

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE,  
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND  
DISABLED EMPLOYEES' JOB  
EMBEDDEDNESS: THE MEDIATING  
ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL  
CLIMATE**

**HASNIZAWATI HASHIM**

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## CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS

I certify that a Panel of Examiners has met on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2016 to conduct the final examination of Hasnizawati Hashim on her Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “Leader-Member Exchange, Organizational Climate and Disabled Employees’ Job Embeddedness: The Mediating Role of Organizational Climate” in accordance with Universiti Teknologi MARA Act 1976 (Akta 173). The panel of Examiners was as follows:

Noryati Ahmad, PhD  
Associate Proffessor  
Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School  
Universiti Teknologi MARA  
(Chairman)

Sarminah Samad, PhD  
Associate Proffessor  
Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School  
Universiti Teknologi MARA  
(Internal Examiner)

Husna Johari, PhD  
Associate Professor  
School of Business Management  
Universiti Utara Malaysia  
(External Examiner)

Ekin Pellegrini, PhD  
Associate Professor  
University of Missouri, St. Louis  
(External Examiner)

**DR. MOHAMMAD NAWAWI**  
**DATO’ HAJI SEROJI**  
Dean  
Institutes of Graduate Studies  
Universiti Teknologi MARA  
Date: 24 January 2017

## ABSTRACT

The foundation of this research is that disabled employees will engage with their job if they receive support from each of the important elements in the workplace. There are many researches that focused on investigating various outcomes of job embeddedness but little is known on what makes PWD stay with their job. Understanding job embeddedness among person with disabilities is very crucial as it focuses on the factors that may influence their job retention. Hence, the Unfolding Model in this study provides basic understanding on the relationships between variables that makes people embedded to their job. Furthermore, Social Cognitive Theory is applied according to the justification that individual behaviour could be explained through a self-regulatory system. This system explains that individuals are believed to have control over their own thoughts and behaviour. This system will be operated if it is activated by the person. So, job embeddedness is the construct that describes the activation or deactivation of an individual's self-regulatory system. This research investigates specifically, (1) direct relationship between leader-member exchange, emotional intelligence, organizational climate and job embeddedness, 2) direct relationship between leader-member exchange, emotional intelligence and organizational climate, and 3) organizational climate mediation relationship between a) leader-member exchange, b) emotional intelligence and job embeddedness among disabled employees in Malaysia by applying The Unfolding Model, Social Cognitive Theory and supported by the Person-Environment Fit Theory. A two-stage sampling technique was applied to randomly collect data from disabled employees in private and public sectors at the operational level in Malaysia. Further, to examine the direct and mediating effects of the hypotheses a structural equation modelling software (Analysis of Moment Structure) or AMOS was used. Results showed support to the direct hypothesized relationships between emotional intelligence, organizational climate and job embeddedness. On the other hand, leader-member exchange was found not to support the direct relationship with job embeddedness. Furthermore, emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange were confirmed to have a significant relationship with the organizational climate. Organizational climate was also found to fully mediate the relationship between leader-member exchange and job embeddedness. However, organizational climate was found to partially mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and job embeddedness. This research makes several theoretical contributions and provides further insights on the relationship between leader-member exchange, emotional intelligence, organizational climate and disabled employees' job embeddedness, and mediating effect of organizational climate on the relationship between a) leader-member exchange and disabled employees job embeddedness, b) emotional intelligence and disabled employees' job embeddedness particularly in Malaysia. Further, methodological and practical implications are discussed. Besides, several potential possibilities for future research are identified and discussed. In brief, this research helps to produce in a more comprehensive view on the relationship between leader-member exchange, emotional intelligence, organizational climate and job embeddedness and mediating effect of organizational climate on the relationship between a) leader-member exchange and job embeddedness, b) emotional intelligence and job embeddedness which focus on disabled employees.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background and justification of the study. It also contains the details of significant information regarding disabled employee environment, the issues, and the problems that led to the research, and subsequently the structure of the thesis.

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Person with disabilities (PWDs) have been referred to people with certain biological properties (Woodhams & Danieli, 2000). Based on their disabilities per se, the process of hiring and turnover among them has become an endless issue of concern in Malaysia (Adabi, 2011). This is due to the challenges in finding jobs that suit their capability. The empirical research findings showed that PWDs face difficulties in finding jobs to survive (e.g., Duckett, 2000; Ellsum & Pederson, 2005; Jarhag, Nilsson & Werning, 2009; Jones, 2008; Piggott & Houghton, 2007; Vila, Pallisera & Fullana, 2007; Wehman, Brooke, Green, Hewett & Tipton, 2008).

There is an interesting statement quoted from Boyle's article as stated by Schur, Kruse, and Blanck (2005; p.p 4) in his article concerning disabled stigma as perceived by one PWD.

*"When individual with disabilities attempt to gain admittance to most organizational settings, it is as if a space ship lands in the corporate boardroom and little green men from Mars ask to be employed."*

This statement shows how PWDs are negatively perceived by employers. This perception eventually has influenced their decisions and leads to the reluctance of hiring PWDs as well as understanding their needs at the workplace.

There are many reasons as to why these problems become workplace issues. For instance, the research findings from Bricout and Bently (2000), Dench, Meager and Morris (1996), Sirvastava and Chamberlain (2005), Shier, Graham and Jones (2009), and Williams-Whitt (2008) found that the problems are primarily caused by