



**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATIONAL
CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR TOWARD THE ENVIRONMENT - ECO
INITIATIVES: THE INFLUENCE OF AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT
TOWARDS THE ENVIRONMENT**

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ABSTRACT

An emergent body of knowledge has acknowledged that there is a relationship between organizational environmental management practices and the employees' organizational citizenship behaviour toward the environment. Nonetheless, there is very little that is known about mediating mechanisms that trigger the establishment of this relationship. Based on the social exchange theory, the study explores the possibility of affective commitment towards the environment as an indirect effect of the relationship between environmental management practices and the employees' organizational citizenship behaviour toward the environment - eco initiatives. This research model is analysed using the information gathered from 244 employees working with local authorities in Peninsular Malaysia. Respondents answered questionnaires to measure their perceptions toward environmental management practices, affective commitment towards environment, and organizational citizenship behaviour toward the environment - eco initiatives. The analysis made on the indirect effect has revealed that the affective commitment towards the environment has mediated the relationship that exists between environmental management practices and the employees' organizational citizenship behaviour toward the environment - eco initiatives.

Keywords: Organizational citizenship behaviour towards the environment, eco initiatives, environment management practices, affective commitment towards the environment, local government

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Global warming and climate change are among the two environmental subjects that are being debated meticulously worldwide particularly their dangers to the environment and human systems (Robertson & Barling, 2013) as well as human health (Patz, Campbell-



Lendrum, Holloway, & Foley, 2005). At the local level, the Local Agenda 21 (LA21) has set a standard for authorities to attain sustainable development (Nurudin, Hashim, Hamik, Rahman, Zulkifli, & Mohamed, 2016). Hence, the liability and responsibility handed to them as a medium of direct communication for the government to reach out to the local communities (Coenen & Menkveld, 2002) are seen as essential since they are in a better position to nurture sustainable lifestyles, improve the well-being of the local communities (Bakshi, 2012), and play a significant role in generating as well as supporting climate policy at the local level (Coenen & Menkveld, 2002). Referring to the quote by Shabecoff (2003) “If environmentalism is to be an agent of necessary social transformation, it will have to transform itself” (p. 293). Thus, a study is conducted to understand the employees of local authorities on their organizational citizenship behaviours toward the environment (OCBE) is noteworthy due to their extraordinary responsibility in sustainable development and promoting environmental issues (Jörby, 2002). Proficient employees at local authorities who appreciate and recognize sustainable development efforts are greatly preferred (Mohamed, Seow, & Masrom, 2016). In this study model, the pro-environmental behaviours aspect of the employees’ organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment - eco initiatives dimension is highlighted.

2.0 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND, LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 Social Exchange Theory

The social exchange theory (SET) suggested that human behaviours in humanity are the product of an exchange process and this theory argued that all human interaction is shaped based on the cost-benefit analysis carried out in an organization. SET is the most persuasive, and has been a leading approach in the learning of subordinate and organizational relationships (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Hence, SET is the most appropriate theory in understanding the employees’ OCBE (Paillé & Mejía-Morelos, 2014) in an organization where interplays and interactions between employees, colleague, and other members of the organization take place (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). Nonetheless, limited investigations used the foundations of the social exchange outline to elucidate employees’ OCBE (Paillé, Boiral, & Chen, 2013). Past empirical studies have displayed that organizations regulated social exchanges in order to anticipate their employees’ eco initiatives (Raineri, Mejía-Morelos, Francoeur, & Paillé, 2016). In this study, the social exchange setup is used as a foundation to explain the relationship of “support - affective commitment” between the organization and its subordinate.



2.2 Employees' Organizational Citizenship Behaviours toward the Environment - Eco Initiatives

Generally, the pro-environmental behaviours or PEB is defined as the “behaviour that minimizes the risk of harming the environment and maximizes the application of practices that can benefit the environment” (Steg & Vlek, 2009, p. 309). Studies conducted on employees' green behaviors, their pro-environmental behaviors, and environmental-related behaviors such as the employees' OCBE at the workplace have been intellectualized as a discretionary and voluntary behaviour instead of a required one (Boiral & Paillé, 2012). Voluntary behaviour is not listed in the formal job description (Lamm, Tosti-Kharas, & Williams, 2013) along with the individual's initiative that transcends the set organizational expectations whereas the mandatory employees' behaviours are usually seen to contribute in the achievement of the primary business objectives set (Norton, Parker, Zacher, & Ashkanasy, 2015). The employees' OCBE - eco initiatives behaviours is usually been regarded as one of the achievement factors for pollution deterrence (Boiral, Talbot, & Paillé, 2013). Eco initiatives are seen as a voluntary and informal behavior that helps in expanding environmental performance (Boiral & Paillé, 2012) besides being considered as a vital feature of company greening (Boiral et al., 2013). Empirically, Alt and Spitzbeck (2016) found that the relationship between the employees' OCBE and the environmental performance among employees is positive.

2.3 The Influence of Environmental Management Practices to Employees' Organizational Citizenship Behaviours toward the Environment -Eco Initiatives via Affective Commitment towards Environment

Paillé et al. (2013) defined environmental management practices (EMP) as “*formal practices aimed at integrating environmental concerns in organizational management and at providing stakeholders with tangible evidence of the environmental commitment of the organization, including the implementation of an environmental policy, the adoption of ISO-norm 14001, environmental reporting, etc.*”. EMP is commonly substantial in the expansion of an organization's environmental performance (Perez, Amichai-Hamburger, & Shterental, 2009). Empirically, the study conducted by Norton, Zacher, and Ashkanasy (2014) found that the relationship existed between the perceived presence of an organizational sustainability policy (i.e., environmental management practices dimension) and the employees' proactive green behaviours is positive. Bulkeley and Kern (2006) argued that the focus placed on environmental policies is under the obligation of the local authorities in order to tackle environmental problems faced.

The successful executions of EMP are generally significant in intensifying the organization's environmental performance (Perez et al., 2009). The literature applied focuses on the discipline of environmental management in developed countries that are



mostly showed through the implementation of the organizational ISO 14001 environmental management system which has a significant and positive relationship with the firm's performance. Nonetheless, EMP alone may not be able to deal with the complications posed by environmental problems since the employees' environmental performances are mostly voluntary in nature (Boiral, 2009). There is no question that the EMP is indeed vital for the execution of organizational environmental behaviours (Ramus & Steger, 2000) although it is seen as simple since it is the only construct to estimate employees' OCBE.

The connection between these two constructs can answer the question of *whether* and *if*, but it fails to comprehend the enquiries of *how* and *why*. Hence, this study believed that researchers should include the psychological mechanisms that bring impact on the relationship between EMP and the employees' OCBE, based on an emotional variable, i.e., the affective commitment towards environment (ACE) construct (Raineri & Paillé, 2016) that is anticipated as a mediator. Kolb and Whishaw (2011) stated that human life revolves around emotions, thus the act of recognizing and appreciating them is essential in knowing and comprehending the nature of human beings. If this trigger is activated, human feelings will be stimulated, followed by the demonstration of behavior. Therefore, the integration of human emotional and rational facets drives the crucial demonstration of pro-environmental behaviours (Tapia-Fonllem, Corral-Verdugo, Gutiérrez-Sida, Mireles-Acosta, & Tirado-Medina, 2010). The mediator functions as a variable that enlightens and clarifies the psychological mechanisms that trigger the relationship between an independent variable and dependent variable (e.g., Baron & Kenny, 1986; MacKinnon, 2008).

Based on the above literature review, the argument presented is comprehensive and believable. Thus, the following hypotheses will be studied.

- Hypothesis 1: The organizational environmental management practices are positively related to the affective commitment towards environment.
- Hypothesis 2: Affective commitment towards environment is positively related to the employees' organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment – eco initiatives.
- Hypothesis 3: The relationship between the organizational environmental management practices on the employees' organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment – eco initiatives that is mediated by affective commitment towards environment.

The above literature derives a network of association between EMP, ACE, and OCBE – eco initiatives based on the SET and is showed in Figure 1.

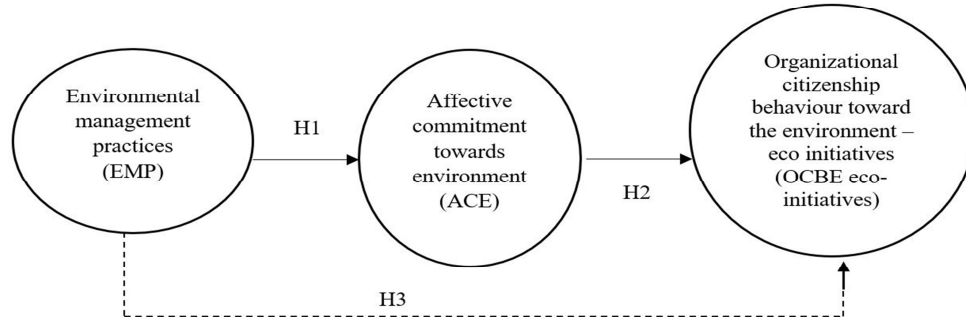


Figure 1: The Research Model.

Note1: OCBE - eco initiatives - Organizational citizenship behaviour toward the environment – eco initiatives, EMP - Environmental management practices, ACE - Affective commitment towards environment.

Note2: Solid arrows illustrate direct relationships and dashed arrow signify indirect relationship.

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Respondents

This study is a cross-sectional quantitative design in nature and the survey data are collected in a single time period; the unit of analysis for this study is individuals, i.e., employees from local authorities in Peninsular Malaysia. In this study, the respondents answered the questionnaires distributed anonymously. Out of 380 circulated questionnaires, 280 are returned and only 244 complete questionnaires are found useable and met the study criteria for the measurement and structural model analysis. Kline (2004) stated that sample size of more than 200 is generally large and appropriate for most study models.

3.2 Measures

Three instrument items established by Boiral and Paillé (2012) are used to measure the OCBE – eco initiatives construct. Eight items on the environmental commitment scale used by Raineri and Paillé (2016) to reveal an individual’s sense of affection and obligation to environmental interest in the workplace. Eleven indicators and a single dimension instrument of environmental policy statements are established by Ramus and Steger (2000) to measure the construct of organizational environmental management practices.



As for the procedural remedy, this study used a distinctive scale endpoint for both exogenous and endogenous measures as recommended by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003). The five-point Likert scales is used to measure the respondents' independent variables and indirect endogenous variable while the seven-point Likert scales is used to measure the respondents' dependent endogenous variable (e.g., Ngah, 2016).

3.3 Data analysis

The statistical software such as the SmartPLS 3.2.6 (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015), SPSS 23.0 and *PROCESS* macro 2.16.3 (Hayes, 2013) are employed to conduct the study analysis. The presentation of data analysis starts by examining the reliability and validity of the measurement model. Once the measurement model is verified according to the recommended threshold, the study then proceeded to examine the structural model and answering the hypotheses outlined.

As to partial out any possible confounding effect on employees' organizational citizenship behaviour toward the environment, control variables are entered into study model. Demographic variables of gender, age and tenure are used as control variables as this study give attention to employees' behavioural concepts. Past empirical studies have demonstrated that gender, age and tenure are potentially influence employees' organizational citizenship behaviour toward the environment (Graves, Sarkis, & Zhu, 2013; Lamm et al., 2013, Temminck, Mearns, & Fruhen, 2015), as well as employees' emotion (Cote & Morgan, 2002; Tsai, 2001). Gender is dummy coded as (0 = male, 1 = female), age is ratio data, and tenure are coded as (1 = less than 5 years, 2 = 6 - 10 years, 3 = 11 - 15 years, 4 = 16 - 20 years, 5 = more than 20 years). Besides, social desirability bias is also entered into study model, as King and Bruner (2000) stated that one of the fundamental risks to the validity of result using multi-indicators self-report scale is social desirability bias difficulty.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Measurement Model

As demonstrated in Table 4.1, all of indicators' loadings are above the recommended threshold of > 0.50 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). The indicators' loading values ranged from 0.500 to 0.884 (the empirical t value is greater than 1.96). Hence, the results obtained showed that all indicators are loaded significantly on their own constructs and less on the other constructs (Henseler, 2017), thus no indicators are further removed. The internal consistencies of the measurement are tested by looking at the composite reliability (CR). Hair et al. (2010) claimed that reliability denotes the degree of which a set of indicators displays internal consistency to the construct. Table 4.1 showed all reliability values of CR ranged from 0.883 to 0.938 for all constructs,

which surpasses the lowest suggested value of 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Besides, the CR also restfully goes beyond the proposed value of more than 0.80 for all constructs (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

This study also examines the value of the average variance extracted (AVE). AVE refers to the cluster of indicators from the similar constructs in which the threshold values should be larger than of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results in Table 4.1 showed that the AVE values in all of the constructs ranged from .507 to .716, thus indicated a sufficient degree of convergent validity. A valid and reliable measure is essential for the data constructed in social work researches (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010). Henseler (2017) stated that the two main conditions used to examine goodness of measurements are reliability and validity.

Table 4.1 *Measurement Model for Convergent Validity of the Reflective Indicators*

Construct	Indicators	Loading	CR	AVE
E_Init	E_Init1	0.848	0.883	0.716
	E_Init2	0.884		
	E_Init3	0.805		
EMP	EMP01	0.757	0.938	0.582
	EMP02	0.743		
	EMP03	0.793		
	EMP04	0.764		
	EMP05	0.834		
	EMP06	0.838		
	EMP07	0.807		
	EMP08	0.724		
	EMP09	0.707		
	EMP10	0.694		
	EMP11	0.712		
ACE	ACE01	0.784	0.889	0.507
	ACE02	0.825		
	ACE03	0.805		
	ACE04	0.766		
	ACE05	0.500		
	ACE06	0.521		
	ACE07	0.682		
	ACE08	0.735		

Note1: E_Init – OCBE –eco initiatives, EMP - Environmental management practices, ACE - Affective commitment towards environment.

Note2: CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted.

Note3: $AVE = \frac{\text{summation of the square of the factor loadings}}{[\text{summation of the square of the factor loadings} + \text{summation of the errorvariances}]}$.

Note4: $CR = \frac{\text{square of the summation of the factor loadings}}{[\text{square of the summation of the factor loadings} + \text{square of the summation of the errorvariances}]}$.

The discriminant validity is verified via the Fornell-Larcker criterion (1981) and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT, Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). Fornell-Larcker criterion showed in Table 4.2 indicated that the square root of the AVE for each construct is larger than the correlations values with other constructs horizontally and vertically. Fornell and Larcker (1981) claimed that in order for the validity of the discriminant to be established, the related construct should share more variance of its indicator. Referring to Table 4.2, the result indicated that the diagonal elements of the square roots of AVE are higher than all of the off-diagonal elements, both vertically and horizontally, thus ascertaining the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the validity of the discriminant is verified.

Table 4.2 *Fornell-Larcker Criterion*

Construct	ACE	EMP	E_Init
ACE	0.712		
EMP	0.320	0.763	
E_Init	0.549	0.212	.846

Note1: Diagonals (in bold) represent the squared root of AVE while the other entries represent the inter-correlation values between constructs.

Note2: ACE - Affective commitment towards environment, EMP - Environmental management practices, E_Init - OCBE –eco initiatives.

In Table 4.3, the HTMT showed that the values of HTMT are less than 0.85 (ranging from .233 to .631), thus, the findings obtained advocate that all of the constructs are realistically diverse (Henseler et al., 2015), thus establishing the validity of the discriminant.

Table 4.3 *Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)*

	ACE	EMP	E_Init
ACE			
EMP	0.345		
E_Init	0.631	0.233	

Note: ACE - Affective commitment towards environment, EMP - Environmental management practices, E_Init - OCBE –eco initiatives.

Based on the above criterion, the discriminant validity and convergent validity of the constructs is established. The construct validity is referred to “the degree of which a measurement is used to assess a construct as it is purported to be assessed” (Peter, 1981, p. 134). The confirmatory factor analysis results supported that the variable in this study variable are verified distinctively for further analysis as the measurement model showed a satisfactory discriminant and convergent validity.



4.2 Structural Model

As for Hypothesis 1 (H1) - ACE direct effect model, R^2 value of 0.111 ($F = 5.931$) suggested that 11.1% of the variance in ACE is explained by EMP. R^2 value of 0.111 is weak according to Cohen's (1988) guideline, however, for ACE direct effect model only one variable predicting it, thus R^2 value is relatively low. Furthermore, EMP constructs is discovered significantly correlated to ACE ($\beta = 0.329$, $t = 5.321$), and empirical t value is larger than the theoretical t value of 1.645 with α of 5%, thus confirming that the relationship of the EMP and ACE is significant at α of 5%. Hence, H1 is supported.

As for Hypothesis 2 (H2) – OCBE - eco initiatives direct effect model has a R^2 value of 0.324 ($F = 22.780$) which suggested that 32.4% of the variance in OCBE - eco initiatives is explained by ACE. The R^2 value of 0.324 is large according to Cohen's (1988) guideline. Besides, ACE constructs ($\beta = 0.543$, $t = 10.159$) is discovered significantly correlated to OCBE - eco initiatives, and empirical t value is larger than the theoretical t value of 1.645 with α of 5%, which confirms that the relationship of ACE and OCBE - eco initiatives is significant at α of 5%. Hence, H2 is supported.

To safeguard the stability of the results, the number of sample duplications is set at 5,000. The 5,000 bootstrap re-sampling methods have a 95% bias corrected confidence intervals for the indirect effects as suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008). Hayes's (2013) *PROCESS* procedure is engaged to test the indirect effect. The results obtained establish that the ACE did mediate the relationship between the EMP and OCBE – eco initiatives dimension ($\beta = 0.175$; $CI_{95} = 0.087, 0.282$). The indirect effect is claimed to occur and significant if the value of zero does not contain within the range of upper bound and lower bound of the 95% confidence intervals. Thus, H3 is supported.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, the findings of this study proofs that the SET is a reliable theory in forecasting the OCBE - eco initiatives at a workplace. Moreover, the outcomes of the study have established that the ACE can function as a mediator in the relationship existed between the EMP and OCBE - eco initiatives in the local government settings in Malaysia. Since this study is limited to the employees of local authorities, hence its generalisation and validity is summarized. Consequently, it is essential to note that the outcomes explained from this study must be recited with care especially when inferring the study outcomes to dissimilar agency and organizations in which the cultural context situation and value might be dissimilar.

The proposed framework can be employed as a guideline to the sustainable development educational program conducted by the local authority human resources department in order to better train and educate the employees with respect to the



sustainable development values and practices. As stated that by Kaprawi and Azroai (2009), there is a growing significance in the continuation of knowledge and one of the challenges faced is the need for sustainable development for educational programmes. Environmental education intends to bring balance to the economic development as well as environmental constraints (Ruiz, 1994).

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