Organizational Learning Culture Vital Roles towards Employee Retention and the Impact on an Organizational Citizenship Behaviour in Malaysia Public Sector

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Abstract

Employee retention is the ability of workers to remain in the organization. It can be affected by the organizational learning culture. Organizational culture creates a high-level behavioral consistency in members over social norms, shared values and a shared mental model. On the other hand, a learning organization learns continuously and transforms itself, and the learning occurs at all levels, such as individual, team, organization, and community. Employees willing to remain in the organization will engage in more organizational citizenship behavior. Employees who stay with the organization or wish to stay longer will create a positive working environment where employees infrequently complain about the aggravation experienced by them and diminish work-related conflicts with other employees. This study applied qualitative method and analysis results using SPSS AMOS. The outcome the employee retention is mediating the learning culture and organizational citizenship behavior in the public sector.

Keywords: Organizational learning culture, employee retention, organizational citizenship behavior, public sector, employee, mediating

1. Introduction

Employee retention is essential for an organization to ensure stability of the organization. According to Ibrahim, Ali, and Zumrah, (2019), employee retention is the ability of workers to remain in the organization for the maximum period. Many studies are calculating the factors to remain the employees in the organization. One of the factors examined in this study is organizational learning culture. Watkins & Marsick (2003) suggested that organizations prioritizing learning have seen increment in employees' job satisfaction. Also, it can diminish the employee's turnover intention (Chow, Haddad, & Singh, 2007; Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2008; Hemdi & Nasurdin, 2006; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006).

In part of employee retention impact, every employee who retains in the organization may give a good impression of the organization citizenship behavior named altruism, helping, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. This impression provides a positive organizational citizenship behavior because it entails personal motivations beyond the need to offer something in return for being treated fairly (Lavelle, 2010), especially in public organizations.

2. Literature Review

Organizational learning culture (OLC) defines as "an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights" (Garvin, 1993). It is incorporated between organization culture and learning organization. An organizational learning culture supports information acquisition, distribution, and sharing and reinforces and supports continuous learning and its employment to organizational improvement (Bate & Khasawneh, 2005).

Organization culture creates a high-level behavioral consistency in members over social norms, shared values and a shared mental model. On the other hand, a learning organization learns continuously and transforms itself, and the learning occurs at all levels, such as individual, team, organization, and community (Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Other researchers such as Garvin (1993) and Takada and Westbrook (2009) found that organizational learning culture plays a significant role in employee retention.

There are a few possible reasons to support the link between organizational learning culture and Conner (1992)

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described a learning organization as good at knowledge creation, knowledge acquisition, knowledge transformation, and behavior modification to reflect new knowledge and insights. employee retention. First, organizations that have prioritized learning has seen an increment in employees' job satisfaction (Watkins &Marsick, 2003). Second, the organizational learning effort (e.g., providing training opportunities for employees) can diminish employee turnover (Chow, Haddad, & Singh, 2007; Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2008; Hemdi & Nasurdin, 2006; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006). Similarly, Emami and colleagues (2012) argue that the shared vision, one of the learning disciplines, can also decrease employee turnover intention because a shared vision strongly influences knowledge workers. Third, having a culture that emphasizes learning can be regarded as the support from the organization, which can enhance the employee commitment to the organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986; Hutchison & Garstka, 1996). Therefore, based on the previous basis, the following hypothesis is proposed, Hypothesis 1: Organizational learning culture is positively related to employee retention.

While employee retention is essential in the organization, there was a question in how the workers who remain in the organization will react toward the organizational citizenship behavior. Organ and colleague (2005) offered that organizations can improve productivity, free up resources, attract and retain good employees, and develop social capital.

Previous studies have applied social exchange approaches to justify citizenship behavior, in which affective commitment has been found as one of the consistent determinants of organizational citizenship behavior (Meyer and colleague, 2002). Also, the workgroup characteristics strongly affect the nature of the exchange relationship that determines in-role performance and organizational citizenship behavior (Cohen and colleague, 2012). Although these methods favour explaining government employees' organizational citizenship behavior, they are limited in exploring why public employees tend to embody citizenship behavior proactively. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed, and Employee retention is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior indicates employee behaviors that are discretionary, beyond the call of duty and not rewarded in the context of an organization's formal reward structure (Organ, 1988). Organizational citizenship behavior entails personal motivations beyond the need to offer something in return for being treated fairly (Lavelle, 2010).

Four dimensions measure organizational citizenship behavior: altruism, helping, sportsmanship, and civic virtue (Paille, 2009). Altruism refers to voluntarily assisting others with a specific work-related task, such as assisting a co-worker with a heavy workload (Organ, 1997). Helping behavior is behaviors targeted at individuals to alleviate their struggles with work-related problems or probably avoid issues from appearing in the first place (Organ et. al., 2006). Sportsmanship is enduring hardship and interference without complaining (Organ, 1988). It also keeps a positive attitude when things do not go as planned and does not take offence when others reject one's suggestions and ideas, thus lighting up the determination and workgroup morale (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, &Bachrach, 2000; Lo et. al. 2009). Civic virtue is keeping themselves knowledgeable about the organization as a whole rather than simply focusing on their job or department (Organ, 1988; Hart et. al., 2016).

Meanwhile, DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran (2001) classify organizational citizenship behaviour with two dimensions known as OCB-individuals (OCBI) and OCB-organization (OCBO). OCBI is behaviors directed at specific individuals in the organization, such as courtesy and altruism. It is devoted to the organization indirectly by giving a meritorious deed to peers and co-workers. At the same time, OCBO is concerned with benefiting the organization, such as conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue.

Morrison (1994) reveals that employees willing to remain in the organization will engage in more organizational citizenship behavior. Similarly, Ünal (2013) also argues that employees who stay with the organization or wish to stay longer will create a positive working environment where employees infrequently complain about the aggravation experienced by them and diminish work-related conflicts other employees.

According to Basirudin and colleagues (2016), organizational citizenship behavior is a crucial part of the upbringing productivity of government organizations'. The person incharge may offer citizenship behavior practices in the public organization to create a better public service and organizational atmosphere, thus increasing the organization's performance. As scholars' opinion, Vigoda and Golembiewski (2001), citizenship behavior improved citizens' welfare and upgraded public organizations image.

Organizational citizenship behavior is a collective engagement and contributes to the effectiveness and advancement of an organization (Shim and Rohrbaugh, 2014). The employee who retains in the organization with satisfaction was likely to show positive behavior and attitude as an exchange for a good deed that has been done by the organizations (Ibrahim and Aslinda, 2013; Basirudin et al., 2016).

It is shown in organizational citizenship behavior when public employees have distinct motivational bases

(Houston, 2000; Perry, 2000).

The proposed role of employee retention as a mediator in relationships aligns with the social exchange theory perspective (Hutchison & Charlesworth, 2003). This theory suggests that employees respond to perceived favourable working conditions by behaving to benefit the organization and or other employees. In other words, when employees perceive good working conditions, application of organizational learning culture, they will behave in ways that benefit the organization (employee retention) and demonstrate organizational citizenship behavior and job embeddedness. On this basis, the following hypotheses are proposed: Employee retention mediate the relation ship between organizational learning culture and organizational citizenship behavior

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

This study applied quantitative research design because it focuses on hypothesis testing and theory testing. The population of this study is the supporting staff employees (Grade 1-40) working in the public sector and based in Putrajaya, Malaysia. Putrajaya is the headquarters of the public sector in Malaysia. All ministries are located here, including the ministry of education, the ministry of tourism and culture, the ministry of foreign affairs, the ministry of health, the minister of human resources, the ministry of transport, the ministry of energy, communications, multimedia, and many others more. The population of the supporting staff for public sector employees in this context is 16,488.

This study applied a stratified sampling method. Twenty-four ministries were selected as the stratum. Each ministry (stratum) contributed 100 of its total number of ministries to the overall sample. The final respondents were picked randomly from each stratum. The population size is 16,488. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size would be 377. The sample size obtained from the respondent was 1110 and met the requirement of Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

The pilot was conducted, and the study result (see table 1) showed that the alpha values for the seven measures exceeded the cutoff point, Cronbach-alpha of 0.70. The overall Cronbach alpha value for organizational citizenship behaviour, 0.751, organizational learning culture, and 0.70 for employee retention.

Table 1: Reliability of Each Variable.

Reliability results of the variables and their dimensions	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	13	0.70
Organizational Learning Culture	21	0.975
Employee Retention	5	0.70

Research Tools in the study as be shown in table 2

Table 2: The Research Tools

Variable	Measure Source	Total number of items
Organizational Learning Culture	Dimensions of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) developed by Watkins & Marsick (1993, 2003) and Yang (2003)	21
Employee Retention	Jun et. al., (2006)	5
OCB	Podsakoff & MacKenzie (1994), Paille (2009)	13

The data screening is 27 cases showed incomplete responses or missing values. Deleting the 27 incomplete surveys, the complete and usable surveys were 1110. The final sample size exceeds the minimum required to analyze the proposed model using the structural equation model technique (Hair et. al. 2010). The complete total respondents represent twenty-four ministry public sector organizations in Malaysia.

Results

Analysis of Results of Main Data

The demographic profile of employees, as shown in table 3, total employees are 1110. 33.4 per cent (N = 371) are male, and 66.6 per cent (N = 739) are female. 8.6 per cent (N = 95) are age range 18 and 25 years old, 53.1 per cent

(N = 589) age range 26 and 35 years old, 28.2 per cent (N = 313) age range 36 and 45 years old, 8.2 per cent (N = 91) age range 46 and 55, and the rest 2 per cent (N = 22) were 55 and over the years old. Married employees (72.5 per cent, N = 805), while the remaining 27.5 per cent (N = 305) were single.

Employment term in public sector organizations, 20.5 per cent (N = 228) of the respondents has worked in around 2 to 5 years. 48.2 per cent (N = 535) have worked in the public sector between 6 to 10 years. The remaining 31.3 per cent (N = 347) have worked in the public sector organizations for more than ten years.

Table 3: Respondent's Demography

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
Gender (n=1110)		
Male	371	33.4
Female	739	66.6
Age (n=1110)		
18-25 years old	95	8.6
26-35 years old	589	53.1
36-45 years old	313	28.2
46-55 years old	91	8.2
55 and over years old	22	2.0
Marital status (n=1110)		
Single	305	27.5
Married	805	72.5
Length of employment (n=1110)		
2 - 5 years	228	20.5
6 - 10 years	535	48.2
More than 10 years	347	31.3

Descriptive statistic of variables.

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics of variables included in this study. The standard deviations of all varia bles appeared in a range 0.61239 to 0.90567.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for All Variables.

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation
OLcu	3.3073	.64048
OcBe	3.5793	.90567
ERe	3.4744	.61239

Note: N= 1110, OLcu= Organizational Learning Culture, ERe= Employee Retention, and OcBe= Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Multicollinearity

The fourth assumption is multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is a problem that shows the variables tested are t oo highly correlated (Tabachnick&Fidell 2007). The assessment of multicollinearity is based on eigenvalues, which are determined from the AMOS sample moment output, which indicates the smallest eigenvalue is 0.18 1 and the largest eigenvalue is 8.260. The result shows the k value is 101.07(14.15/0.14) suggesting this study does not have a serious collinearity problem (Gujarati & Porter, 2009). Further assessment on the correlation matrix (Table 4.1) reveals no correlation above 0.90, thus, confirming that there is no violation of this assum ption (Tabachnick&Fidell, 2007).

Table 4.1: Correlations Matrix

Variable	OLcu	ERe	OcBe
OLcu	-		
ERe	.575	-	
OcBe	.450	.411	-

Note: OLcu= Organizational Learning Culture, ERe= Employee Retention, and OcBe= Organizational Citizenship Behaviour.

Based on Table 4.2, there are three variables for all items factor loading above 0.50 and have achieved the KMO (> 0.50), Barlett's Test (p < 0.05) and Cronbach alpha (> 0.70).

Table 4.2: Summary of the Result Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Construct Code	Original Items	Remaining Items	KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Cronbach's Alpha	Factor Loading Range
OLcu	21	21	0.760	2621.009	0.927	0.926-0.944
ERe	5	5	0.851	2534.446	0.710	0.708-0.827
OcBe	13	9	0.557	766.503	0.710	0.652-0.893

Note: Organizational Learning Culture, ERe= Employee Retention, and OcBe= Organizational Citizenship Behaviour.

Discriminant Validity

The Discriminant Validity for the construct is achieved if the correlation among the exogenous constructs in the model does not exceed 0.85 (Zainudin, 2015).

Table 4.3 shows that the correlation value between all construct are less than 0.85. In addition, the square root AVE for all variables also are higher than any the correlation values in its row and column. The Discriminant Validity for all constructs is achieved.

Table 4.3: Discriminant Validity Index Summary

Variable	OLcu	ERe	OcBe
OLcu	**0.9**		
ERe	.575	**0.754**	
OcBe	.450	.411	**0.788**

Note: OLcu= Organizational Learning Culture, ERe= Employee Retention and OcBe= Organizational Citizenship Behaviour.

Structural model validity

Following the confirmation of the measurement model validity, the structural model was specified by assigning relationships from one construct to another. The following hypotheses tested: -

H1   An organizational learning culture is positively related to employee retention.

H2   Employee retention is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior.

H3   Employee retention will mediate the relationship between organizational learning culture and organizational citizenship behavior.

Table 4.4 shows the results of the regression path coefficient. Human resource management practices show positive and significant impact on employee retention (Coefficient = 0.669, Critical Ratio = 7.827, p<0.05). Similarly, the effect of organizational learning culture on employee retention was also positive and significant (Coefficient = 0.214, Critical Ratio = 5.675, p<0.05). Peer support has a significant effect on employee retention. However, its effect on employee retention was negative (Coefficient = -0.084, Critical Ratio = -2.389, p<0.017). In addition, the effect of transformational leadership on employee retention was not significant (Coefficient = -0.054, Critical Ratio = -1.949, p<0.060). Finally, table 4.5 reveals that employee retention was positively and significantly related to organizational citizenship behaviour (Coefficient = 0.412, Critical Ratio = 10.245, p<0.05) and job embeddedness (Coefficient = 0.373, Critical Ratio = 9.447, p<0.05).

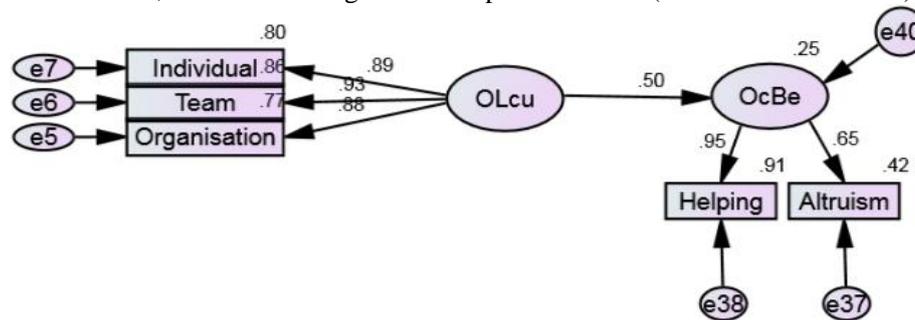**Table 4.4:** The Regression Path Coefficient

Construct		Construct	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
ERe	<---	OLcu	.214	.038	5.675	***	Significant
ERe	<---	PeS	-.084	.035	-2.389	.017	Significant
OcBe	<---	ERe	.412	.040	10.245	***	Significant

Note: OLcu= Organizational Learning Culture, ERe= Employee Retention, and OcBe= Organizational Citizenship Behaviour.
***p<0.05

Employee retention will mediate the relationship between organizational learning culture (OLcu) and organizational citizenship behavior (OcBe).

Firstly, this study has tested the direct effect of OLcu and OcBe , as shown in Figure 1. The output in Table 4.5 shows coefficient is 0.498, and it has a significant impact on OcBe (critical value=10.832)

Figure 1: The result of direct effect on OLcu (The Beta Coefficient is .498)

Table 4.5: The direct effect of OLcu on OcBe is significant (Beta Coefficient .498)

Variable		Variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
OcBe	<---	OLcu	.498	.028	10.832	***	Significant

Second, this study has created a new model by including the construct ERe as a mediator (see Figure 2). Table 4.6 shows that the coefficient of the direct effect of OLcu on OcBe has reduced to 0.351 but is still significant when the mediator (ERe) enters the model. The other direct effect between OLcu to ERe (coefficient = 0.626, critical ratio = 14.109, p<0.05) and between ERe to OcBe (coefficient = 0.240, critical ratio = 5.531, p<0.05) also shows positive and significant effect.
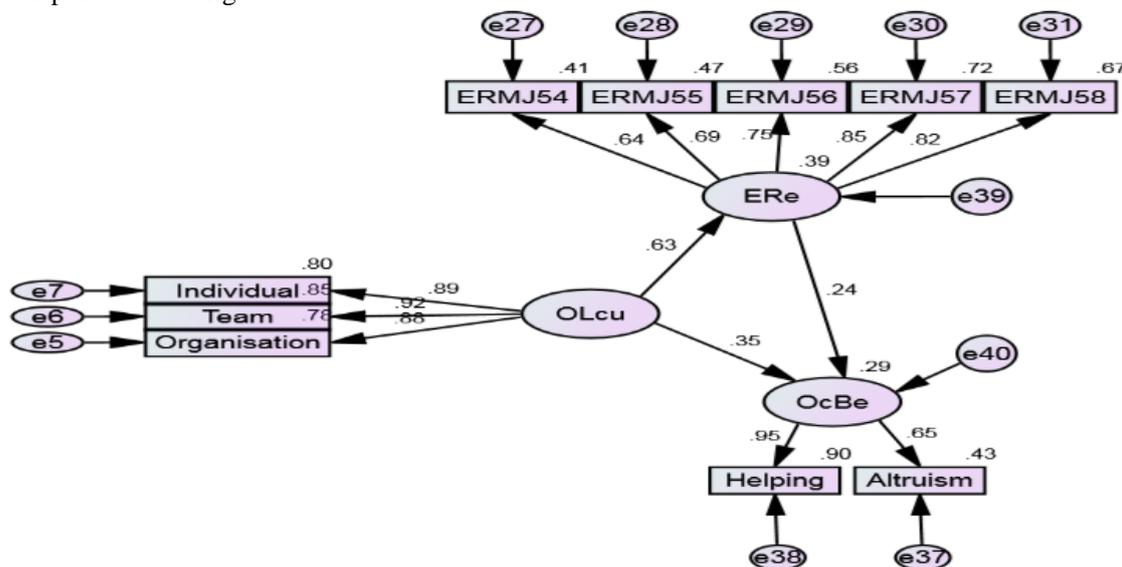

Figure 2: The AMOS output showing Regression Weights between constructs

This study was interested to prove that the construct ERe is mediating the relationship between construct OLcu and construct OcBe.

Table 4.6: The Path Regression Coefficient and its significance

Variable		Variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
ERe	<---	OLcu	.626	.028	16.636	***	Significant
OcBe	<---	ERe	.240	.036	5.531	***	Significant
OcBe	<---	OLcu	.351	.028	7.821	***	Significant

Based on the previous results, the construct ERe does mediate the relationship between OLcu and OcBe. The type of mediation here is called "partial mediation" since the direct effect of OLcu and OcBe is still significant after the mediator variable ERe entered the model even though the path coefficient for OLcu was reduced from 0.498 to 0.351. In other words, OLcu has a direct effect on OcBe and also an indirect effect on OcBe through ERe.

To confirm the test for mediation, the steps outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) using SPSS were followed. First, organization learning culture was positively related to organizational citizenship behavior (β = .351, p < 0.05). Thus, the first condition of mediation was met. Second, organizational learning culture was positively related to employee retention (β = .626, p < 0.05), thus, completing the second condition of mediation. Third, employee retention was still positively related to organizational citizenship behavior (β = .240, p < 0.05). Finally, the effect of OLcu on OcBe is still significant even after controlling the impact of ERe (β = 0.240, p<0.05). This result confirmed that ERe has partially mediated the relationship between OLcu and OcBe.

Discussion

Employee retention will mediate the relationship between organizational learning culture (OLcu) and organizational citizenship behavior (OcBe). Firstly, this study has tested the direct effect of OLcu and OcBe , as shown in Figure 3. The output in Table 4.7 shows coefficient is 0.498, and it is having a significant impact on OcBe (critical value=10.832)
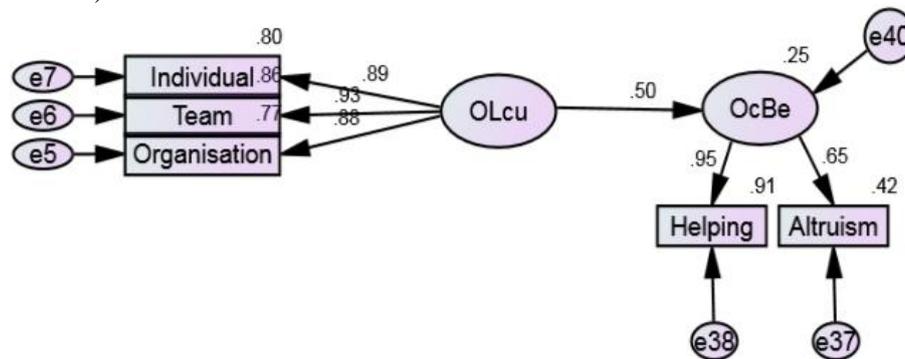

Figure 3: The result of the direct effect on OLcu (The Beta Coefficient is .498)

Table 4.7: The direct effect of OLcu on OcBe is significant (Beta Coefficient .498)

Variable		Variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
OcBe	<---	OLcu	.498	.028	10.832	***	Significant

Second, this study has created a new model by including the construct ERe as a mediator (see Figure 3). Table 4.7 shows that the coefficient of the direct effect of OLcu on OcBe has reduced to 0.351 but is still significant when the mediator (ERe) enters the model. The other direct effect between OLcu to ERe (coefficient = 0.626, critical ratio = 14.109, p<0.05) and between ERe to OcBe (coefficient = 0.240, critical ratio = 5.531, p<0.05) also shows positive and significant effect.
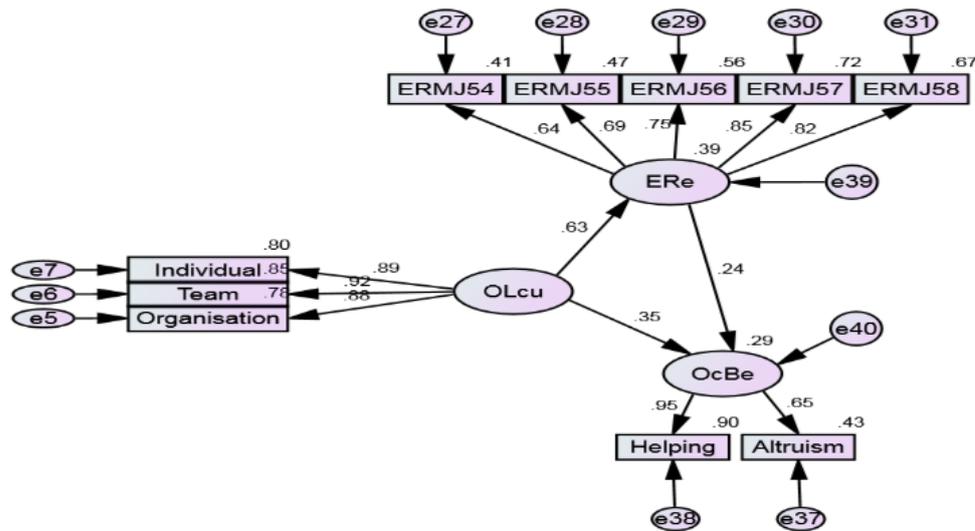
Figure 4: The AMOS output showing Regression Weights between constructs

This study was interested in proving that the construct ERe is mediating the relationship between construct OLcu and construct OcBe.

Table 4.8: The Path Regression Coefficient and its significance

Variable		Variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
ERe	<---	OLcu	.626	.028	16.636	***	Significant
OcBe	<---	ERe	.240	.036	5.531	***	Significant
OcBe	<---	OLcu	.351	.028	7.821	***	Significant

Based on the previous results, the construct ERe does mediate the relationship between OLcu and OcBe. The type of mediation here is called "partial mediation" since the direct effect of OLcu and OcBe is still significant after the mediator variable ERe entered the model even though the path coefficient for OLcu was reduced from 0.498 to 0.351. In other words, OLcu has a direct effect on OcBe and also an indirect impact on OcBe through ERe.

Researcher was using SPSS as the steps outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) to confirm the test for mediation. First, organization learning culture was positively related to organizational citizenship behavior (β = .351, p < 0.05). Thus, the first condition of mediation was met. Second, organizational learning culture was positively related to employee retention (β = .626, p < 0.05), thus, completing the second condition of mediation. Third, employee retention was still positively related to organizational citizenship behavior (β = .240, p < 0.05). Finally, the effect of OLcu on OcBe is still significant even after controlling the impact of ERe (β = 0.240, p<0.05). This result confirmed that ERe has partially mediated the relationship between OLcu and OcBe.

The conceptual framework of this study predicted that employee retention would be positively related to organizational citizenship behavior. This study argued that the employees who stay in are prepared to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is generally expected to help organizations be successful (Paillé, 2013; Lavelle, 2010).

Based on the analysis result, there is a significant and positive relationship between employee retention and organizational citizenship behavior in the context of public sector organizations. This study reveals that these employees willing to stay in the organization will create a voluntary commitment, especially in a public sector organization that is not part of their contractual tasks—for example, voluntarily helping others with a specific work-related task, such as helping a co-worker with the heavy workload, helping others to alleviate their struggles with work-related problems or probably avoid problems from appearing in the first place (Organ et al., 2005). Helping carry out a complex task replacing absent colleague, enabling a new employee in performing his tasks or making additional copies of the meeting agenda for the co-workers. Such behavior can give a meritorious deed to peers and co-workers inside the organization (Cohen et. al., 2012), increasing the employer value to an organization and profession' (Mossholder, et. al., 2005, Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997).

Thus, it is impossible that employee retention in the organization refused to give altruism and help toward the organization because it is a part of corporate culture in public sector organization in Malaysia. Employees are encouraged to active and voluntary participation. They require to be involved, for example, in decision-making by formulating new ideas, suggesting improvements in seminars or meetings, or protecting the organization (Organ et. al. 2006). Also, the employees willing to stay in this context will demonstrate an organizational citizenship behavior because it is considered one of the indicators in their performance evaluation.

The conceptual framework predicted that employee retention would mediate the relationship between organizational learning culture and organizational citizenship behavior. The analysis result confirmed the role of employee retention as a mediator in the relationship between organizational learning culture and organizational citizenship behavior. This finding is in line with the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). The social exchange theory states that an exchange of goodwill occurs between employee and organization or employee and supervisors, and a sense of reciprocity exists between members. Therefore, the employees who perceived that their organization has promoted a learning culture (i.e., encourage the employee to create, acquire and transfer knowledge in the organization) will be willing to stay in the organization and demonstrate behaviour that go beyond the call of duty (Hart et. al., 2016; Organ, 1988).

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