managerial practices, within the context of Malaysian SME's, is proven to be an important element in the competitive mix of firm's survival and quest for sustainable competitive advantages. The assumption that management commitment to employee satisfaction implies better work environment, which leads to better organizational commitment, innovation, and improve competitive advantage is widely debated in academic literature, and evident in the results of this paper.

Research findings confirmed that earlier research by Firend & Alkathiri (2017); Hiep & Ameen (2017) asserted that the general criteria for organizational success includes a true commitment by a given organization management to change. Change, here, is viewed as the agent of an ongoing improvement process that is an essential component of sustaining competitive advantage. Such changes based on findings must include internal changes to firm's practices that encompass higher levels of managerial interaction with workforce. This study further confirmed findings of Armstrong & Taylor (2014), which concur to study that describe managerial practices that contribute to employee satisfaction and creativity as a mean of competitive advantage. As a result, factors such as job involvement, job satisfaction, productivity and commitment to organization are found to be directly correlated to employee's level of satisfaction, productivity and ultimately, organizational competitiveness. Findings further supported earlier examinations by Firend & Alkathiri (2017), which suggested that the general criteria for organizational success includes a true commitment by a given organizational management to change. 'Change', is

viewed as the agent of organizational development and a component of its competitive advantage. Such change includes internal changes that encompasses higher levels of environmental improvements to workforce.

CONCLUSION

In result the managerial practices were analyzed which then, tend to have a positive correlation with employee's job-related attitude, that includes factors such as, focus on organizational improvements and employee satisfaction, teamwork, work environment, empowerment, delegation, involvement and trust that are directly linked to employee satisfaction. This in turn, is found to be the major contributors to the internal strengths of the organization when a firm is not suffering from marketing myopia that deter the firm from focusing on external market forces.

REFERENCES

- Akehurst, G., Comeche, J.M. & Galindo, M.A. (2009). Job Satisfaction and Commitment in the Entrepreneurial SME. *Small Business Economics*, 32(3), pp 277-289.
- Albrecht, S.L., Bakker, A.B., Gruman, J.A., Macey, W.H. & Saks, A.M. (2015). Employee Engagement, Human Resource Management Practices and Competitive Advantage: An Integrated Approach. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 2(1), pp 7-35.
- Armstrong, M. & Taylor, S. (2014). *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. Kogan Page Publishers. UK.
- Ayuso, S. & Navarrete-Báez, F.E. (2018). How Does Entrepreneurial and International Orientation Influence SMEs' Commitment to Sustainable Development? Empirical Evidence from Spain and Mexico. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 25(5), pp 80-94.
- Benner, M.J. & Tushman, M.L. (2015). Reflections on the 2013 Decade Award- "Exploitation, exploration, and process management: The productivity dilemma revisited" ten years later. *Academy of Management Review*, 40(4), pp 497-514.
- Berger, L.A. & Berger, D.R. (2010). *The Talent Management Handbook: Creating A Sustainable Competitive Advantage by Selecting, Developing, And Promoting the Best People*. McGraw Hill Professional. US.
- Bonsdorff, M.E.V., Janhonen, M., Zhou, Z.E. & Vanhala, S. (2015). Team Autonomy, Organizational Commitment and Company Performance—A Study in the Retail Trade. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 26(8), pp 1098-1109.
- Bratton, J. & Gold, J. (2017). *Human Resource Management: Theory and Practice*. 6th edition. Palgrave. UK.
- Cascio, W. (2018). *Managing Human Resources*. 9th edition. McGraw-Hill Education. US.
- Farhangian, H. (2016). Effect of Organizational Commitment and Trust on Job Involvement (Case Study: All Branches of Parsian Bank in Semnan Province). *Human Resource Management*, 3(6), pp 22-28.
- Fay, D., Shipton, H., West, M.A. & Patterson, M. (2015). Teamwork and organizational innovation: The moderating role of the HRM context. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 24(2), pp 261-277.
- Firend, Al. R. & Alkathiri, O. (2017). *Critical Success Factors in Project Management: A Comparative Study between the GCC and the UK*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. US.
- Firend, Al. R. (2016). *Asian Case Studies: Lessons from Malaysian Industries*. 1st edition. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. US.
- Harter, J.K., Schmidt, F.L. & Hayes, T.L. (2003). Business-Unit-Level Relationship Between Employee Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, and Business Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), pp 268-279.
- Hiep, N.H. & Ameen, A.A. (2017). Changing the administrative thinking and leadership to reform SOEs (State-Owned Enterprises) in Vietnam. *International Journal on Recent Trends in Business and Tourism*, 1(2), pp 1-9.
- Hon, A.H. & Lui, S.S. (2016). Employee Creativity and Innovation in Organizations: Review, Integration, and Future Directions for Hospitality Research. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 28(5), pp 862-885.

- Kandampully, J. & Duddy, R. (1999). Competitive Advantage through Anticipation, Innovation and Relationships. *Management Decision*, 37(1), pp 51-56.
- Karia, N. & Asaari, M.H.A.H. (2003). TQM Practices: Continuous Improvement and Problem Prevention. In *International Business Information Management 2003 Conference*, Refereed Proceeding, Cairo, Egypt, pp 498-502.
- Karia, N. & Asaari, M.H.A.H. (2006). The Effects of Total Quality Management Practices on Employees' Work-Related Attitudes. *The TQM Magazine*, 18(1), pp 30-43.
- Kehoe, R.R. & Wright, P.M. (2013). The Impact of High-Performance Human Resource Practices on Employees' Attitudes and Behaviors. *Journal of Management*, 39(2), pp 366-391.
- Khalique, M., Bontis, N., Shaari, J.A.N. & Isa, A.H.M. (2015). Intellectual Capital in Small and Medium Enterprises in Pakistan. *Journal of Intellectual Capital*, 16(1), pp 224-238.
- Koys, D.J. (2001). The Effects of Employee Satisfaction, Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Turnover on Organizational Effectiveness: A Unit-Level, Longitudinal Study. *Personnel Psychology*, 54(1), pp 101-114.
- Lande, M., Shrivastava, R.L. & Seth, D. (2016). Critical success factors for Lean Six Sigma in SMEs (small and medium enterprises). *The TQM Journal*, 28(4), pp 613-635.
- Lee, C.S. & Wong, K.Y. (2015). Development and Validation of Knowledge Management Performance Measurement Constructs for Small and Medium Enterprises. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 19(4), pp 711-734.
- Logan, T.R. (2016). Influence of teamwork behaviors on workplace incivility as it applies to nurses. *Creighton Journal of Interdisciplinary Leadership*, 2(1), pp 47-53.
- Macey, W.H., Schneider, B., Barbera, K.M. & Young, S.A. (2011). *Employee Engagement: Tools for Analysis, Practice and Competitive Advantage*. John Wiley & Sons. US.
- McAdam, R. (2000). Quality Models in a SME Context: A Critical Perspective Using A Grounded Approach. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 17(3), pp 305-323.
- Mittal, S. & Dhar, R.L. (2015). Transformational Leadership and Employee Creativity: Mediating Role of Creative Self-Efficacy and Moderating Role of Knowledge Sharing. *Management Decision*, 53(5), pp 894-910.
- Molina-Azorín, J.F., Tari, J.J., Pereira-Moliner, J., López-Gamero, M.D. & Pertusa-Ortega, E.M. (2015). The Effects of Quality and Environmental Management on Competitive Advantage: A Mixed Methods Study in the Hotel Industry. *Tourism Management*, 50(1), pp 41-54.
- Moy, J.W. & Lee, S.M. (2002). The Career Choice of Business Graduates: SMEs or MNCs? *Career Development International*, 7(6), pp 339-347.
- Naranjo-Valencia, J.C., Jiménez-Jiménez, D. & Sanz-Valle, R. (2016). Studying the links between organizational culture, innovation and performance in Spanish companies. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología*, 48(1), pp 30-41.
- Noe, R.A., Hollenbeck, J.R., Gerhart, B. & Wright, P.M. (2003). *Gaining a Competitive Advantage*. Irwin-McGraw-Hill. US.
- Patterson, M.G., West, M.A., Lawthom, R. & Nickell, S. (1997). *Impact of People Management Practices on Business Performance*. Institute of Personnel and Development. London.
- Regnier, P. (2017). *Small and Medium Enterprises in Distress: Thailand, the East Asian Crisis and Beyond: Thailand, the East Asian Crisis and Beyond*. 1st edition. Routledge. UK.
- Saridakis, G., Muñoz Torres, R. & Johnstone, S. (2013). Do Human Resource Practices Enhance Organizational Commitment in SMEs with Low Employee Satisfaction? *British Journal of Management*, 24(3), pp 445-458.
- Szamosi, L.T. (2006). Just What Are Tomorrow's SME Employees Looking For? *Education+ Training*, 48(8-9), pp 654-665.
- Zhou, B. (2016). Lean Principles, Practices and Impacts: A Study on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs). *Annals of Operations Research*, 241(1-2), pp 457-474.