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## **THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR BETWEEN JOB ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOR IN PRIVATE HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTION AT KOTA KINABALU, SABAH**

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FULFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER  
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AND ACCOUNTANCY  
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2015**

## UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

## BORANG PENGESAHAN TESIS

JUDUL KAJIAN: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR BETWEEN JOB ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOR IN PRIVATE HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTION AT KOTA KINABALU, SABAH

IJAZAH: MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

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Lim Buan Ling  
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## ABSTRACT

There are very few studies that examine impact of job attitude on knowledge sharing behavior. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of job satisfaction, job involvement and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) on employees' knowledge sharing behavior. This study based on a survey of 326 individuals in private higher learning institutions in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. Structural Equation Model (Partial Least Square approach, version 2.0) is used to test the hypothesis. The findings in this study show that, job satisfaction and OCB are independent and positively related to individuals' knowledge sharing behavior. However, job involvement does not have direct relationship with knowledge sharing behavior. The current study confirmed that OCB is a significant mediator between job satisfaction, job involvement and knowledge sharing behavior. It is widely reported that knowledge is perceived as intangible assets to an organization especially the higher learning institution that act as the knowledge communication center, therefore, this study provides an in-depth understanding on the effect of job attitudes on the behavior to share knowledge. In practical, given the importance of knowledge sharing in today's knowledge-based economy, this study provides a better understanding for organization administrator to take proactive action to find out what are the factors that hindered the knowledge sharing behavior. The findings suggest that organizational administrators and managers should look into ways of improving the degree of job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational citizenship behavior in order to facilitate knowledge sharing behavior. This study makes three distinct additions to the organizational behaviour and knowledge sharing literature. First, job attitudes appear to be significantly related to knowledge sharing behavior. Second, this study proposes that OCB not only has direct effect on knowledge sharing behavior at the same time it mediates individuals' job attitudes to promote knowledge sharing behaviors. Third, this study confirms the insignificant relationship between job involvement and knowledge sharing behavior.

## **ABSTRAK**

### **THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR BETWEEN JOB ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOR IN PRIVATE HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTION AT KOTA KINABALU, SABAH**

*Terdapat hanya beberapa kajian untuk mengkaji kesan sikap kerja ke atas tingkah laku perkongsian ilmu. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji kesan kepuasan kerja, penglibatan kerja dan kelakuan kewarganegaraan organisasi (OCB) atas tingkah laku perkongsian ilmu pekerja. Kajian ini adalah berdasar atas kaji selidik 326 individu di institusi pengajian tinggi swasta di Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. Partial Least Square (PLS) digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis. Dapatan dalam kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa, kepuasan kerja dan OCB adalah bebas dan positif berkaitan dengan pengetahuan tingkah laku perkongsian individu. Walau bagaimanapun, penglibatan kerja tidak mempunyai hubungan secara langsung dengan tingkah laku perkongsian ilmu. Kajian ini juga mengesahkan OCB adalah pengantara yang signifikan antara kepuasan kerja, penglibatan kerja dan tingkah laku perkongsian ilmu. Secara umumnya, pengetahuan telah diangkat sebagai aset tidak ketara kepada organisasi terutamanya institusi pengajian tinggi yang bertindak sebagai pusat komunikasi pengetahuan, oleh itu, kajian ini memberi kefahaman yang mendalam mengenai kesan sikap kerja ke atas tingkah laku untuk berkongsi pengetahuan. Dalam praktikal, memandangkan kepentingan perkongsian pengetahuan dalam ekonomi pengetahuan hari ini, kajian ini memberikan pemahaman yang lebih baik untuk pentadbir organisasi untuk mengambil tindakan proaktif untuk mengetahui apakah faktor-faktor yang menghalang tingkah laku perkongsian ilmu. Penemuan ini menunjukkan bahawa pentadbir dan pengurus organisasi perlu melihat ke dalam cara-cara untuk meningkatkan tahap kepuasan kerja, penglibatan kerja dan kelakuan kewarganegaraan organisasi untuk memudahkan pengetahuan tingkah laku perkongsian. Kajian ini membuat tiga tambahan berbeza kepada tingkah laku dan perkongsian pengetahuan organisasi sastera. Pertama, terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara sikap kerja dengan tingkah laku perkongsian ilmu. Kedua, kajian ini mencadangkan OCB bukan sahaja mempunyai kesan langsung ke atas perkongsian pengetahuan bahvior pada masa yang sama ia menjadi pengantara dari sikap kerja individu untuk menggalakkan tingkah laku perkongsian ilmu. Ketiga, kajian ini mengesahkan hubungan yang tidak signifikan antara penglibatan kerja dan tingkah laku perkongsian ilmu.*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>IPT</b>	Institut Pengajian Tinggi
<b>IPTA</b>	Institut Pengajian Tinggi Awam
<b>IPTS</b>	Institut Pengajian Tinggi Swasta



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Overview

This chapter would be able to provide an insight into the research area to the reader. It starts with a brief description of the background of the study describes the importance of knowledge and knowledge sharing, followed by the gap and objectives of the study. Finally, an introduction of research context and implication will be indicated.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Today, Malaysia ranks 11<sup>th</sup> as the leading global educational provider and becoming a business educational hub in the Asian region. This is to succeed the government efforts to accomplish the Malaysia government vision to become a global education hub and to strive for high-income nation status by 2020 (BusinessBecause, 2015). According to the Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh, Second Education Minister, the fast growing of higher education sector in the past decade has enabled Malaysia to have 135,502 (an increase of 16.5% from 2013) foreign students originated from approximately 160 countries worldwide as at Dec 31 2014. Out of this, 74,996 international students (an increase of 29.9% from 2013) studying in private tertiary institutions with the remaining 32,842 international students pursuing their study at public institutions (Thesundaily.my, 2015).

According to Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin, who is now the Chief Minister of Johor said that, knowledge creation is vital to facilitate Malaysia transforming into a high-income economy country. At this point of time, universities have played a dynamic role in allowing access to competitive education programs for the student

population and it also serves as a route to stimulate information transmission as well as generate data cohort. To step into this international platform successfully, it is essential to produce more quality and capabilities education teaching workforce. To support the existing higher education environment and hit the demand of 21<sup>st</sup> century, government has an intention to build up a database that could provide authoritative and high-quality information that could facilitate the necessities learning environment. Besides, both learners and instructors could be stimulated to attain the required knowledge and skills (BusinessBecause, 2015). As such, promoting knowledge sharing behavior is crucial in meeting this vision.

The role of higher education is to cater to the economy at large, human resource needs and to foster a generation of knowledge, technology and innovation. Higher learning institutions have always been identified as the knowledge communication centre and the best knowledge communicator will always refer to academician. Currently, Malaysia private universities is facing high turnover of academic staffs especially higher in private than public universities. The high turnover might cause the chances of losing knowledge is high when people left without knowledge sharing and this will eventually affected the research and teaching activities in the education sector.

Given the important of knowledge sharing that could increase the competitive advantage of an organization, regardless of any department in neither the organization nor the position you are holding, everyone needs knowledge to facilitate the day to day operation especially in today's competitive business world. As such, organization has started to realize the essential to cultivate the culture of knowledge sharing in an organization. However, not everyone willing will take up knowledge sharing. Some of the employees will find reluctant to engage in knowledge sharing behavior. With this, organization administrator tends to find out the factors that could encourage or hinder the knowledge sharing behavior.

Based on the norm of reciprocal concept in Social Exchanged Theory, individual believed that they would be able to generate favorable returned from their contribution. As a result, motivation factors will be first come into mind when talking about how to promote knowledge sharing behavior. Motivator that serves as extrinsic factor couldn't promote knowledge sharing behavior (Lin, 2007). Therefore, it will be utmost important is to focus on intrinsic factors such as underlying job attitudes that include job satisfaction and involvement that foster knowledge sharing behavior (Yang, 2008). It is been argued that knowledge sharing behavior is type of organizational citizenship behavior, with regards to SET's reciprocal concept, organizational citizenship behavior is preserved as the positive outcome generated from the social exchange between individual and organization, therefore it is believed that organizational Citizenship Behavior plays a significant role in the knowledge sharing process.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

In recent years, many studies were conducted either on knowledge sharing, job attitudes or organizational citizenship behavior, for instance by Ramasamy and Thamaraiselvan (2011), Lathalavanya and Thenmozhi (2011), Chennamanenia, Tengb and Rajab (2012), Swift and Alvin (2013), Wei Chong, Yen Yuen and Chew Gan, (2014), Boateng, Dzandu and Agyemang, (2015), Shao, Wang and Feng (2015) and etcetera, yet few attempts pinpointed the mediating effect of organizational citizenship behavior between job attitudes and knowledge sharing behavior especially in higher learning institution. No doubt, Lin (2007) and Reychav and Weisberg (2010) has proven the significant correlation on knowledge sharing behavior between employee attitudes associates with intentions. Notwithstanding the above, little is known about how job attitudes affect knowledge sharing behavior because conceptually people will think of how motivator could promote knowledge sharing behavior, this is to base on reciprocity relationship. However, extrinsic motivator such as organization reward does not promote individual attitudes towards knowledge sharing behavior (Lin, 2007). As such, Quan, Di and Bocai (2014) suggested taking in other important and deserved variables such as attitude of knowledge sharing to examine its influence on knowledge



sharing behavior of different levels. Mogotsi, Boon and Fletcher (2011) also suggested looking into other behavior that might affect knowledge sharing behavior. Therefore, this study will take the suggestion from Quan *et al.* (2014) and Mogotsi *et al.* (2011) to justify the individuals' attitudes on knowledge sharing behaviors.

Organizational citizenship behavior, an additional character, unofficial and discretionary individual behavior, assists individuals in carry out their task in an organization (Borman, Penner, Allen & Motowidlo, 2001). Due to the voluntary intention contain in the knowledge sharing and organizational citizenship behavior, therefore, it is argued that knowledge sharing behavior is indeed a kind of organizational citizenship behavior and their relationship couldn't be neglected. There is evidenced that organizational citizenship and knowledge sharing behavior are significantly correlated in the study of Mogotsi *et al.*, (2011), Ramasamy and Thamaraiselvan (2011), together with Lathalavanva and Thenmozhi (2011).

There are limited research studied how job attitudes (comprises of job involvement and satisfaction and organizational commitment) affect knowledge sharing behavior, therefore Teh and Sun (2012) study was conducted to close this gap by examining the relationship between job attitudes and knowledge sharing behavior, strengthen by organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) on information system personnel in Malaysia. Their findings shown that job involvement, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior having direct relationship with knowledge sharing behavior except organizational commitment; organizational citizenship behavior does not reinforce the correlation between job attitudes and knowledge sharing behavior. In contrast, researchers Sung Jun Jo and Joo (2011) conducted their study on Korean workers, postulated that organizational citizenship behavior fully mediated the relationship between intention to share knowledge and organizational commitment (job attitude). With this, the inconsistent finding on the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior towards knowledge sharing behavior is not conclusive and further investigation is in need for this relationship to be definitive.

Teh and Sun (2012) findings posited that organizational citizenship behavior has detained as a mediator owing to past researchers suggested that organizational citizenship behavior played a role in reconciled the relationship of job attitudes (independent variables) and knowledge sharing behavior (dependent variables). However, there was limited study tested on organizational citizenship behavior as a mediator. Even though Teh and Sun (2012) study revealed that there was no significant relationship between job attitudes, organizational citizenship behavior and knowledge sharing behavior. It is believed that the generalizability of their findings might be restricted due to the sample based on information technology personnel in Malaysia. As such, this study will build upon the suggestion from Teh and Sun (2012) to test their suggested framework to further justify organizational citizenship behavior as a mediator in different environment,, for example education sector in this study.

Malaysia is devoted to become world-class knowledge based economy and a regional education hub, this required an excellence education standard, complete data system, research and development enhancement, invention, distinct financial establishments and independence data collaboration. Higher learning institutions have always been identified as the knowledge communication center and played the role to provide insights and concepts. Alike with other organizations, as a knowledge enabler center, higher learning institutions have a tendency to rely more on knowledge sharing. With this, they have played the role as knowledge disseminator in the institution. Excellence knowledge sharing practices definitely improve development of quality education and intensify effectiveness of an organization. In general, lack of knowledge sharing in the higher institution may lead to underutilization of resources and reduces the chances to obtain knowledge. According to Goh and Sandhu (2013), in a university, academic's attitude is the most influence issue in predicting intention to share tacit knowledge. As such, academic attitude towards knowledge sharing behavior should be investigated.

Moreover, based on the report from Malaysia higher education indicator report (2009 to 2013) with reference to the number of academic staff having qualification in degree and above, in IPTA (now renamed as Universiti Awam), the number of academic staff has increased from 29,198 (2011) to 33,137 (2013); however in IPTS, the number of academic staff has dropped from 26,438 (2011) to 24,476 (2013) (refer to Figure 1). This implied that the turnover rate in IPTS is higher than IPTA. The high turnover rate also reflected the loss of knowledge when the employee left an education institution together with the lack of knowledge sharing behavior, this will definitely adversely impact the teaching and research activities in the educator industry.

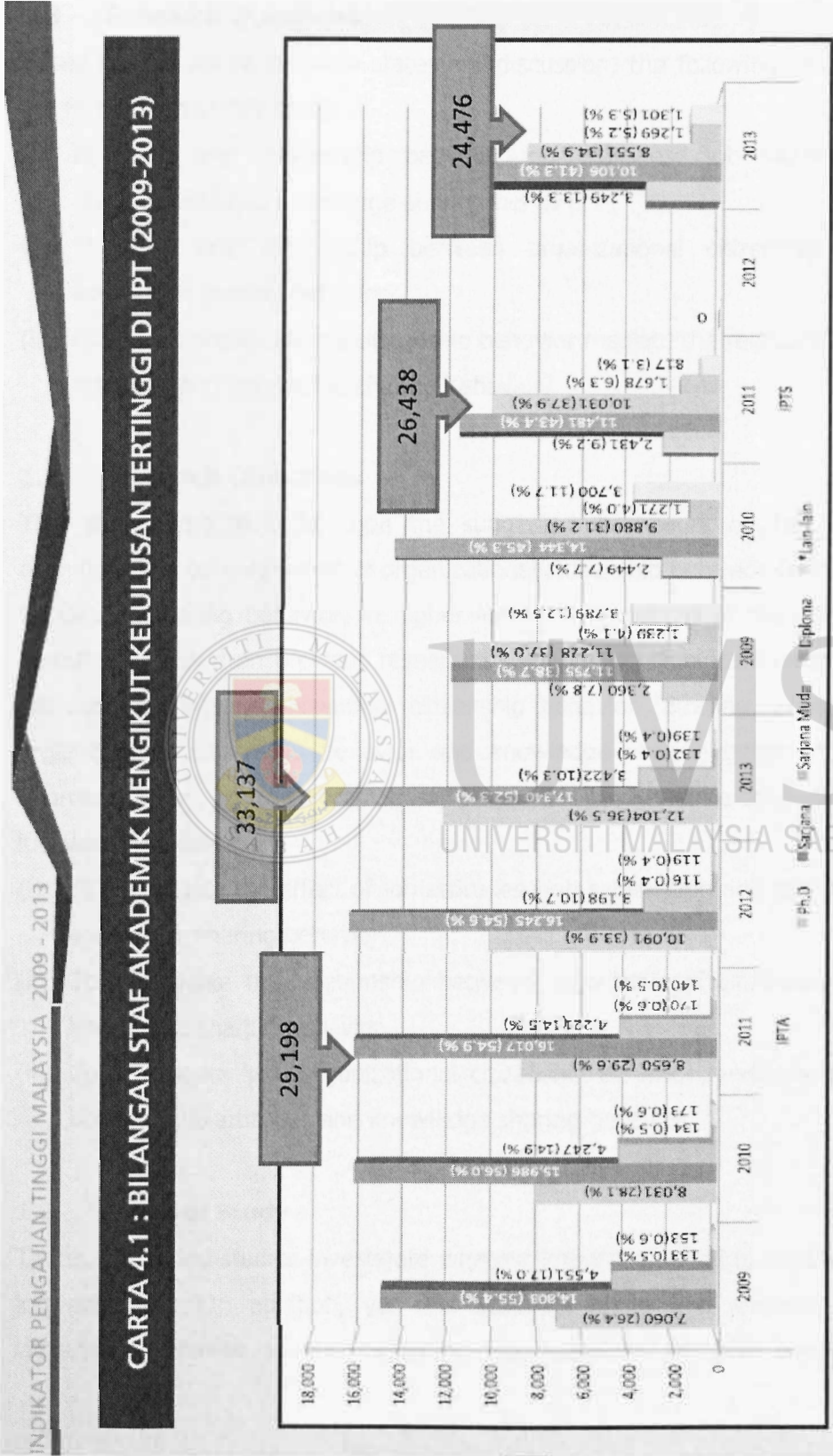
Besides, Dr Chong Kok Boon (academician from University Malaysia of Computer Science and Engineering) questioned at a forum organized by the Strategic Information and Research Development Centre that he was puzzled about the quality of teachers and academicians who did not know how to carry out research and this will definitely impact the ability of a university to teach their students without advancing knowledge (Yunus, Tan & Chan, 2015). This implied that academicians who did not know how to carry out research did not involve in the publication of their work and didn't have any intention to share knowledge. No doubt, there is distinctive difference between duty taken up by lecturers in university and private higher learning institution. For example, lecturers in private higher learning institution do not need to conduct academic research and publication. Nevertheless, the primary task of academic staff is lecturing. However, in Malaysia, the role of lecturer in private higher learning institution is all rounded. They are not only lecturing, but also doing tutorial, involve in administrative work and marketing activities, as well as provide consultation to students. Therefore, this has indicated the importance of academician to participate in the knowledge sharing behavior to advance knowledge in practicing their multi-tasking role. However, limited study has conducted to examine the knowledge sharing intention of individuals in higher learning institutions (Bock & Kim, 2000) in Malaysia. Therefore, investigating knowledge sharing among individuals in higher learning institution is essential.

In reality, knowledge has always labeled as source of power, fear of losing power is the cause of impediment for an organization to encourage effective knowledge sharing culture (Ranjbarfard, Aghdasi, López-Sáez & López, 2014; Chennamanenia *et al.* 2012; Wang & Noe, 2010). When target higher learning institution, academican will always be the main focus while far less is known to examine the administrator job attitudes. Bartol and Srivastava (2002) postulated that knowledge is basically a broad concept that embraces all data, ideas and significant task know-how skill that could be undertaken by everyone. As such, both academican and administrator are the main manpower source of an institution, and most of the time, administrators are the one who involve more in the knowledge management process. Besides, owing to the all rounded role played by academican in private higher learning institution, job attitudes as an administrator in higher learning institution will also be taken into account in this study.

Hence, this has motivated the current study examining same variables among job attitudes, organizational citizenship behavior and knowledge sharing behavior. It is appropriate to conduct in higher learning institution to validate Teh and Sun (2012) findings in Malaysia context especially in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Thus, this study will bridge up the gap and gaining further justification among job attitudes, organizational citizenship behavior and knowledge sharing behavior in higher learning institutions in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia context.



Figure 1 : Number of academic staff at IPT (2009-2013)



Source: Adopted from "Indikator Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia (2009 – 2013)



### **1.3 Research Questions**

Based on the above problem statement discussion, the following research questions are formulated in this study:

- (i) Is there any relationship between job attitudes (job satisfaction and job involvement) and knowledge sharing behavior?
- (ii) Is there any relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and knowledge sharing behavior?
- (iii) How does organizational citizenship behavior mediate the relationship between job attitudes and knowledge sharing behavior?

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

This study aims to build upon the suggested framework of Teh & Sun (2012), examining the core influence of organizational citizenship behavior on job attitudes and knowledge sharing behavior, in higher learning institutions in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Specifically, based on previous researchers suggesting significant correlation between job attitudes and organizational citizenship behavior (Bowling, Wang & Li, 2012); organizational citizenship behavior and knowledge sharing behavior (Ramasamy & Thamaraiselvan, 2011; Mogotsi *et al.*, 2011), this study will be conducted to meet the following objectives:

- (i) To investigate the effect of job attitudes (job satisfaction and job involvement) on knowledge sharing behavior.
- (ii) To investigate the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and knowledge sharing behavior.
- (iii) To investigate how organizational citizenship behavior mediates the relationship between job attitudes and knowledge sharing behavior.

### **1.5 Scope of Study**

There are limited studies investigate whether knowledge sharing behavior affected by job attitudes. In addition, yet few attempts could find examine organizational citizenship behavior as the mediating role between attitudes towards work and