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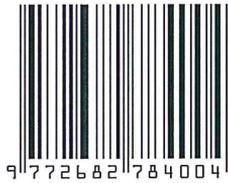
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THE EFFECTS OF HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES, KNOWLEDGE-ORIENTED LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL INNOVATION TOWARDS FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: A REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA

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ABSTRACT

Ageing population and reduction in birth rates has altered the demographics' structure on working-age populations. It has been a major setback for many developing countries especially at the era of digitalization. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate how fourth industrial revolution technology of the workplace and its societal challenges on business among productive aging workforce in Malaysia. The study is intend to conceptually argue that knowledge oriented leadership and human resource practices able to enhances organizational innovation where subsequently increase the compatibility of firm towards fourth industrial revolution. Based upon the discussion, a conceptual framework was developed. The adoption of quantitative study was proposed in order to examine the proposed model in the subsequent empirical study. It is expected that the results of the study would be able to generate some useful findings that provide valuable insight to business practitioners, policy makers, academicians and government at Ministry level.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Shifting demographics brought on by aging populations and declining birthrates are reducing the share of working-age populations and creating an economic growth gap: in the not-so-distant future, without acceleration in productivity growth, there will not be enough workers for countries to meet their aspirations for growth in GDP per capita (McKinsey Global Institute, 2017). GE, in the Malaysia Report of its biennial 2016 GE Global Innovation Barometer, said that a high percentage of Malaysian executives feel optimistic (76% vs. 68% globally), excited (67% vs. 61% globally) and confident (72% vs. 60% globally) about the prospect of entering the fourth industrial revolution (Jayaram, 2016). Wisskirchen et al. (2017) explain the risk or opportunity of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the future of employment. For the staff of a company, Artificial intelligence (AI) will entail short-term disadvantages; in the low and medium qualification sectors primarily, several million jobs worldwide are under threat. At the same time, AI opens new opportunities for companies and

individuals. Humans are adaptable and will create new jobs. The use of intelligent IT systems helps decrease the time required for the product or the service, and the associated costs as well. AI should thus result in a growth of prosperity. Moreover, technical developments will lead to a situation in which older employees and employees with disabilities can be better integrated; while machines can perform dangerous work.

According to PwC (2018), new skills will be required to maintain current roles or shift into new ones. These hybrid roles work across domains and generally demonstrate competency in three areas, namely (a) Business and science skills—including domain specialties such as marketing, organizational design, and finance, or specific focus areas across physical and social sciences, (b) Human or soft skills—including communication, critical thinking, adaptability, problem-solving, leadership, creativity, and innovation, which have become even more essential in a digital organization, and (c) Technology skills—including a wide range of information technology skills, from basic data literacy to applying artificial intelligence to real-world problems, which is most commonly cited as a gap for mid-career workers.

The main objective of this paper is to examine the mediating effect of organisational innovation on the positive relationship between knowledge-oriented leadership and readiness towards fourth industry revolution as well as between HRM practices and readiness towards fourth industry revolution. Apart from this, this paper intend to encapsulates that how both knowledge-oriented leadership and HRM practices influence on readiness towards fourth industry revolution. The paper is begin with the underpinning theory that used to justify and support each proposed path. This is followed by literature argument of proposed research model.

2. UNDERPINNING THEORY: KNOWLEDGE-BASED VIEW THEORY

The knowledge-based view (KBV) of the firm is an extension of the resource-based view of the firm (Grant, 2002). The understanding of knowledge as a resource creates the notional connection with the resource-based view (Ariely, 2003). Reasoning for the knowledge-based view to be an extension of the resource-based view is the perception of organizations to be heterogeneous entities containing knowledge (Hoskisson et al., 1999). The knowledge-based view (KBV) has its roots in the resource-based view of the firm, which focuses on strategic assets as the main source of competitive advantages (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993). Knowledge is the main strategic resource, which, when properly managed, allows the firm to create value from its exploitation of production (DeCarolis & Deeds, 1999; Zack, McKeen, & Singh, 2009). Hence, the firm is the embodiment of a knowledge bearing entity that manages its knowledge resources through its combinative–dynamic capabilities (Kogut & Zander, 1992). Donate and de Pablo (2015) reported the mediating effect of knowledge management practices in the relationship between knowledge-oriented leadership and innovation performance. As a result, the use of knowledge management practices, the firm is able to improve its performance in product innovation.

3. LITERATURE DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL

Based on the proposed model (see Figure 1), it's clearly shows that knowledge oriented leadership is hypothesized to be significantly related to organisational innovation. Knowledge Oriented Leadership is defined as an action or ability that encourages new and important information that is created, shared and applied to bring positive change in outcomes (Mabey, Kulich, & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2012). According to Donate & Sánchez de Pablo (2015) contended that a leader

with possess relevant knowledge would able to increase organisational innovation in the firm. Leaders are the one who are responsible to manage, encourage and develop a structure that maintains the innovativeness of his or her firm (Tuan, 2017). Organisational innovation can be defined as “a new idea, method, or device. The act of creating a new product or process. The act includes invention as well as the work required to bring an idea or concept into final form” (Belliveau et al., 2002, p. 446).

Similarly to the relationship between HRM practices and organizational innovation, it is claimed that a firm with the adoption of HRM practices would be able to motivate its workers which subsequently enhance the firm innovation (Ling & Nasurdin, 2010; Escribá-Carda, Canet-Giner, & Balbastre-Benavent, 2014). Past empirical studies also indicates that organisational innovation is significantly related to readiness toward fourth industrial revolution. For instance, an innovative firm would have a better adaptation toward fourth industrial revolution (Sarvari, Ustundag, Cevikcan, Kaya, & Cebi, 2018). Apart from this, age could play an important role in moderating the relationship between organisational innovation and the readiness toward fourth industrial revolution. Especially to senior employees, they may have difficulty in learning more innovative ways to perform their job duties and responsibilities. Additionally, it is also speculated that organisational innovation could be an important mediator in the proposed research model where it could mediate the positive relationship between knowledge oriented leadership and human resource management practices towards the readiness of firm towards fourth industrial revolution. With a knowledgeable leaders and practices of HRM functions would enhance the firm innovation. Subsequently, it could ensure firm are ready for fourth industrial revolution in order to maintain its competitiveness in the market.

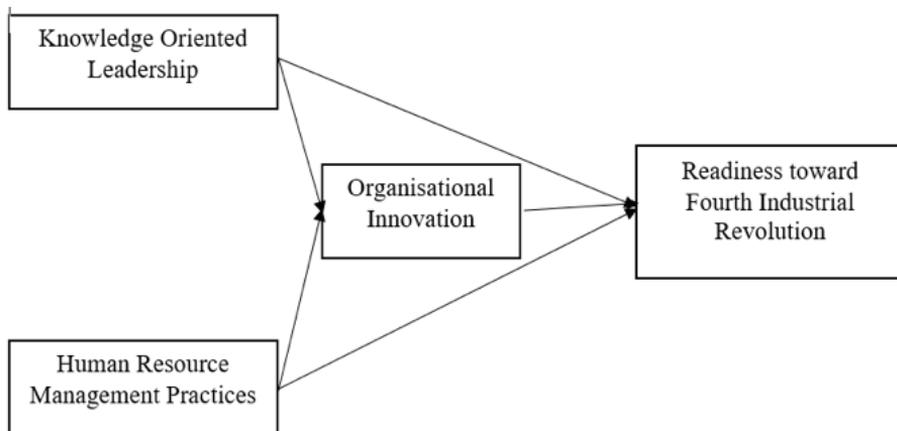


Figure 1: The Proposed Research Model

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the objective of this conceptual research is to understand how Malaysian firm readiness toward industrial revolution. With the understanding of major determinants of readiness toward industrial revolution among Malaysian firms: knowledge oriented leadership and human resource management practices, it is believed that organisational innovation could play a significant role in the proposed model where it could enhance the readiness towards fourth industrial revolution. With new era of industrial revolution: Digital Era, it is essential for nation or government to emphasized more on local industries players through well understand their readiness towards fourth

industrial revolution. Through this, Malaysia or policy maker would be able initialized and implement several useful strategies and ways to assists local firms in order to sustain their business performance in this digital era. Eventually, this could boost the Malaysia productivity and economy.

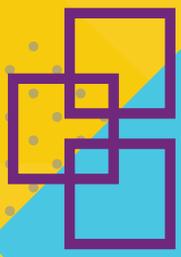
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